



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

'Tis the season for giving back

Peterborough charities need your support this holiday season

The Peterborough Fundraisers Network (PAFN) is encouraging the community to not only support local this holiday season but to support local charities too.

“By donating to local charities, you are investing in the improvement, growth, and support of your own community, your neighbours, and your family and friends,” explains Jen Johnstone, PAFN Executive Chair and Donor Relations Manager at the Alzheimer Society of Peterborough, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland & Haliburton. “Just like when you shop local, you are also investing in our local economies.”

The holiday season is typically the most significant period for giving, with initiatives such as National Philanthropy Day on November 15 and Giving Tuesday on November 29 inspiring charitable giving. Yet PAFN’s members, representing more than 40 local charities and nonprofit consultants, say that their organizations are facing unprecedented strain due to growing demand for services, rising inflation and declining donations.

According to Brooke Erickson, the Development Lead at YES Shelter for Youth and Families, declining support for local charities will mean significant gaps in services that many people in our community depend on to keep their housing, take care of their families, and in some instances, stay alive.

“In many cases, local non-profit organizations are providing lifesaving essential services in our communities, and the need is increasing,” says Erickson. “We are seeing more families needing shelter than we can accommodate, and those families who are in shelter tend to have very long stays because of the extreme lack of affordable housing in Peterborough. We also continue to grapple with the increased complexity of cases of youth experiencing homelessness, which means they very often have heightened mental health challenges that present as violence and self-harm amongst clients.”

Yvonne Lai, Director of Community Development at the New Canadian Centre echoes Erickson’s concerns.

“Inflation directly influences how we deliver services as the same services or items now cost more; it directly impacts how many people we can help,” Lai adds. “We are seeing more clients who are struggling with the accumulated impact of inflation, political and economic instability, poor mental health, and social isolation. There are real consequences for not meeting immediate needs for food and shelter. In addition, the longer we are not able to proactively develop programs and supports, the higher we will have to climb.”

While the local charitable sector needs help now, more than ever, Johnstone realizes that inflation and the rise in the cost of living mean that people in our community are not able to give as much as they have in the past. There are, however, other ways to support your favourite local charities this holiday season.

“While monetary donations are always welcome, and of course have the benefit of being tax deductible, there are other ways to support local non-profits,” Johnstone adds. “For example, with COVID restrictions lifting, many organizations are welcoming back volunteers. Like the for-profit sector, many charities are also coping with the impacts of the great resignation but have fewer resources to capture and retain talent. So, volunteers are truly a lifesaver when resources are spread thin.”

Visit <https://www.peterboroughareafundraisersnetwork.com/current-members> for information about the 40+ current PAFN members.

About the Peterborough Area Fundraisers Network

Peterborough and Area Fundraisers' Network (PAFN) was formally created in 1997 to strengthen professionalism within our local charitable sector including our members, interested individuals and organizations. Over the years, PAFN has grown into a robust network of individuals and organizations who work collaboratively to share ideas and strengthen our local community. With over 40 member organizations, our members are staff and volunteers from non-profit organizations across Peterborough and the Kawarthas. PAFN offers numerous networking opportunities as well as an exceptional speaker series for our members (as well as their boards), to continue their professional development.

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