

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT **JOB FINDING CLUB**



A bridge to employment

As the economy stalls, the unemployed population in this city is rising. The time is right for the launch of the Neighbour to Neighbour Employment Services Program website www.bridgetoemployment.ca.

The impact of the recent closure of Stelco and subsequent loss of 1,500 jobs is already felt in Neighbour to Neighbour Centre's Foodbank and Employment Services Program. It's estimated that with every unemployed steelworker three other jobs are lost in the community.

With its motto, 'Search Smarter... Not Harder!' the easy-to-navigate website has postings for job seekers, those looking to upgrade their skills, opportunities for training in the trades and educational requirements for various positions, as well as information for newcomers to Canada

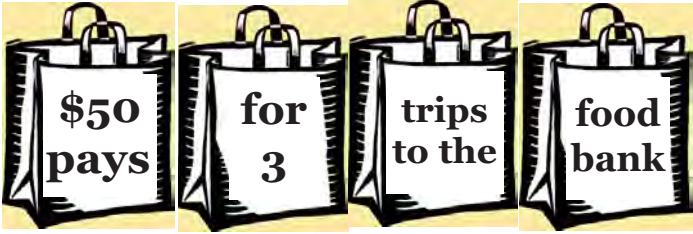
Due to the recession, Neighbour to Neighbour's Foodbank has experienced, since November 2008, an influx of 150 more households each month. That's 1,150 households in need of emergency groceries per month. The numbers continue to rise as the economic downturn takes its toll. Please donate. A little goes a long way as this adjacent illustration shows.

Read about one of the many Employment success stories on page 4.

who are looking for work. Workshops offered Monday to Friday focus on resumé and cover-letter writing, where to look for work, how to sell one's skills, an interactive computer workshop, what to look for when researching companies and Internet job searching, among others. All dates and information about these workshops are listed on the website's calendar.

Best of all, the services, use of resources, expert help from staff, workshops and parking are all free.

Job seekers coming to the Centre can take advantage of the computers, phones, fax machine and photocopier, or scan the job board, or research companies in our expansive library. Staff are available to offer guidance, support and counselling.



Our Mission:

Through diverse programs and partnerships we are the first stop for individuals and families who want help with difficulties they encounter on their path to self-sufficiency.

Our Vision

Leading poverty prevention in our neighbourhood.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Denise Arkell	Executive Director	Alan Beech
Glen Watts	President	Jim Rankin
Marlene Atlas	Vice-President	Joany Verschuuren
Kathy Dewling	Past President	Jim Drury
Robin O'Brien	Secretary	
Ed Brink	Treasurer	

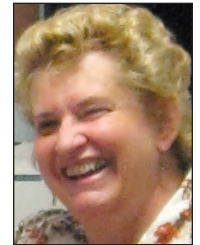
"HELP IS JUST A NEIGHBOUR AWAY"

COMMUNITY MINDS

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

A whole new world

Shirley Brawn, 63, is a Westview School volunteer turned Neighbour to Neighbour children's reading tutor, turned Foodbank helper, turned Resource Counsellor and now is back on the Foodbank floor doing her best for those in need.



Shirley Brawn

Shirley's only connection with Neighbour to Neighbour in the past was making regular trips to the Used Bookstore with her two sons and five grandchildren in search of affordable reading material, puzzles and games.

But when she answered an advertisement in the Mountain News, Shirley's awareness of Neighbour to Neighbour's programs and services expanded.

Shirley became a Children's Tutoring Program volunteer teaching young children struggling to read, through one-on-one meetings two to three times a week.

More training led her to become a Resource Counsellor, giving clients valuable information about other community programs and services.

She's in the Foodbank now, helping clients shop and pack their groceries. In the past month she has seen a large increase, signalling the impact of the recession.

All the while clients talk, about their worries, life, children, favourite foods, problems, job loss, everything under the sun.

"I didn't realize how many services were available at Neighbour to Neighbour until my volunteering world with them expanded," said Shirley.



April 19 to 25 is **Volunteer Appreciation Week** across Canada. Every day at Neighbour to Neighbour is possible because of the hard work and compassion put forth by our 360 volunteers. Cumulatively, they dedicate 29,200 hours in the Foodbank, Children's Tutoring Program, Used Book Store, Resource Counselling, Warehouse, Christmas Hampers and so many more ways. This community is a more caring place because of you.

Thank you to all of the organizers of Neighbour to Neighbour's **annual golf tournaments**. For 12 years the fundraising event held every August has been building on the success of the previous year. It's the same story over the past six years of putting together the Corporate Golf Tournament held in September. Over the years you have exceeded expectations. Your outstanding job is appreciated.



