



Spring 2013

The LIGHTHOUSE

Helping People | Changing Lives

1008 Bathurst Street • Toronto • ON M5R 3G7

416-535-6262

The Christmas Banquet by Laura Koornneef (Student Intern)



Food Bank Volunteers

Here we are, it's the middle of December. It is a time to make lists and check them twice., and a time to enjoy a meal and fellowship together. I had the privilege of assisting in this year's Christmas festivities. Janet and I had spent a full day industriously packing gift bags, taking care to customize them for the different families, labeling each one, and stashing them away in every available space possible. (Rob's office has disappeared behind the boxes, and there's only a narrow little trail in to Janet's chair!) The place has been decorated by many hands. We are thinking over each and every detail, and I have never seen so many lists checked twice!

Suddenly, it's December 18th - Banquet Day. The day we have been gearing up to for weeks! Janet has been preparing me for "a bit of a zoo-

ey day." We are having frozen turkeys delivered for the families by 10 a.m., as well as distributing gift bags and food bank items for the families. We still have to start lunch, restock the food bank, serve lunch, while simultaneously running the food bank (round two), and giving out gifts. Within that time we should also find a chance to eat and socialize. As we pulled out all the ingredients, pots and pans. The decision was made, we'll put the potatoes on at 11:10 for our 12:30 start. The board members and volunteers trickled in and we find ourselves laughing merrily as we don some festive Santa hats and begin cooking. It is going to be a great event!

We started on the potatoes and ZZZZZAP all of our twice-checked lists flew out the window. The stove died. "QUICK CALL ROB!" The prognosis is not good, there's no easy solution, it's down for the count. There are nine of us in the vicinity of our little kitchen all wondering what we should do. Well, Praise the Lord, we ordered the chicken from a place down the street. Worst case scenario, we all eat chicken with copious amounts of

cranberry sauce and Christmas cookies. "Okay Lord, it's in your hands now!"

"Can we call up Santaguida?" (It's a catering company a block and a half away.) Janet ran there and back: "They are in, they'll take our potatoes." In the mean time some divinely inspired creativity kicked in, and the ladies have decided that we will do the corn in the rice-cookers and the stuffing in the microwave. Time keeps ticking; our early birds arrive, suddenly its 12:15 and the chicken has arrived; 12:25 and we get the call from Santaguida: our potatoes have finally finished.

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By the grace of God we are ready on time and are able to share a lovely (although very busy) afternoon of fellowship and food. We talked and shared stories of family and traditions. There was abundant laughter! Some of the clients dressed up for the meal, and all of them expressed gratitude and their enjoyment. Much thanks to the whole community for your support over the Christmas season, and to our volunteers and board members who made the banquet run so smoothly despite the dead stove!

**New Faces
@ The Lighthouse**

Madeley Perez



“Hi my name is Madeley Perez and I’ve been working at the Lighthouse for about 2 months as the Hispanic

administration assistant. With experience in administration, working at The Lighthouse is a new opportunity for me. It is about helping people and getting involved with the community. I’m excited about working with the programs that help the many women in the Spanish community. These programs give opportunities to single mothers and women in general to start a career. To have the opportunity to learn more about my community at the Lighthouse is my dream.”

Tiffany Kwok



“Though I am only at The Lighthouse on Fridays as “Janet”, it is absolutely wonderful

working with kind and passionate individuals who truly reflect God’s love. Coming to The Lighthouse with experience in community recreation and fundraising, I look forward to meeting new challenges and working on the upcoming issues of the newsletter.”

