



“We make a living by what we get but we make a LIFE by what we GIVE.” Winston Churchill

OUR VOLUNTEERS HARD AT WORK PREPARING DONATED CARROTS FOR DEHYDRATION

Winter 2015



Newsletter

Making a Difference Locally & Internationally

Teaming up with the V.O.N

Great news! We have teamed up with the Windsor-Essex VON to battle hunger experienced by students from across Essex County and surrounding areas. Through this partnership, we will be supporting the Ontario Student Nutrition Program by providing a year's worth of dehydrated apple and squash snacks to approximately 170 schools in the Windsor, Essex and Chatham-Kent areas. Eligible schools will include public and Catholic schools at both the elementary and high school levels.



The first shipment of dehydrated apple snacks leaving the building.

The Leamington Goodfellows

The Leamington Goodfellows completed another successful Christmas Basket program in December 2014 and we at the Gleaners were happy to help! We contributed 300 packages of our dehydrated apple snacks and it was the perfect opportunity to try out our new 1lb bags and sealer! The Christmas baskets contained a wide variety of food staples such as: shelf-stable canned & packaged goods, onions, potatoes, a Christmas turkey and our tasty, nutritious apple snacks.



Gleaners' Volunteers Linda and Riza shown packaging dehydrated apples snacks for Goodfellows Christmas baskets

Guinea, West Africa

In December, we were privileged to receive a visit from Lizette Lavoie, a Missionary working in Guinea, West Africa. She runs the "Crisis Orphanage" there and was very excited to see that our dehydrated soup mix and fruit snacks were ready for distribution. Through Gregory Drive Alliance Church in Chatham, we will be shipping over 300 bags of dehydrated soup mix, vegetables & fruit snacks to the orphanage.

North Korea

We are extremely proud to announce that through the Mennonite Central Committee, we will be distributing 2000 bags of our dehydrated soup mix to North Korea. Our volunteers have been extremely busy preparing this order which equates to 200,000 servings. Shipment should occur in early February. Watch for photos and follow-up in next newsletter! Together – we are making a difference!

First Day of Packaging

On January 12, 2015, our dehydrator was allowed to rest and the familiar chopping and dicing sounds from the production area temporarily ceased. We were finally ready to start mixing and packaging our dehydrated soup mix! A huge THANK YOU to the very patient and hard-working volunteers who came out to help us with this "history in the making" event. The day was not without its bumps, but after much trial & error our volunteer team packaged 290 bags. We are that much closer to reducing hunger locally, nationally and internationally. Together – we are making a difference.



Pouring the soup mix into each bag to be weighed.



Volunteers weighing & sealing off the packages



Please "Like" our Facebook page and encourage your friends to do the same. Watch for regular updates, good news stories, and information on our community partners. Please "share" our news.

Holiday Volunteer Appreciation Gathering

Held on Dec. 13, our first annual holiday gathering was a huge success! With over 50 volunteers in attendance, this event was the perfect opportunity for volunteers, staff and board members to kick off the holiday season, celebrate our achievements and to taste the wonderful treats so generously provided by board members, staff, and family. Congratulations to volunteers Andre Lalonde and Harold Rempel who were each presented with their own "SWO Gleaners 2014 Volunteer of the Year" award. Way to go gentlemen...you are making a difference!



Andre Lalonde accepts award from Pete Fiss



Harold Rempel accepts award from Vern Toews

Family Heirloom Finds a Home at the Gleaners



"The Gleaners" – an original oil painting by Jean-Francois Millet (France) 1814-1875 was completed in 1857 and now hangs in the Musee d'Orsay in Paris. This needlepoint of "The Gleaners" was stitched by Erna Enns (1918-2004). Her daughters Rita Unrau and Ruth Woodsit presented this to the SWO Gleaners in memory of their mother.

Holiday Brass – A Choral Christmas Celebration

On Saturday, December 6, 2014, the Leamington Mennonite United Church was filled with the majestic sound of holiday melodies, thanks to a visit from the WSO Brass Quintet, the Windsor Classic Choral and the Belle River Public School Choir. A portion of the event's ticket sales were to benefit the Southwestern Ontario Gleaners. Our sincere thanks to the Windsor Symphony for thinking of us!



Just a Thought...

Not enough time to volunteer, but you'd like to help? Why not consider donating the proceeds of your next garage sale to the Gleaners?