FAMILY SUPPORT TAX CLINIC



It's tax time and the paperwork can be difficult to manage. Head to Neighbour to Neighbour Centre any Friday until April 24 between 9:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. and a volunteer well-versed in filing tax returns will help with the process.

This service is provided free to all low-income residents. Bring along all relevant paperwork and let the experts take it from there. For more information call the Centre at 905 574-1334.

FAMILY SUPPORT FOODBANK LIST OF MOST WANTED

The need is greater than ever before

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| * Flour | * Tea/Coffee | * Canned meat |
| * Spaghetti Sauce | * Sugar | * Canned vegetables |
| * Pasta | * Cake mix | * Canned fish/salmon/tuna |
| * Rice | * Baby formula | * Canned fruit |
| * Chick Peas | * Diapers | * Canned tomatoes |
| * Cookies | * Powdered milk | * Canned milk |
| * Cereal | * Nutrition supplements: | * Diabetic non-perishable items |
| * Juice | Nutren/Resource | |
| * Peanut Butter | Boost/Ensure | |

"HELP IS JUST A NEIGHBOUR AWAY"

Searching for success in the work world *and finding it*

Louie and Elizabeth Diedericks arrived in Canada from Moscow, Russia, via their native South Africa in August 2007 with their three teenaged children.

A job was supposed to be waiting for Louie, who built a career as a diplomat, running embassies in his homeland, England and Russia for over 20 years.

After waiting and waiting, the job in Canada never materialized. "I was desperate for work," said Louie.

It was the same frustration for Louie's wife Elizabeth.

She came to this country with three degrees and an established career as a physio-therapist. She faced a Catch-22 that required she have work experience before applying for professional status, but couldn't work unless she were qualified by the Canadian organization.



Louie & Elizabeth

It took 18 months of tests and paperwork to get her Canadian credentials. The tedious and expensive process took longer than their immigration approvals, added Louie.

An ad for Neighbour to Neighbour's Employment Services Program in their church bulletin brought Louie and Elizabeth into the Athens Street Centre.

The two-week course in the program gave them new skills to lean on during job interviews, and helped them sharpen their resumes, as well as boost their confidence and stay motivated.

As someone with vast experience interacting with non-governmental organizations, Louie said Neighbour to Neighbour proved to be the most positive one.

"Sending out so many resumés can be disheartening," said Louie. Elizabeth's patience also waned at times waiting to start working again in a field that she has become expert in.

After sending out 200 resumés in three months Louie got an offer from an employer.

In September 2008 he started a job managing a Pet Smart store on the Mountain. It's a new field on which he's keen to build his skills and expand his future career.

Elizabeth is now working as a physiotherapist at a Brantford hospital. "After two years we can start to have a more normal life. "It wasn't easy, especially in this economy," said Louie.

Hailey's an eager reader!



Hailey Thurgar

Reading, spelling and writing have long been a struggle for eight-year-old R.A. Riddell student Hailey Thurgar.

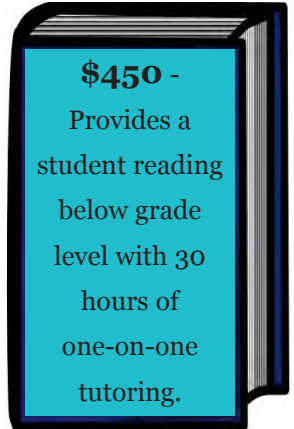
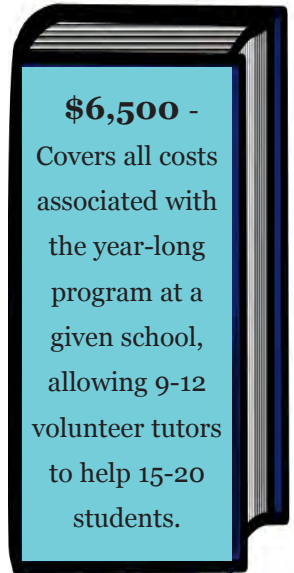
This year volunteer tutors Bob Blundson and Mary Hudon have joined the team of educators and a speech therapist who are all intent on helping Hailey build up her literacy skills and enunciation.

"I can always tell when it has been Hailey's reading day with her (Children's Reading Program) tutor," said her mom, Michelle. "She comes home and tells me how much fun she had reading." Hailey has discovered the thrill of reading because she can do more of it. "When we go to the library or book store she searches for the books she's read and proudly holds them up to show me and say 'I read this, Mom,'" said Michelle.

"This is a great program because for Hailey, reading is fun, not work, and that will keep her interested in books for the rest of her life, I'm sure," she added.

