

York Region

**Food
Network**



SPRING 2007

NEWSLETTER

Annual General Meeting

York Region Food Network welcomes members of the community to join the Board of Directors for our Annual General Meeting. The AGM will be held on Thursday June 14, 2007 at 7:30pm in the main boardroom of the Newmarket Health Centre, located at 194 Eagle Street, Newmarket.

The AGM is a time to celebrate the accomplishments of the past fiscal year and for friends of YRFN to meet both the Board and Staff. Following a review of the strategic plan and notes from the annual Food Security Event, refreshments will be served. RSVP your attendance to Kim at 905-967-0428 or kima@yrfn.ca

We look forward to seeing you there.

Food For Thought

Community gardens originally started during the First and Second World Wars. At that time, growing food in "victory gardens" was a patriotic duty. Community gardens have since become beautiful spaces where neighbours care for vegetables and flowers. People who live in apartments or who don't have space at their own homes, can use these gardens to grow their own fresh food. In addition, community groups use the plots for a variety of reasons including social interaction, food supplement and learning new skills.

Community gardens have been shown to revitalize areas of neglect into places for community programs and celebration. This transformation takes place when community gardens engage sustained community involvement by youth, families, seniors, as well as intergenerational, ethnic, and multicultural groups.

Every community garden is different. They can be large or small and come in many shapes and sizes. York Region Food Network is fortunate to operate three community gardens located in Aurora, Markham and Newmarket on both private and public land. In 2006, 164 families and 7 community groups maintained plots. The YRFN community gardens fill up quickly, so we are always looking for more community garden sites. Should you know of potential community garden space please call York Region Food Network.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Brims".

Elizabeth Brims
Executive Director

Our vision is to ensure that all residents of York Region are food secure. Food security is the assurance that all people at all times are able to acquire nutritional food in a way that upholds basic human dignity.

Our mission is to increase access to affordable, nutritious food for York Region residents. York Region Food Network will:

- Raise awareness and promote food security issues and policy change in our communities.
- Support community-based food security programs and services.

Better Living Banquet

Mark May 27th in your calendar as the date of the Better Living Banquet. YRFN is delighted to be the charitable beneficiary of this outstanding event. More information inside the newsletter. Call 905-967-0428 to book your table!

Supported by:



Editor: Kirsten Eastwood

...the voice of hunger in York Region

A Convenient Truth



It's true – community gardens help in the fight against climate change. Over the past year the film “An Inconvenient Truth” has been getting significant attention, as has the star of the documentary, Al Gore, former Vice President of the United States. The message from this Oscar-winning film is quite simple – it's time to do something about climate change before it

is too late. The convenient truth is that community gardeners are doing their part to address this worldwide issue.

Research indicates that the average distance for food to travel to get to your dinner plate is 2000 kilometers. By contrast, most community gardeners only go a couple of kilometers for their fresh produce, thus reducing greatly the contribution of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Factor in the benefits of reduced packaging, no large shipping crates and boxes, and no plastic bags carried out to the car. It's a very short trip from the community garden to the dinner table, and the environment appreciates that.

Yet community gardens do more for the environment than simply reduce emissions through decreased travel. At the beginning of each garden season, community gardeners spread compost - donated by Miller Compost - throughout their vegetable plots. In addition, community gardeners participate in composting their spent plants throughout the entire gardening season. When those plants are composted, they lock up carbon from the atmosphere for decades. If those same plants were sent to landfills, the decomposition process would actually release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.



This coming season we will have over 200 plots full of vegetables, representing thousands of pounds of food that won't travel thousands of kilometers or further contribute to our climate change challenges. Instead we will enjoy our fresh vegetables knowing we have done something for ourselves, our children and our planet, and it tastes good too.

I look forward to seeing you again,

Catherine Cook

YRFN Pick-a-Plot Fundraiser

York Region Food Network is launching a major fundraising initiative to raise \$20,000 for community gardens and farm gleaning programs in York Region. We are inviting churches, community groups, schools and companies to support these important local community programs by becoming “Pick-a-Plot” Sponsors!

Community gardens and farm gleaning build healthy and green communities by providing residents with affordable, nutritious fresh food produce. Programs reduce poverty and hunger by providing a “hand-up” to low income residents, including seniors, children, and new Canadians. Plus dedicated plots provide essential produce to local food banks.



Sponsor a plot! Individuals, churches, schools, groups, and corporations can sponsor one or more plots of land that produce fresh produce for families in need. A plaque recognizing levels of sponsors (Carrot, Tomato, & Broccoli sponsors) will be erected at each community garden, plus sponsor listings will be included in media releases, newsletters, and on the YRFN website.

The costs to administer this program include plants, seeds, gardening tools, compost, stakes, tilling, watering, fencing of community garden plots and school bus transport to farms for hand picking (or gleaning) of fresh produce. All land for the programs is currently donated.

This fundraiser will run until the official opening of the gardens on May 15, 2007.

