This page was exported from - Bancroft this Week
Export date: Thu Mar 28 14:10:10 2024 / +0000 GMT

Food bank needs your help

March 31, 2020

By Chris Drost

The good news according to North Hastings Community Cupboard director Monica Piercey is that so far, they have managed to continue feeding people. This has been made possible because of the generous support provided by the community of North Hastings and the Cupboard's partners across the province.
The Cupboard is facing large increases in numbers served and pounds of food distributed. In 2019, for the same two-week period, it served 153 people with 2,042 pounds of food compared to serving 255 people a total of 3,656 pounds in 2020. For the entire month of March 2019, 271 people were served a total of 3,903 pounds of food compared to this year when 447 people have been served for a total of 6,410 pounds of food. (which will be higher at March 31)
?Local stores are doing an amazing job and are working with us,? says Piercey. The Cupboard is also getting some access to wholesale foods but she describes it as ?spotty? at the moment. They reached out to Jim Mallabar, program coordinator at the Community Development Council and managed to get some fresh produce wholesale. CDC Quinte hopes to have the Good Food /box back for April.
The Cupboard is fortunate to not only have supporters within North Hastings, but also outside the area. The United Way, which helps fund the organization, was able to access resources through Procter & Gamble which resulted in a supply of diapers, wipes, personal hygiene products etc. being delivered to Bancroft.
SIRCH in Haliburton has reached out and ?the Wilberforce food bank is also good at getting resources and will share,? adds Piercey.

Maynooth and Lake St. Peter food banks have had to close their doors because they do not have the ability to operate under Public Health Unit guidelines at this time. Fortunately, the Cupboard provides assistance for all of North Hastings.
There is good news that Coe Hill food bank will be reopening. The resources provided through the United Way and Procter & Gamble will be shared with them. The hours for the Coe Hill food bank are from 12:30 ? 2 p.m. outside the Coe Hill Legion on April 6 and 20, May 11 and 25 and June 8 and 22. There will be pre packed parcels and all precautions will be taken as advised by Public Health.
The Community Cupboard is a member of the Good Food Organization under Community Food Centres Canada which continues to petition different levels of government for assistance. The Cupboard also belongs to Feed Ontario formerly the Association of Foodbanks, which also petitions upper levels of government. This has resulted in some large skid donations.
?We have a lot of resources but we need a lot of help,? says Piercey. She is impressed by the number of people getting in touch with them offering to assist. ?This is new territory ? we see people and the community pulling together and it has been overwhelming,? she added. Financial contributions can be made through www.canadahelps.org.
Piercey also expressed how proud she is of the NHCC board of directors and everyone who has helped.
The Cupboard needs financial contributions as well as donations of canned tomatoes, pasta sauce, pork and beans, canned milk, canned meats and fruits and vegetables. They are currently out of milk. The best way to help is to drop items in the bins at the grocery stores. There has been a marked decrease in donations of late, especially since limits have been put on items per customer. These limits have made it a challenge for the Cupboard to purchase bulk supplies for the food bank but they are working with the stores and suppliers. ?Things are backed up at the stores and manufacturers may not have produced enough,? says Piercey. She noted that during the last week of the month, donations in the box at Foodland go to Cardiff food bank.
Safety precautions are being taken seriously at the Cupboard. The volunteers and staff are using medical gloves, have a drive through window, recommended distances are being maintained, and at least one person with food safety certification is on-hand. When the food is being brought in from elsewhere, everything is being sanitized with a bleach solution. Additionally, client intake is being done remotely by someone working from home. The Cupboard uses a computer tracking system called Linked to Feed through Feed Ontario which ensures an equitable distribution of food.
Bancroft Community Transit and the Cupboard have a new delivery program in place to assist seniors, those with disabilities, single parents without childcare, the quarantined and self-isolated. ?We did a great set of deliveries last week,? explains Piercey.
Piercey says they are meeting weekly through teleconference with the Town of Bancroft, health officials and social services so

everyone is aware of what everybody is doing. They are trying to keep fully informed.
?We need to be creative in our approach and work together to have each others' backs,? she said.