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Message from the Board

After a very cold, record setting winter, we can finally focus our attention on Spring and the coming Summer. With warm temperatures, long days of sunshine and good times, it is always a special time of year as we get outdoors more, plan backyard BBQ's and look forward to vacation time. It has also been a special time of year for West Island Mission as we celebrate 10 years operating as a food bank in the West Island of Montreal.

From its humble beginnings, preparing food baskets and co-ordinating deliveries for a few families from the back of founder Eric Tetreault's van, to the present in our Pointe Claire warehouse where dozens of volunteers help stock shelves, make pick-ups, assemble baskets and deliver these baskets to the families in need in the West Island.

We could have not arrived at this anniversary, or continue to operate without dedicated volunteers; so as WIM celebrates 10 years, the Board wants 2015 to be the year we recognize and properly thank **all** volunteers that have helped us get to this point. So to all of you that have given your time at one of our major distributions or as a regular volunteer during day to day operations, I thank you for helping WIM reach this milestone; it is all of you that have really allowed us the opportunity to help our West Island neighbours who struggle with day to day food and financial issues.

Thanks,
Donald Harris- President and Chairman

A Look Back...

December 13th marked the date of our annual Christmas distribution. With approximately 300 volunteers involved, WIM was able to assemble & deliver Christmas baskets to 296 families living in our West Island Community. The baskets were stocked with turkeys, staple food items, goodies and of course presents for the children, 494 in all. So many people look forward to this event and 2014 was no different. Besides our volunteers, the event was attended by some local municipal politicians, and government representatives from both the Provincial and Federal levels.



Volunteers loading cars with Christmas cheer!



2014 Christmas Committee



Families & friends came out to help deliver 296 baskets along with a holiday smile



"There is no better exercise for your heart than reaching down and helping to lift someone up."

Bernard Meltzer

WEST ISLAND MISSION

P.O. Box 46539
RPO St-Jean Boulevard
Pierrefonds, QC
H9H 5G9
www.wimmoi.com
Ph : 514-912-6813



About West Island Mission...

West Island Mission was founded in February 2005. Our purpose is to help alleviate poverty on the West Island of Montreal through the provision of food and other aid to those in need. WIM is a non-for-profit, non-denominational charitable organization.

A Look Back (con't from page 1)...

April was National Volunteer Month and as mentioned above, we at WIM wanted to be sure on this our 10th Anniversary to recognize those who regularly give of their time and energy to help others. The slogan for the 2015 campaign was **"Volunteers are part of the ripple effect,"** and the reason is this - **a volunteer action is like a stone thrown in a lake: its effect has a direct impact. At the same time, like ripples, volunteer efforts reach out far and wide to improve communities. Undeniably, volunteers rock!**

In early May, the WIM Board hosted a dinner where we recognized and feted about 50 of our dedicated day to day volunteers. This evening allowed our volunteers to mingle, enjoy dinner and even share a story or two of their own experiences with West Island Mission.



A Look Today...

WIM continues to serve 30-40 families each week. An increase in the number of families coming to pick up their baskets will allow us to take on more families as the needs arise. Every week, anywhere between 3-6 new families call WIM looking for assistance for the first time and our economic times dictate that there will be no slowing of this trend in the near future.

As June begins, WIM is launching its annual June Food Drive termed "because hunger doesn't take a vacation". As shelves start to deplete and people in the community begin the transition into summer vacations and a break from the day to day, we sometimes need to be reminded that there are those who will continue to struggle with food security, with **no** break from their day to day.

During the holiday season each year, WIM receives the bulk of its food donations, and we rely on those donations to last us through to June or July of the following year. Thanks to all our generous donors, throughout the 2014 holiday period, we experienced an increase in food donations of over 60% from the previous 2013 season. More and more, we're hearing of how people are getting creative with how they collect food. Children having birthday parties and asking for food donations instead of gifts; families and friends having dinner parties and asking people to bring food instead of the bottle of wine or flowers that usually come as hostess gifts. We want to encourage you to keep getting creative while at the same time, spreading the word on how many people are in need right here in our community.

Check our website for ways that you can help contribute to this important initiative.

A Look Ahead...

Our Back to School Event will be taking place on August 15th. Registrations are being taken throughout the month of June and we are expecting to provide backpacks filled with school supplies to well over 500 students from our community. An event this size does not happen without the help of an army of volunteers as well as generous donors to "sponsor a backpack" (\$20) or give a donation to help cover the cost of the fresh produce, milk and bread that are supplied to the families at this time. We'd like to make this a really fun day for the kids and are hoping to provide some activities (face painting/balloon animals, etc.) while they wait their turn. **How would you like to help?** Beginning in July, you will find information on how you can do this on our website or by dropping us an email at wimmoi@hotmail.com

**As always, we thank you for your help and support.
Without this, West Island Mission would not be able to do what we do.**