Neighbour to Neighbour Centre's Children's Reading Program has many stories like Hailey's to tell. There are a variety of ways to incite such infectious learning in children like Hailey. Consider sponsoring a student, or school (see the suggested amounts on the adjacent books) or becoming a volunteer tutor.

Sponsor!



Expanding avenues of support

Cyndy is a familiar face in Neighbour to Neighbour Centre's Foodbank and Resource Counselling area.

Since July 2008, the Interval House representative has been a presence at the Centre every Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30.

She's there to talk to women and men about domestic violence.

"Someone always knows someone who is in an abusive situation, whether it's a neighbour, friend, relative or themselves," said Cyndy.

It's her job to provide practical information such as safety planning, as well as community resources to deal with the emotional and physical impacts of abuse.

Cyndy has been working in the social services field for 11 years, in family and emergency services, front line counselling as well as outreach and

transitional support.

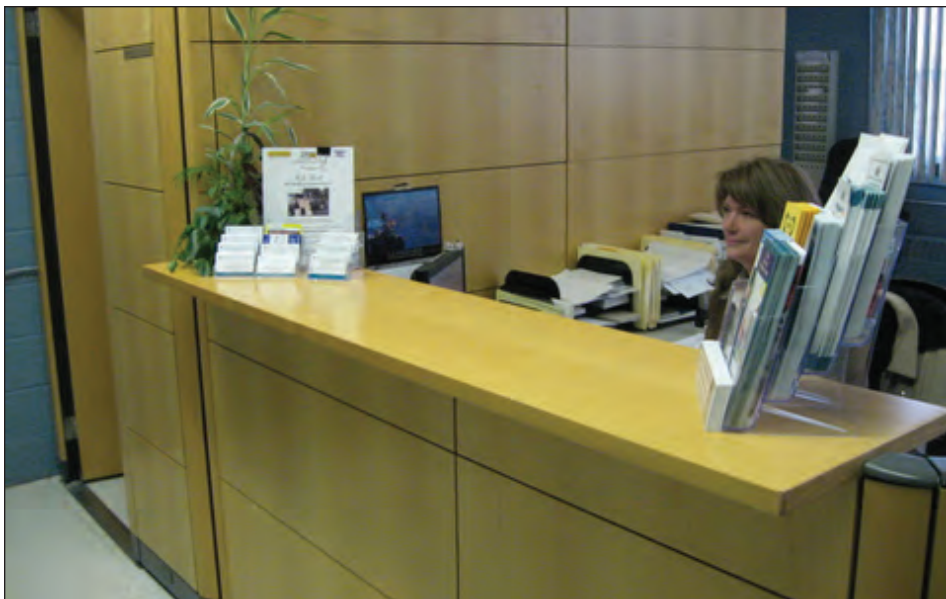
"We can't change what happened but we can help victims move beyond it," said Cyndy.

This partnership between Interval House and Neighbour to Neighbour allows clients to have easy access to vital information in a safe environment.

Cyndy walks about the Foodbank and lets clients know that she is available, should they need to talk with someone.

With an abundance of programs and services available in-house referrals are made that much easier.

Cyndy has also been integral in training the Centre's Resource Counsellors, in helping them recognize signs of abuse and how to handle disclosure of it, as well as how to access services and programs in the community.



Thank you to Gowlings Law Firm for donating a new reception desk and entryway for Neighbour to Neighbour Centre's administration office.

It creates a much more ergonomic and expansive working space for our Administrative Supervisor Wendy Hayes, who manages myriad feats of organizational tasks daily on behalf of the Centre.

More than a bed

A bed provides more than a place to sleep as a mom and Neighbour to Neighbour client writes.

"It broke my heart when my daughter told me that she wished she could invite her friends over but was too embarrassed because she didn't have a bed in her room."

The young girl and her brother shared a rundown mattress laid on the floor.

Enter the **Choices Donated Bed Program**, a partnership of Sleep Country Canada and In Kind Canada.

With a referral from the Centre, the program gives low-income clients free mattresses, box springs and bed frames. Last year, about 35 referrals were made each month through Neighbour to Neighbour.

"Thank you so much for this program. My children are thrilled!" added the very grateful mom.

Donate Bonus Bucks

When you fill up your vehicle with gas at Pioneer gas stations, you could also fulfill the lives of low-income people who live in our community.



To donate your points online once, or every time you visit, simply go to www.pioneer.ca, log on your Pioneer Bonus Bucks card and transfer all, part or a percentage of current and future dollars to Neighbour to Neighbour's account, which is 7078645013225630.