

SHARE A LITTLE JOY THIS CHRISTMAS

BETTER TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE

Written by: John Valk

Christmas is upon us. The Santa Claus parade, busy shopping malls, office parties - remind us that the Season of Giving is approaching once again. With it comes the traditional family gatherings. Students go home for Christmas, relatives join together, and friends drop by, all to celebrate and enjoy festive times.

Unfortunately, not everyone has loved ones or families to turn to at this time. For good reasons the, the "Season of Giving" becomes one of frustration and despair. Poverty, family discord and loneliness are particularly painful at this time. The effects are most often devastating.

There are organizations which attempt to alleviate this type of pain and suffering. They attempt to give concrete expression of the scriptural passage, "remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said it is better to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). The Fredericton Community Kitchens, the Emergency Shelter, Transition House and others, in a heightened way become sensitive to the real meaning of giving.

Sharing what we have with those who have not, brings out a true sense of our humanity. We discover that when we involve ourselves directly or indirectly these organizations. It is good to reflect on that at this time of the year, and share what we have the entire year.

The Fredericton Community Kitchen

The Fredericton Community Kitchen's Incorporated, located at the Victoria Health Centre on Brunswick street, exists to provide one hot meal a day, seven days a week, for people in need. The Kitchen, is run completely by volunteers. They consist of: a board of directors, on site volunteers, workers and servers, food preparation and cooking, and cleaning. According to Ms. Pauline Cunningham, Chairman of volunteers and Chief Hostess, the Kitchen serves approximately 70 to 80 people a day. Last years figures estimate that the Kitchen served over 27,000 people through the year.

Contrary to popular belief, most of the people are not alcoholics, these people have been displaced from the current workforce, some are handicapped, and others are in their teens - most of whom have no where else to go.



Pictures of a Food Shelter in Montreal
By: Chris Vautour



The Kitchen attempts to provide a hospitable atmosphere where guests can feel at ease with friends and acquaintances. They are set up cafeteria style and provide information and post notices to inform the guests about community services and functions. "Although government owned, we still have to pay a sizable rent," says Ms. Cunningham, "fortunately, we do get donations from within the community."

This Christmas's plans are well under way, "we are planning turkey dinners with the works and presents for both children and parents," says Ms. Cunningham. The UNB swim team recently helped their cause by collecting a large number of tin foods and presents.

"What can you do to help us for Christmas? Donations of cash allow us to purchase food or items needed to run the kitchen, or donations of food can be:

- Homemade soups and chowders
- Leftover food from weddings, parties, etc.
- Purchased canned goods.
- Fresh vegetables from your garden surplus.

We also appreciate receiving donations of cleaning supplies, kitchen utensils, and silverware. Donations of your time as a volunteer are also needed, especially on weekends and holidays."



Community Kitchen
Transition House
The Emergency Shelter
Fredericton Group Homes
Fredericton Food Bank
N.B. Child Welfare Association
Oromocto Food and Clothing Bank
Children Wish Foundation

*Just a few, of the many, Fredericton
Organizations that could use a little joy this
Christmas!!*

