



November 6th, 2023

Barrhaven Food Cupboard Newsletter #2023/03

From everyone associated with, or interested in, the Barrhaven Food Cupboard, we hope this newsletter finds you safe and well.

Changes to the BFC Board

In addition to some anticipated changes to the board addressed at the AGM in June, there have been a few additional departures. A full listing of the new board can be found on our website at www.barrhavenfoodcupboard.ca. We wish to extend our sincere appreciation to Alain Lutala who has left the position of Director for Community Liaison and to Karen Kleiss who has been our advisor extraordinaire on everything digital. We welcome Glenn Schumacher who has just taken over as Director for Community Liaison.

Higher Demand for Food Assistance

We continue to see rising demand for assistance from the Barrhaven Community which has necessitated the expenditure of some of our contingency funds to continue operations. At the June Board meeting, the Treasurer reported that we were on a track to literally run out of money in 3-4 months. Clearly, some drastic action was needed! In little more than a week, we managed to mount an effective campaign to kick off on July 1. Anyone who came out to Clarke Field that day, saw an army of dedicated volunteers in yellow shirts engaging and informing the Canada Day revellers. Behind the scenes, we implemented software to make it easier for people to donate on our website. And we set up a new system to keep track of donations and donors so you could be properly thanked and receipted.

The momentum has carried on over the ensuing months in the form of neighbourhood barbecues, pancake breakfasts, bottle drives, cookie sales and lemonade stands, all organized independently by individuals in Barrhaven. Local businesses stepped up with cash donations, as did the sports teams, community groups, and schools. Our local churches, always strong regular supporters, increased their already generous donations. We are delighted to report that the Barrhaven community has come through once again and we have met our goal of raising \$180,000 to allow us to operate to the end of 2023.

At the same time, we have reduced spending on some non-essential items which we were previously buying to maintain our inventory. We will continue to distribute any of these items received through donations, but we will not be buying any more for the time being to allow us to focus on the essential, healthy items in a food order.

The challenge for the future is, of course, to continue to meet the demand. For this reason, we will have to continue to actively fundraise to ensure that we can support the \$40,000 or so needed monthly to procure the necessary food for our clients – all in addition to the food which is donated. In our all-volunteer organization, ninety percent of our costs is for food that we buy, so our donors can rest assured that every little bit helps.

Garden Commemoration and Naming

We welcomed a good crowd to the community garden near the Barrhaven United Church on September 9th, where we named the garden after Peter Oegema, our longtime volunteer extraordinaire who passed away earlier this year. Thank you to everyone who attended this event and to Darrell Bartraw and team who once again served a great lunch.

Volunteer Spotlight

Karen Kleiss joined the BFC board to assist us with our digital presence, that is, our website, social media, and document management. Her expertise was badly needed, and she has done an excellent job in modernizing our digital practices. More than that, she has been an active member of the board and was intimately involved in the 2022 Holiday Hamper undertaking, where we delivered 475 hampers to families throughout Barrhaven. Karen has also participated on our fundraising committee which has had a number of successes. Unfortunately, Karen has indicated that she will be leaving her position for personal reasons, but we want to take this opportunity to thank her for all that she has done and wish her well in the future. She is a living example of our motto, “Neighbours Helping Neighbours”!

Community Support

As always, we continue to receive excellent support from the community. Several organizations have raised cash or food donations at events. For example, a recent comedy night hosted by the Barrhaven Legion and sponsored by the Rotary Club and the Lions Club was well attended and raised \$5137.50 for the BFC. A group of high school students have taken the initiative to form an organization called Food for the Capital and have supported us with food and funds for the past few years. The local Kiwanis Club of Manotick and four local high schools (Kiwanis Key Clubs) has coordinated with local grocery stores to solicit donated food over the Thanksgiving period and it turned out to be a huge success. We continue to be blown away by the goodwill in the community to help those in need. Thank you to everyone involved!

Santa Claus Parade

The Barrhaven Food Cupboard is once again participating in the annual Barrhaven Santa Claus Parade on November 19, 2023. There will be several volunteers accompanying our float on foot to collect donations. Given that the need for our services is at an all-time high, please encourage anyone attending to consider bringing cash or non-perishable food to donate. You can also scan the QR code on the float to donate online. Please consider that, while food is always appreciated, cash allows us to target volume food purchases for greatest efficiency. Given the popularity of the parade it should be a very significant fundraising and collection opportunity, in addition to getting everyone into the Christmas spirit.

Holiday Hamper Program

Unfortunately, for the 2023 holiday season, the Barrhaven Food Cupboard will not be running a hamper program. As explained previously, we are facing a challenging year dealing with increased demand and inflation, and despite our recent fundraising success, we don't feel that running a costly hamper program is fiscally prudent or responsible at this time. Instead, we will be focusing on ensuring that our existing regular 450 families a month have a little extra support around this holiday season. This is regrettable, given the extent and success of our hamper program in the past, but we must focus on our key mission of providing the essentials for families in need.

For Those in Need

Some individuals or families may not know how to access our services or may be hesitant to do so for a variety of reasons. If you know someone who could benefit from our services, please ask them to contact us through our website, by email to info@barrhavenfoodcupboard.com or by calling us at 613-825-4505.

Interested in Volunteering?

We are always on the lookout for new volunteers for a variety of tasks. We have a limited number of opportunities available but if you are interested, please contact our Director for Volunteers at volunteering@barrhavenfoodcupboard.ca. This may result in you being put on our standby list for future openings, but please do not hesitate to come forward.

Social Media Presence

Website: www.barrhavenfoodcupboard.ca

Facebook: @barrhavenfood

Twitter: @barrhavenfood

Instagram: @Barrhaven_food_cupboard

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/barrhavenfoodcupboard/>

Best wishes to everyone. *NEIGHBOURS HELPING NEIGHBOURS!*

Ken McCarthy

President

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