

# WOLFVILLE AREA INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL

## *NEXT MEETING*

*Wednesday,*

*12 April 2006*

*7:00 pm*

*Manning Memorial Chapel*

## **REPORT OF SPECIAL MEETING**

**Wednesday 15 March 2006**

Present:

(clergy) Rev. Roger Prentice, Rev. Barry Morrison, Rev. Robin Brown-Hewitt

(WAICC members) Margaret Burton, Nancy Burbidge, Ann Watson, Liz Vermulen, Helen Whidden, Gary Dunfield, Morris Tugwell, Neil Cloghesy, Kurt Bowen, Allison Trites, Gene Trites

(Guests) Mayor Bob Stead, Vicky Brown, Myra Tuton, Mary Beth Miles of WAICC telephone committee, Chris Olsen of the Rotary Club, Bonnie Davison from the Lions, Helen from L'Arche Community, guest speaker, Diane Swinamer and others

Following welcome and introduction by President, Nancy Burbidge, the meeting was turned over to the guest speaker, Diane Swinamer.

Diane gave a brief history of the food bank in Halifax. It started out as the interfaith Beacon House from where food and clothing were distributed. This then went on to become the Metro Food Bank and ran for over 22 years. In 1991 Diane was hired as the Director. The Metro Food Bank has now become "Feed Nova Scotia"...

Feed Nova Scotia is a member of the National Food Bank Association, a national organization which enables sharing of available food resources across the country. Diane noted that previous to the formation of this group, Kraft Canada, for example had received up to 300 letters per week asking for donations. In Nova Scotia, food items are received from various NS retailers including the Co-op, Sobey's and Superstore. The products donated are shared in an equitable manner throughout the province. Food is currently housed in three warehouses on the Bedford Highway one of which is refrigerated and one handles only reclaimed or damaged goods. It is noteworthy that 63% of the food is fresh or perishable. Special credit is due to CN who provide free transportation. Since 1994, cooked food has also been recovered from nursing homes, hospitals, etc. and in the first year that this was done, \$10,000 worth per month of cooked food was distributed. This amount was decreased as the food services at hospitals, etc. increased their efficiency. About 155 agencies participate in Feed Nova Scotia

It had been noted in Diane's remarks that over 40,000 clients per month were served in the province and many clients visited more than six times per year indicating hunger. 80 to 85% of food banks are open once a week (usually closed the week after government cheques are issued). It was estimated that about 20% of users were using more than one food bank per month (double dipping) Date now suggests that there is less than 4% abuse of the system..

At present WAICC serves about 215 households. \$22,000's worth of vouchers are issued throughout the year with an additional \$10,000 at Christmas time. With \$4,000 made available for the Breakfast programme this makes a total of \$36,000 Concern was expressed about obtaining permanent (independent) and accessible space to set up the food bank in the Wolfville area. It was questioned as to whether a food bank as opposed to a voucher system might take away people's choice. Diane reported that a voucher/basket combination system is used in some areas

The following further points were made:

Feed Nova Scotia expects data base information

There is an annual membership fee of \$40.00

At the last year-end (30 June 2005) there was a deficit of more than \$200,000

Food bank boundaries must be respected for alternate fund raising

A local Board of Directors would be set up to establish guidelines for operation and would typically consist of four people from the Christian community, four from service groups and four clients

Respectfully submitted

Gene Trites  
(and Diana Shelley)

Following formal adjournment of the meeting, refreshments were served and informal discussion regarding food banks and more specifically a food bank for the Wolfville area took place.