How to Host 4 Chinese Christmas Celebrations



Hosting four Christmas parties may seem like an impossible task to some, but for Rita, hosting four Christmas parties in three different locations is just another Christmas season here at The Lighthouse. For each and every Christmas party, it is a time of gathering, celebration and sharing of the Christmas message. For many of our clients at the Markham and Scarborough satellite locations, this was their first encounter with Christmas carols, the Christmas story and Christmas turkey. Between the Markham women’s outreach program, the Scarborough ESL class and the Scarborough Dancercise class, we were able to serve over 100 people. Through cooperation and partnership with both volunteers and the local church pastors, The Lighthouse was able to share a traditional Canadian Christmas celebration with these people, and each Christmas party afforded wonderful opportunities to outreach and share the Christmas message with our new clients and those who do not normally attend church.



With the help of volunteers from the Toronto Short Term Mission Centre, the gathering right here at the Lighthouse was a great success with over 70 people in attendance. It was a wonderful opportunity to gather friends of The Lighthouse,

both old and new, in a time of sharing and fostering community. From friends who have partnered with us since the very beginning with refugee sponsorship, to new clients whom we had just met, stories and personal testimonies were shared amongst one another with carolling and games.

All in all, this year’s Chinese Christmas parties were incredible. We would like to extend a big thank you to our friends and partners at Zion Alliance Church, Calvary Logos Baptist Church, and the volunteers from Toronto Short Term Mission. It is because of their faithful support and commitment to our work and mission that all of this is possible.

PAR is Advantageous

PAR

The Lighthouse continues to see challenges in reaching its financial goals. You can help us with monthly giving through PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) which is a “direct debit” program that allows you to give through an automatic monthly withdrawal from your bank account. PAR is giving, made easy. You just provide The Lighthouse with your bank info and your monthly giving amount, and the rest is automatic. No more cheques. No more fees. Of course, you may cancel or change either the amount of your monthly gift or other information at any time.

PAR is advantageous:

- It provides an opportunity to give faithfully
- It provides regular, dependable flow of contributions
- It reduces bank fees for The Lighthouse.

For more information concerning the PAR program, please contact The Lighthouse at 416-535-6262 or rob@lighthousecentre.ca.

What's for Lunch?

by Laura Koornneef (Student Intern)

When Rob and Janet interviewed me as a candidate for student placement, they immediately asked if I would like to initiate a cooking class for The Lighthouse's food bank clients. I was so thrilled with the opportunity; it was one of the deciding factors to come here. I took two years of culinary school straight out of high school, but found that God was calling me to work with people, rather than vegetables. Since then, I have been completing a bachelor's degree in human service through Tyndale University. I have been so blessed with the opportunity to use my culinary skills in different missions, and creating this cooking class has been one of my favourite uses thus far.

The classes have been far from what I expected. We tried a sign-up sheet, it didn't really work. Instead, it has become more of a drop in program. I thought I would have a bunch of students, who didn't know how to cook, but instead my one faithful student knows how to cook wonderfully, and I've had a former line-chef join us one week.



Through all of this I have realized that what really matters is the sense of camaraderie that is established, even in just one session. Food is so universal, and yet so personal; everyone can participate and bring something to the class. One week, I decided we would make curried chickpeas and homemade chapatti. The smell wafted through the whole building, and several clients came back to the kitchen to see what is going on. The clients ended up refreshing my rusty skills in the art of chapatti, and also taught me about the culture of Indian food and of other neighbouring countries. Also, as we sliced and diced, cooked and stirred, we ended up chatting about all sorts of different things. Life lessons, family memories, favourite meals I even had the opportunity to talk about faith one week.

Each week I try to start our cooking class by immediately sautéing some onions and garlic. We make the place smell fantastic to inviting others to join us. I never know who will show up or what we will talk about, but I know it will be a great time. Sometimes I get to teach a little (yes, you can eat broccoli stems, they have a lot of vitamins!); other times I am more of a student. We enjoy the meal together at the end, usually feeding all of the staff and available volunteers as well, and we send home the leftovers with the participants. One of the most frequent comments I hear is about how nice it is to sit around a table to eat with other people; and in my mind, that's mission accomplished!

