

An invitation to a Between the Bridges Community Grants Conversation Café

by Matt Spurway

DARTMOUTH NORTH residents know from experience that when people work together, amazing things happen. Between the Bridges is supporting community members to do just that with its second year of community grants, which are now open and ready for your ideas.

You are invited to join with others to share a meal and engage in creative conversation about what's possible... and what can be next!

A Community Grants Conversation Café will take place at the Dartmouth North Community Food Centre, 6 Primrose St. on October 9. Dinner begins at 5:30 p.m. and the community conversation is from 6 until 8 p.m.

Grants of up to \$2,500 are available to small teams of community members who have an idea that will improve community pride, neighbourhood safety, and/or social inclusion. Between

the Bridges staff will support teams throughout the process, as needed.

A wonderful group of community members have volunteered to form the Community Grants Insight Team, which reviews applications for endorsement on a monthly basis, from now until March. They are mostly residents from around Dartmouth North, as well as representatives from the local public, non-profit, and private sectors. They also may

offer advice or additional support to strengthen proposals and help the ideas to be the best they can be.

For more information about the Between the Bridges Community Grants or the Community Grants Conversation Café, please contact Matt Spurway, community coordinator, Between the Bridges at 902-488-7446 or matt@between-thebridges.ca.

Feeding others of Dartmouth The story behind Margaret's House

by Kevin Little

I HAVE BEEN visiting Margaret's House or Feeding Others of Dartmouth (F.O.O.D) for 10 years now. In that decade, I have observed dedicated volunteers, and a community of guests, staff and volunteers who excel at hospitality and serving tasty and nutritious meals every day.

Almost everyone has heard of this special house; the only challenge may be which name you choose. When I say F.O.O.D. some scratch their heads, but then tell me, "But I love Margaret's House!" And for others, when I tell them about the wonderful Margaret's House people will look confused and then respond, "Have you been to Feeding Others of Dartmouth? It's great!" But whichever name you choose this is indeed a very special place, filled with special people, guests, volunteers, and staff.

In case you don't know Margaret's House, here is a brief overview of one of Dartmouth's most compelling stories of care and community. It began in the late 1960s as a nutrition/cooking class for low-

income women who were on social assistance. The number of people coming in for meals, as well as those requiring delivery, continued to increase throughout the 1970s. In the 1980s a group of Dartmouth churches, the Dartmouth Christian Relief and Development Coalition, co-sponsored the work of the hot-lunch program with Dartmouth Social Services to form what is now known as Feeding Others of Dartmouth.

In the summer of 1989, with the assistance of then Mayor John Savage, the current property at 43 Wentworth Street was loaned to F.O.O.D. as the location for the continuation of the program. From its initial schedule of serving three days a week in 1990, the program expanded to five days per week. Six years later, the service was further expanded to seven days as a way of decreasing the stress of emergency food service to single adults on weekends. An additional expansion occurred in 2000, when suppers on a twice-weekly basis were offered. The program now serves



Photo: contributed

a meal seven days a week, from 12 noon to 12:30 pm, with suppers on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, from 4:30 to 5:00 pm. Approximately 3,000 meals are served each month.

More recently a gazebo was built on the property and it was landscaped with flowers and shrubs. Both former Mayor John Savage and his wife, Margaret, were huge supporters of F.O.O.D. Thus, the house is now also known as Margaret's House.

Margaret's House sometimes serves as many as 100 people per meal, making things a little crowded, depending on the day. I used to go to Margaret's House every day but found I was often getting in the way of guests accessing their meals and connecting with each other and Karen Goudie, who is the executive director. Karen is a maternal figure, and

guests are drawn to her warmth, kindness, resourcefulness, and good humour. She credits the success of Feeding Others of Dartmouth with the astounding volunteer spirit and support that goes into every meal. While there is no present need for additional volunteers (there is a waiting list) they gratefully accept any donations from the community whether financial or material. To clarify what exactly is needed interested persons can contact Karen at 902-464-2919 or info@margarets-house.ca.

Kevin Little is the part-time community outreach facilitator for The Public Good Society of Dartmouth. As a navigator who travels to places and people in need, Kevin responds quickly to questions about available resources. He can be contacted at 902-476-0785 or thepublicgoodsociety@gmail.com.

A MESSAGE FROM

Darren Fisher, MP
DARTMOUTH-COLE HARBOUR



Photo: contributed

MP Darren Fisher getting tips from a senior at the Dartmouth Seniors Service Centre.

An update on our seniors

ENSURING THAT Canada's seniors have what they need to enjoy a secure and dignified retirement matters to me and it matters to our government. We are working to make meaningful improvements for today's seniors and for the seniors of tomorrow.

As soon as we took office, we made sure to restore the age of eligibility for Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) to 65. This change is putting thousands of dollars back into the pockets of Canadians as they become seniors. We've also increased the Guaranteed Income Supplement top-up which is helping 900,000 vulnerable single seniors gain greater financial security.

Many of you have asked us to enhance the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). These enhancements require negotiations with the provinces and territories and benefit the seniors of tomorrow. I am pleased to say that for the first time in more than 20 years, Canada has reached an agreement to meaningfully improve the CPP. Once fully implemented, these enhancements will put up to 50 per cent more into the pockets of retirees.

We know that many seniors want to stay in their homes as long as possible, some just need the support to do so. That's why on top of the Canada Health Transfer our government is investing \$157 million dollars to support better home care across the province of Nova Scotia. And as you may know, we've taken the first step toward a National Pharmacare program in Canada. I have strongly advocated for this both publicly and within my caucus. The Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare is working hard to find a path forward for National Pharmacare in Canada.

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