



LINKING HANDS

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Linking Hands Dundas County Newsletter—Volume 1

Fall 2015

Voice for poverty reduction

Linking Hands began with the idea that by working together, poverty can be reduced in Dundas County. Everyone, from those living in poverty to those wanting to end it, have an important role to play, each person or group has the capacity to make a measurable difference by adding their unique voice and talents to the cause. Anyone can help and everyone is welcome to join.

Working groups

There are eight working groups under the Linking Hands umbrella, each with its own mandate. Each working group is chaired by a member of the steering committee.

Community Connectivity

This group aspires to bring people together in the hope they will learn to function as an inclusive and supportive community.

Food Security

Without access to fresh nutritional food, where would we be? The members of this group hope to address these issues.

Lunch and Learn

This program offers free food, a chance to learn something new, and an opportunity to socialize.

Seniors Solution

Many of our seniors face barriers to leading healthy, happy, and fulfilling lives. This group's mandate is to break down those barriers.

Transportation

While it has many benefits, rural living often means inadequate, costly, or non-existent transportation options. Finding feasible solutions is this group's focus.

Housing

The cost to buy or rent a home can often deplete a budget; this group is gearing up to tackle the issue of inadequate access to affordable housing in the area.

Economic Development

Promoting economic development within the area can benefit everyone. This group's agenda is creating opportunities.

Health and Wellness

A person's well being involves more than the physical; it also includes spiritual, emotional, and mental.

Adapting to fit Dundas County

Linking Hands has gone through several changes throughout its short lifespan, growing and adapting to fit the needs of Dundas County. With every added voice, the initiative draws closer to realizing its mission—to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, poverty.



June 2015 Lunch & Learn, Winchester United Church — "Horticultural Therapy"

In This Issue

- Linking Hands defined
- Spotlight on The House of Lazarus
- Seniors Solution
- Advocacy award
- Coming events
- Getting involved



Building Community, Sharing Hope

The House of Lazarus



Thrift Store / Giving Garden



More than a food bank

The House of Lazarus (HOL) began with an idea, a man, and his car. In 1986, Rev. Alan Tysick began feeding the poor in South Dundas using the trunk of his car. As the need grew, the charitable venture moved to his garage and then to the local church before taking up space in an actual office-like setting in South Mountain. In 1999, a large donation led to the purchase of the mission's current location. It was at this time that HOL became a registered charity, whose board of directors envisioned a hub – a one-stop spot where people could find the help and information they need.

Today, employees are trained to provide more than food – they are there to offer emotional support as well. Staffing qualifications include, but are not limited to training in the following areas: pastoral care; victim crisis; mental health first aid; suicide intervention; individual crisis in-

tervention; peer support; and, elder abuse.

Onsite services

In addition to a food and clothing bank, the HOL runs thrift and household goods shops, offering the general public an opportunity to find the items they need to furnish their homes and clothe their families at affordable prices. HOL has also added a garden to provide fresh local produce, ensuring food bank clients have access to healthy foods.

Beyond outreach, into advocacy

Acknowledging the need to do more than provide for the basics, the House of Lazarus has taken strategic steps toward creating a network of likeminded people and organizations to tackle the county's many poverty-related issues. This latest initiative is Linking Hands.



Unpacking Portobello mushrooms



Sorting donated clothing



Furniture—old and relatively new



Household Goods + Appliances



House of Lazarus
COMMUNITY OUTREACH MISSION

2245 Simms Street, Mountain

613-989-3830

www.houseoflazarus.com

Seniors Solution

"She had to live in this bright, red gabled house with the nurse until it was time for her to die... I thought how little we know about the feelings of old people."

- Daphne du Maurier

With their own unique set of challenges, seniors' experience poverty somewhat differently than the average person.

In recognition of this fact, Linking Hands is creating a working group to focus on what Dundas County's elderly population needs to live happy, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

Isolation appears to be one of the major factors negatively impacting those aged 65 and over.

Many seniors are faced with limited income to deal with life's financial challenges, including the rising cost of living on top of additional fees for a host of items — withdrawing money from an RRSP, retaking the drivers' test on an annual basis, having a license reinstated, and more. Many seniors also lack coverage for items like prescriptions, hearing aids, and vision care.



Participants answering survey questions during the April 2015 Seniors' Solution event



The Winchester Press June 17 edition featured Kim Merkley (left) and Gayle Hewton (right)

In the news...

Local mission recognized for advocacy work

The House of Lazarus (HOL) received the Ontario Association of Food Banks (OAFB) award for advocacy during this year's provincial conference in Windsor on June 7, 2015.

In addition to its long-standing efforts providing those in need with food, clothing, and household items, the HOL has become an active voice in the fight against poverty. On the frontlines of a growing movement, the HOL took the challenge of reducing poverty in Dundas County into its own hands by hosting a community-wide forum in 2011. This event saw members from different corners of the community come together in an attempt to identify how poverty is impacting Dundas County and to brainstorm ideas for implementing a poverty reduction plan locally.

What does poverty look like in Dundas County? What can we, as a group, do to reduce poverty and alleviate its impact?

The answer, ultimately, led to the creation of Linking Hands Dundas County — an initiative mainly composed of volunteers from the community, service and government organizations, church members, residents, local business people, municipal staff, and more.

The HOL partnered with like-minded individuals to create a steering committee, a group relegated with the task of pointing the initiative in the right direction. With priorities identified, working groups were created to tackle the day-to-day challenges.

"So very happy about Linking Hands and all that is done for the people..."

- Jannie Van Noppen, Lunch and Learn participant

Looking ahead...

For a comprehensive and up-to-date look at what's happening at Linking Hands, visit our website at linkinghandsdundas@gmail.com. In the meantime, here is a listing of what is on the horizon:

SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18th—Green Food Box orders are due • 21st—Lunch and Learn at Winchelsea Events • 21st—House of Lazarus AGM in Chesterville • 23rd—Linking Hands new website goes live with introduction of new blog! • 25th—Green Food Box pickup day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19th—Lunch and Learn at Cannamore Orchard • 23rd—Green Food Box orders are due • 30th—Green Food Box pickup day • Good Neighbour Gala event—not yet scheduled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16th—Lunch and Learn at Winchester Springs United Church • 20th—Green Food Box orders are due • 27th—Green Food Box pickup day • Seniors Solution event—not yet scheduled

Help wanted...

Join the Linking Hands cause and become a voice for poverty reduction in your community!

Whether it's behind the scenes or centre stage, everyone has skills and talents to share, as well as the potential for positively impacting their community.

So what will it be? Do you want to join a working group? The level of commitment is up to you, but most groups meet no more than once per month and all planned activities are plotted on a volunteer basis.

Or, if time is limited, why not participate in one of our many events? Attend a Lunch and Learn workshop, join the Green Food Box program and enjoy great produce for less money,

or take some photos of Dundas County and send them to us. Get involved in your community.

Conversation starters...

"We are living in a phenomenal age. If we can spend the early decades of the 21st century finding approaches that meet the needs of the poor in ways that generate profits and recognition for business, we will have found a sustainable way to reduce poverty in the world." – Bill Gates

"Once poverty is gone, we'll need to build museums to display its horrors to future generations. They'll wonder why poverty continued so long in human society – how a few people could live in luxury while billions dwelt in misery, deprivation and despair." – Muhammad Yunus

Contact Us

For more information or to submit an item for our website or Facebook page—such as a photograph, poem, or comment:

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a voice for poverty reduction in Dundas County