



News and Information

May 7, 2009

Rose Valley Elementary collects 10,000 items and \$1,700 for the Westside food bank



Kelowna, BC: In just six school days, students and staff from Rose Valley Elementary collected 10,000 food items and \$1,700 for the Westside Family Food Bank. This year's total topples last year's impressive food drive record of 8,000 items. With a rallying cry of "Helping our community is really neat, just 2,000 more, bring on the heat!" they reached and exceeded their goal.

Jennah Smailes, a Rose Valley student, came up with the catchy motto and teachers Kumi Nittel and Karina Connor kicked off the food drive with a school-wide game show called "Let's Make a Meal!" Contestants answered food bank trivia questions and accepted fun challenges in order to 'win' donations from the pile of non-perishable items brought in by staff. A makeshift stage, a charismatic host played by teacher James Durose, and a feather boa-draped 'Vanna White' played by teacher Kimberley Brodie completed the game show ambiance. During the campaign from April 24 to May 4, a giant thermometer in the gymnasium helped to keep everyone on track to the goal.

"Our students were very motivated to help, particularly when they learned that the Westside Family Food Bank has seen a 41% increase in its clientele from last year and that 40% of people relying on the food bank are children," says Connor.

By May 4, ten thousand food items lined every hallway in the school and although it was a large amount of food, Nittel notes that this is just one month's supply for local families in need. "Rose Valley encourages those who can afford to donate, to give regularly to the food bank. Campaigns such as ours are helpful but there is an ongoing need. There are many vulnerable children in this recession who are relying on the generosity of our Westside community."



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