

As lead volunteers with the Keswick Community Fridge (KCF), we realized we haven't communicated the positive impact the KCF, (in partnership with the Georgina Community Food Pantry and the Town of Georgina), is having in the community.

Our involvement has allowed us to engage extensively with business owners, donors, recipients, volunteers, and passersby. These interactions have been overwhelmingly positive. We wanted to share some experiences to convey the gratitude expressed daily for the KCF and everyone's hard work.

It is rare for us or any volunteers to be at the KCF without someone stopping to offer thanks, share how amazing they think the KCF is, or offer a positive comment. When we explain the KCF to newcomers, they are genuinely moved. Out-of-towners often express a desire for their own communities to have something similar.

People who access the fridge include families with young children, seniors, those who struggle to get to Sutton, social workers with their clients, people living out of their cars or experiencing homelessness, and even those with homes and jobs who still can't afford to eat. Most people take just a few items and are incredibly grateful for what they receive.

- Last Christmas, when most places were closed, the KCF provided dinner for a mother and her two adolescent children.
- Early this spring, a young couple living out of their car came to the fridge. Despite receiving only a cucumber and salad dressing, they felt their existence mattered because of the KCF.
- The day before Easter, a donor left bubble wands in the KCF. A child found them and asked his mother if they could have a present for Easter. The mother smiled and said yes, and the child asked if he could take one for his sibling too.
- In the summer, a pregnant woman who had recently moved to Georgina was amazed by the KCF. She started delivering food to other pregnant women without access to a vehicle.
- We met a woman who was brought to tears because she found cake in the KCF, something she hadn't been able to afford in years.
- An adult man who had only eaten a box of Stovetop stuffing in the previous 24 hours was incredibly grateful for a can of soup.
- Recently, two young ladies helped us unload a heavy donation and shared their pride in having a community fridge in Georgina.

The feeling of pride extends to many residents and businesses donating to the fridge. Riveredge Microfarm, Elpida Café, Cornerhouse Bistro, Clearwater Farms, The Giving Place, Ambrosia, Zehrs, T&T, Tindall Farm & Market, Shoppers Drug Mart, Allison's Farm, and Holburne Farm are some of the businesses contributing regularly to the KCF.

- Karyn Tindall, the owner of Tindall Farm and Market, shared that community members came to shop at her store because they found out her business donates to the KCF.
- Volunteers from The Giving Place have been personally donating to the KCF.

- Two women, one from a local daycare and one from a women's shelter, stock the KCF weekly with food they haven't used at their workplaces.

Private resident donors have also become active in our KCF Facebook Group.

- Members post when they need food and cannot travel to the KCF. Community members now respond directly to these requests and bring food.
- A member suggested an Amazon Wishlist for the KCF. Since launching on August 17, we have received shipments of food, and one resident plans to ship food weekly.

We understand concerns about the KCF being empty, but this is because the need outweighs resources. At popular times, we have seen 6-7 people access the fridge in 20-30 minutes.

Our experiences show the important impacts the KCF is having in the community, not just in feeding people, but also reminding them that they matter. We know positive stories can often go unshared, and we wanted you to hear some of them.

Thank you all for your time, dedication, and hard work with the KCF.