

Wollaston supports Tri-Township Food Basket

By Jim Eadie

The final grant allocation for the current fiscal year has been approved by Wollaston Township council at their Dec. 18 regular meeting. The municipality had \$700 remaining in the grant budget, and unanimously decided to give the money to the local Tri-Township Food Basket (TTFB) which operates a food bank to assist the residents of Limerick, Wollaston, and Tudor and Cashel.

"We operate under the umbrella of the North Hastings Community Cupboard in Bancroft," said Lee-Ann King, one of the TTFB volunteers. "We started out in May 2013 supporting 3 to 5 people a week, but now we have 20 people coming every week."

The food bank operates every Friday out of the basement of the Royal Canadian Legion in Coe Hill, thanks for the kind donation of the Legion. King noted that the available space is quite small, and at present there is very limited fridge or freezer space. Money is desperately needed to purchase such things as milk, or special items required by some users due to medical conditions such as diabetes.

TTFB has a special initiative to try and supply potatoes, carrots and onions along with encouragement and advice on making soups.

"We talk to the people who come in, and go over their choices with them based on their needs and their family size," said King. "We don't want to make it feel like it's just a handout."

Local residents register at the food bank, and will be supported in their food needs. "We have a rule "anyone who comes and asks for food, will get food .. if we have it. If they are from Bancroft or Apsley for example, they will be re-directed there for the future. Not just unemployed people come to a food bank; many are working poor people. A lot of people live paycheck to paycheck, their paycheck is not going up, but the bills are."

This Christmas season TTFB will support struggling local households with a food hamper, which includes a turkey. Recently the food bank has seriously struggled to keep things on their shelves.

"Word got out that we were nearly empty," said King. "I can't get over the generosity of the local people who came forward and donated!"

Due to lack of freezer space, local citizens brought their donated frozen turkeys to the food bank on Dec. 22 where they were promptly distributed to people in need.

Councillor Lynn Krueger supported the grant allocation. "There are lots of kids that go to school without breakfast, or a decent lunch," she said. "People mostly use a food banks because they need it. Many people who need it don't use it, unfortunately."

"Some people may suddenly be faced with an unexpected unfortunate circumstance," noted Councillor Michael Feurth.

King summarized, acknowledging that donations are needed and deeply appreciated, and information about TTFB or making a donation can be obtained by calling her at 1-613-337-8660.