

Food Bank fills shelves on Facebook

By Marni Walsh

Orangeville and Area Food Bank (OAFB) has launched a twist on the recent social media success of the Ice Bucket Challenge, says Director Heather Hayes.

The 'One-Bag Challenge' nominates residents to buy one bag of groceries to donate to the Orangeville Food Bank and post a picture to social media, such as Facebook, and nominate five friends to also make a donation to the Food Bank.

Nominees have 48 hours to complete the One-Bag Challenge.

It's a fun idea that connects friends for a worthy cause and can be applied to local food banks everywhere.

During the month of August in Orangeville, OAFB served 476 people up from 295 clients in 2014.

'People think that they know what a 'typical' food bank client is, but the reality is less than 13% come every month,' says Ms. Hayes. 'People who use the food bank are your neighbours, your co-workers, your classmates, your friends and even your family. The need is increasing in our community and in particular with seniors.'

'Many communities in Ontario are celebrating the one bag challenge to remind people of the ongoing need in their communities. In Ontario, 360,000 people use the food banks every month. One in three is under the age of 18 and, in the last two years, the fastest growing segment of foodbank users are seniors.'

'We are looking forward to the many upcoming food drives that will help us restock our shelves,' says Ms. Hayes. 'If people would like to host a food drive or find out how they can donate fresh or perishable foods please contact OAFB at 519-942-0638.'

At the last sitting, the County of Dufferin proclaimed September as Hunger Awareness month and, since then, the Orangeville and Area Food Bank has continued to source ideas to raise funds and food for individuals and families in need.

The 'One-Bag Challenge' is a new idea Ms. Hayes says she hopes will help to stock the shelves for area families.

'The one-bag challenge is a great way to kick off our Food Drive season in Orangeville,' she says. 'Inspired by the Central Okanagan Food Bank's one bag challenge, the Director says, OAFB 'would love to see 500 pounds of food from the drive.'

OAFB is committed to their vision statement of a community without hunger, but their shelves are very low this time of year. The Orangeville and Area Food Bank is asking for the community to help to fill the shelves as the need in Orangeville continues to grow.

Visit www.facebook.com/OrangevilleFoodBank for more details and consider taking on the challenge for OAFB or Shelburne's Shepherd's Cupboard Food Bank.