For more information please call (905) 967-0428, or visit our website at www.yrfn.ca

Registration nights for the community gardens are as follows:

Aurora Community Garden

Wednesday May 16th, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
(returning gardeners only)
7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (first time gardeners)

Newmarket Community Garden

Thursday May 17th, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
(returning gardeners only)
7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. (first time gardeners)

Markham Community Garden

Friday May 18th, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
(returning gardeners only)
7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
(first time gardeners)

Fashion Plates

Christine Woodley, YRFN Volunteer Reporter



Fashion Plates 2007 at DiNardo's

Photo by David Falconer

Pam Martin, owner and operator of Creative Colours Fashions in Aurora, has always believed that personal service was the key to her success. As large retailers pop up around her, she has stood her ground, continuing to provide service and a personal knowledge of her customers. "What large retailer would have buyers who are thinking of a particular customer when they choose something, and then buy it in that customer's size and call her to tell her it's in?" she asks rhetorically.

And, it's this attention to personal attention that led Pam to sponsor the Fashion Plates Spring Charity Fashion Show for the second year. Food Network Executive Director Elizabeth Brims is a loyal Creative Colours customer and suggested that the two might make a good fit. "I've supported various charities over the years, and this seemed like a great event to sponsor," Pam explains.

The busy mother and grandmother has owned the business for 11 years, after working for the former owner. She has seen the Fashion Plates event grow from a low-key evening with 125 attendees to the major show it is today. This year, over 200 guests attended and the show featured choreography, music and a runway. Also featured will be the York Firefighters who appear in the annual calendar sold locally. "The firefighters are always a big hit," Pam says. And, at \$50 a ticket, including dinner, Pam notes it's a great deal. "It's hard to go out to a nice dinner for that much, and you get so much more."

This year's show was held on April 18 at DiNardo's The Mansion in Aurora. Other sponsors include Chimes Hair Group, L'Oréal

Professional, menswear by Crossings of Upper Canada Mall, the Junior League of Toronto, Frontier Sound and Light and DiNardo's The Mansion.

A wonderful time was had by all! York Region Food Network extends its thanks to Pam Martin, the staff of Creative Colours, and all sponsors of this event for their outstanding support of YRFN.

YRFN 5th Annual Charity Golf Classic Wednesday August 29, 2007



Held at the beautiful Silver Lakes Golf & Country Club, this year's tournament promises to be a wonderful day of golf, prizes, fun, and fundraising.

The day includes:

- BBQ lunch * Arrival gift bag
- Warm up on the Aqua Driving Range
- Shot Gun Start * 18 holes of golf * Power cart
- Longest Drive Competition
- Beat the Bank Closest to the Hole
- Hole-in-one for a 2007 Car and Golf Holiday
- Putting Competition * Raffle
- 3 Course Dinner at Silver Lakes Clubhouse
- Prizes for everyone!
- Golfers \$175
- Hole Sponsorships \$200

Prize donations welcome!

Call to register, or download a registration form from our website:
www.yrfn.ca



BETTER LIVING BANQUET

Poor or declining health is a stress on the individual, the family and the community. We all desire good health, but achieving good health requires changes that may disrupt our lifestyle. On Sunday May 27, the four-course, gourmet Better Living Banquet will be held to address healthy diet and lifestyle. The event is organized by the Newmarket Seventh-Day Adventist Church and will start at 5:30pm at the Roman Palace located at 1096 Ringwell Drive in Newmarket. The Newmarket Seventh-Day Adventist Church is actively working to be an instrument of social support for good health. All proceeds from banquet ticket sales and the anticipated silent auction will go to the York Region Food Network.

Physical health is critical to emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing. A series of eight steps to a healthier lifestyle (NEWSTART) will be highlighted at the banquet. These steps include good: **N**utrition, **E**xercise, **W**ater, **S**unshine, **T**emperance, **A**ir, **R**est and **T**rust. Through implementing these steps, people may prevent, or greatly reduce, their risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and other degenerative and debilitating diseases.

The banquet will feature keynote speaker Dorothy Nelson, a well-known health specialist from Loma Linda, California. Come and join us for an evening of unforgettable experience and "add years to your health".

For tickets please call (989) 264-8127.

You are invited to an evening of community awareness and action about Food Security in York Region

Guest Speaker: Val Tarasuk, PhD

Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences,
Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto

What is “food security”?

Who is hungry in our community and why?

What can we do about food insecurity in York Region?

Tuesday May 29, 2007

Light dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Guest Speaker at 7:00 p.m.

Magna Room, Aurora Public Library

15145 Yonge Street, 1 block south of Wellington Street

Please RSVP by May 18, 2007

905-967-0428 or kima@yrfn.ca

Sponsored by York Region Food Network

Join the YRFN's Fundraising Campaign

I support the YRFN's work to improve access to affordable, nutritious food for all people of York Region.

I have enclosed my donation of _____\$15 _____\$25 _____\$35 _____ other.

Cheques should be made payable to York Region Food Network

YRFN will issue a charitable tax receipt for all donations over \$10.

Name: _____

Address: _____

To donate by credit card, visit our website at www.yrfn.ca, and click on the link to CanadaHelps.org; a secure website where you can make a tax deductible credit card donation to YRFN.

Your privacy is important to us, and we are committed to protecting and safeguarding your personal information. We do not rent, sell or trademark our mailing list, but rather use it to keep you informed of York Region Food Network's activities, services, and programs. Please contact our office to update your information or to be removed from the mailing list, or email 4moreinfo@yrfn.ca with 'Unsubscribe' in the subject line.



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