

Ten tonnes scared up for food bank



Sandy Chase / The Brunswickan

STU participated in the 15th annual installment of Trick-or-treat on Halloween night. The event is a nation-wide fundraiser for food banks. STU raised 10 tonnes of food for our local food bank- enough food to feed everyone who comes to the bank for the next two months.

HILARY PAIGE SMITH
THE BRUNSWICKAN

On Halloween night, hordes of St. Thomas students wandered the streets of Fredericton, doing their part to "take a bite out of hunger."

Trick or Eat is a nation-wide event of the student-founded charity, Meal Exchange. Meal Exchange raises food and money for local food banks and has raised over \$2 million dollars in food or 727,200 meals since 1993.

This Halloween, more than 350 students came out, dressed in costume and ready to help "scare up some food." This year's efforts raised 10 tonnes of food, which tops last year's Trick or Eat by four tonnes.

Emily Bosse, Social Issues

Advocate for the St. Thomas Student Union and organizer of this year's Trick or Eat, says, "When we were unloading at the food bank, there were about 361 boxes and that is enough to feed everyone who comes to the food bank for two months."

St. Thomas is not the only campus to participate in this event; there are more than 50 campuses and schools nation-wide that take part. The event not only serves to better the community, it also brings students together for a greater cause.

"It's something that I think people are comfortable coming out to and it does make a huge difference. The food bank is dependent on what we bring them and it is really bonding. You have close to 400 people there beforehand and when they go out to the buses, and they're pulling away, everyone is cheering because they are just so excited to do something good for

the community," says Bosse.

Michelle Twomey, a first year student, participated in Trick or Eat for the first time and for her, it was not just a fun Halloween activity. She also felt that Trick or Eat raises awareness in the community and made Fredericton citizens more mindful of local poverty.

"When you walk up to peoples houses and you say 'Hi, I'm from Trick or Eat, we're looking for canned goods for the Fredericton food bank' and then you see the look on their face. It's like 'Oh, now I remember we have a food bank.' It's almost like you're spreading awareness to the people door-to-door," she says.

Bosse feels that community members are welcoming towards students as they participate in a worthy cause and often slip them some candy, in addition to canned goods.

"A lot of people have misconceptions about the student

body, like they're just people who party all of the time and don't care about the community. So when they have students come to their door and ask for food on behalf of the food bank, they're generally extremely receptive and generous."

Trick or Eaters bundle themselves into Halloween garb and are then shipped all over the city by bus. Students with vehicles also volunteer to drive, so that the others are not burdened with copious amounts of cans. On average, a group of Trick or Eaters can fill the trunk of a car to the brim with food. Volunteer drivers are repaid for gas and students are compensated for their efforts.

Aside from the satisfaction of a deed well done, students are given a pizza party. Twomey says, "I'm definitely doing it again next year. It was a lot of fun and I really enjoyed helping out. It was worth more than the free pizza."

Eating away at disorders

SARAH RATCHFORD
THE BRUNSWICKAN

At some point in their lives, just about every woman criticizes her appearance. Some of this negativity stems from the popular media, and it is difficult not to judge oneself and others when constantly faced with images of "beautiful," stick-thin models.

Often, the negative self-image held by some women turns into issues with food, including anorexia nervosa, bulimia, binge-eating, and other forms of disordered eating.

Third-year nursing students at UNB are doing something about all of these issues. Each Wednesday from 10 a.m. until noon and from 6-8 p.m., and Thursday from 2-4 p.m., a drop-in clinic called Reflections of Women is being held in room 309 of Tibbits East Hall.

Peer counselor Meaghan Westbury says the clinic is run by six nursing students. It is open to women who are students at UNB and STU.

The clinic covers a different topic each week, including anger, control, perfectionism, assertiveness, self-care, and body image, among others. Clients can go to the clinic either to discuss their own issues or simply to learn about the topic of the week. Westbury also says that clients can complete a 24-hour recall of their diet to find out whether they have healthy eating habits. The counsellors assess that information, and then inform clients how to improve their health in general, referring clinic attendees to appropriate resources if clients are at risk.

"It's a long process, it doesn't happen overnight, so we encourage clients to come in for a session each week," Westbury says.

"A lot of people with eating issues have underlying issues," Westbury says. "It could be abuse or insecurities; it's a lot about control."

Every situation is different, so all of the women who run the clinic have had training with the "It's not about Food" program offered through Counseling Services and directed by Dr. Nancy Buzzell, where they learned how to peer facilitate and counsel.

The nursing students learned how to counsel on topics from healthy eating to assertiveness. Westbury is happy with the success of the clinic so far.

"We've had a better turnout than expected already, and everyone who's left has seemed happy with the information learned. It's just

so special because this is our clinic. We established it. We did the marketing, we recruited people, we've done the conference on how to counsel people, you know? It's a product of our efforts, and it's even more successful than we thought it would be."

Another peer counsellor at the clinic, Samantha Jones, seems equally proud of Reflections of Women: "This clinic was created by students. It's student driven, for students," she says.

The nursing students' instructor is Kate Weaver, RN, PhD. Weaver has expertise in the field of eating disorders, and has completed two nationally funded post-doctorates. Weaver says that eating disorders do not receive the research attention they deserve, and that women who suffer from them need to be heard.

"They need to be given an opportunity to be heard and strengthen their voices. I'd like to see more sustainable resources happen."

Weaver draws attention to the ways in which university life can foster eating issues. When students eat at meal hall, she points out, the food they eat is dictated each day. The pressures of university life, she says, often cause women to develop unhealthy relationships with food in order to obtain control over their own lives.

"In this appearance-oriented society, people can get uncomfortable with themselves," she says.

In women aged 15-24, anorexia nervosa is the leading cause of death, Weaver says ruefully. Jones adds that 91 per cent of women in college attempt to control their weight through dieting, and 35 per cent of all dieters become pathological in their dieting.

Equally disturbing is the fact that, according to Jones, one-quarter of women on university campuses meet diagnostic criteria for an eating disorder.

The nursing students, however, are trying to remain positive.

"I want everyone to feel comfortable coming here," says Westbury. "It's a really safe space, it's confidential. We don't want these women to suffer in silence, and just having someone to talk to can really help. We have a lot of information to pass along, and hopefully it'll be the starting point of their journeys—because eating disorders are curable."

On Nov. 12, a "lunch and learn" will be held at the University Women's Centre to educate participants on disordered eating and "clear away the cobwebs of misunderstanding" surrounding disordered eating, Weaver says.

For more information, call 450-6770 or visit <http://reflectionsofwomen.webs.com>.

Some stats on eating disorders:

- 91% of women in college attempt to control their weight through dieting.
- 35% of all dieters progress to pathological dieting
- 1/4 of women in university campuses meet diagnostic criteria for an eating disorder
- 5-20% of eating disorder patients die as a result of their illness.

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