Report on the Annual Dinner and Silent Auction:

Dinner donations	- \$15,075
Dinner Sales	- \$6,870
Total	- \$21,945

More beautiful
Thanks
Gracias
Gracie
Thank you
Obrigado

A warm thank you to everyone who attended The Lighthouse's Annual Dinner. We thank you for your tremendous continuing generosity and support. Please plan to join us again next year.

Volunteer CORNER

Irene Chan



What kind of volunteer work have you been involved in over the last three years at The Lighthouse?

I started volunteering with the ESL program in Scarborough. After about 6-9 months, Rita told me about the need in Markham for volunteers in the Dancercise program. Since the Markham location was close to my home, I said yes. At the Markham location, I help with the women's praise dance program which takes place once every 2 weeks, where we dance following an exercise DVD. Following the exercise, the local church minister will show a video about the gospel leading to a discussion.

What is your favourite part about volunteering?

My favourite part of volunteering is going to the community and understanding the needs there. I love building new friendships and sharing my faith with others, especially during the holidays, such as Christmas and Easter.

Volunteering is also a big part of my life since moving back to Canada 3 years ago with my whole family. With major relocation, there are concerns with my family, such as my husband's health. By volunteering, I am not constantly dwelling on my own problems. It provides for me psychological and self healing. I am a happier person because I find fulfillment in helping and engaging others by volunteering in the community.



From the Desk of Rob

Coming through the doors of The Lighthouse, there are many seeking assistance. As staff we work with them and sometimes get to hear their stories. Each one has a unique story to tell. Recently one of client's stories came to an end. He was murdered in his apartment. We knew him as a quiet, pleasant man who

needed food assistance and who had just turned 65. We did not know the story which the newspaper told that he after an accident had lost his job, became addicted to painkillers and then other drugs and was estranged from most of his family. His murder made us feel sad and we wondered whether we could have done more.

The Lighthouse's tag line states "Helping People, Changing Lives." When we hear one of our clients is murdered, or deported, or lost their job, or lost their home, we wonder "Is there something we could have done differently or more effectively?" Often the response is "No" but we still wonder. At The Lighthouse, we work hard at helping people, changing lives. We would like to do more but financially we find ourselves straining to meet all the demands. We rely on your support and hope that together we can provide the resources necessary to do more to meet the needs of the people we encounter.

With this newsletter, an advertisement insert will be included. The Board is looking for new avenues to support the work at The Lighthouse. These advertisements pay for the cost of printing the newsletter. Instead of using an insert for advertising, we have discussed including the advertisement as part of the newsletter. If you have a perspective on this we would love to hear from you by sending an email to rob@lighthousecentre.ca.

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- Alex Chan
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- Jessica Miedema
- Jane Moore
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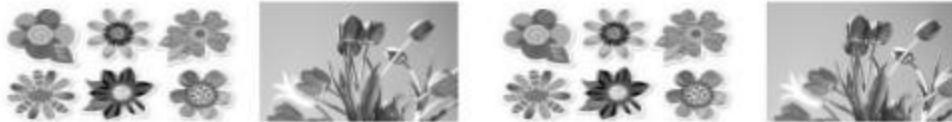
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Tiffany Kwok
Administration

Madeley Perez
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Helping People Changing Lives

Thank you for being partners with us in this ministry.



Yes, I would like to help with a donation of \$ _____

Cheque enclosed

VISA MASTERCARD # _____ Expiry Date. _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Postal Code _____

Other Ways to Help - Contact us for details

- PAR PreAuthorized Remittance
- Monthly Visa or MasterCard donation - makes it easy for you and for us
- Canada Helps on line at www.canadahelps.org
- Giving through Christian Stewardship Service
- United Way Payroll Deduction-just provide our CRA # and address
- Matched Corporate Giving - many companies match employee donations

Please mail your contribution to:

The Lighthouse
1008 Bathurst Street
Toronto, ON M5R 3G7

Receipts will be issued in the New Year.
Canada Revenue Agency #13036 3740 RR001