Meet the SWO Gleaner's Board of Directors



*Vern Toews, Board Chair,
Fund Development Chair*



Art Krueger, Director



*Neil Quiring, Vice Chair,
Equipment Chair*



Tina Quiring, Treasurer



Peter Fiss, Production Chair



Jim Founk, Past Chair



*Carol Sawatzky,
Finance Chair*



Jake Martens, Director

Meet the Staff



*Lisa Kimball-Wigfield (Left), Production Manager
Amy Pinsonneault, Office Administrator*

Making a Donation...

The Southwestern Ontario Gleaners is 100% donor driven. Your donation dollars help us to relieve hunger both locally and abroad by converting surplus produce into a nutritious soup mix. Funds donated are used to operate our facility. Donations can be made online through www.canadahelps.org or sent in the mail to: Southwestern Ontario Gleaners, 40 Industrial Rd. Leamington, ON. N8H 4W4. Tax receipts issued for all donations.

Save the Date!

Sat. April 11, 2015

**Annual
Spring Fundraiser at**

**Colasanti's
Tropical Gardens**

Doors Open – 6pm
Buffet Dinner served
6:30-7:30 pm

**Entertainment by
Bob Gabriele**

Silent Auction/Raffles

Adult Tickets - \$30
Children 4-12 - \$15
Under 3 – Free

Sat. April 18, 2015

**SWO Gleaners'
Annual
General Meeting
Time – TBA**

Come learn more about our
organization – where we've
been and where we're
headed.

*All members of SWO
Gleaners are able to vote
so become a member
today!*

For Information, contact
519-326-7687,
swogleaners@gmail.com or
stop in and see us at
40 Industrial Rd.
Leamington

A New Forklift...

The heavy lifting at the SWO Gleaners just got a lot easier thanks to financial support from Farm Credit Canada. A \$15,000 grant from FCC's AgriSpirit fund has been used to purchase an electric fork lift for handling bulk produce. The new fork lift comes at a perfect time. We're running full production now and we're processing at least 4,000 lbs of raw vegetables daily. That's a lot of product to move. This unit is electric, making it a cleaner, greener environment inside our plant. We are very thankful for the great support shown by Farm Credit Canada Corporation.



 Farm Credit Canada

Community Groups Volunteering Their Time...



Students from U.M.E.I. joined us for a day of volunteering in November (above)



Volunteers from Gregory Drive Alliance Church, Chatham (above)



Volunteers from Knox Presbyterian Church

Volunteer Opportunities

Production: Monday through Friday, we need 30 volunteers/day (age 14 or older) to work on our production line from 8:30 am to 12 Noon. All necessary equipment such as aprons, knives, gloves & hair nets are provided.

Hosts & Hostesses: We feel it is very important that our volunteers enjoy their time with us. We want them to return! Hosts/Hostesses would prepare coffee, tea and sweet treats for volunteer break. Time commitment: 8:30 to 10:30 am. Choose a day (Mon thru Fri) that works for you.

Bakers: We supply baked goods for up to 30 volunteers on a daily basis so we need your help! Do you like to bake cookies, muffins, squares or pies? Come spend an afternoon baking in our kitchen. Let us know what ingredients you need and we'll make sure we're fully stocked.

Janitorial: We could use help with washing the floors/windows & bathrooms once or twice per week. If you or someone you know can help in this regard, we'd love to hear from you!

Bin Dumpers: Each afternoon, after a busy morning of slicing & dicing, we need one or two individuals who can dump 30-40 lb lugs of diced product into dehydrator. This job involves repetitive lifting – no need to visit the gym when you work one of these shifts.

A Word from Chair of the Board Vern Toews...

The New Year brings with it many new dreams, opportunities and challenges for our organization.

After several years of planning, fundraising and installation of equipment, we are now in full production, packaging and shipping of dehydrated apple snacks and dehydrated vegetable soup mix.

We are very grateful for the tremendous community support we have received and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank our members, committees, generous donors and wonderful volunteers. We are also very fortunate to have two very capable staff members, Lisa Kimball-Wigfield, Production Manager and Amy Pinsonneault, Front Office Administrator.

I trust that in 2015, we will continue to further our mandate of converting non-marketable product into edible products to feed hungry people locally and around the world.

Contact:

Southwestern Ontario Gleaners
40 Industrial Rd.
Leamington, Ontario N8H 4W4

Hours:

Monday to Friday
8:00 am – 4:30 pm

Call:

519-326-SOUP (7687)

E-mail:

swogleaners@gmail.com

Website:

www.swogleaners.org