



AGAPE TABLE

Newsletter June 2010



NUTRITION • EMPOWERMENT • DIGNITY • COMMUNITY

BREAKFAST CARDS A RED-HOT COMMODITY



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Our daily, low-cost meal continues to gain traction in our community. An astounding 41% of the 240 daily guests of our emergency meal program now access this service. This translates to an average of 98 nutritious plates every morning, and growing.

Many of our guests use our prepaid cards as a budgeting tool. When they have the funds, they purchase a prepaid card - the best value is our 11 meals for \$10 variety. This small red card means not having to worry about having that \$1 in your pocket each day.

Prepaying for meals is an excellent exercise in budgeting and our staff are eager to work with individuals who would like to try it on a regular basis.

For more information about our fresh approaches to food justice in Winnipeg, visit our web site.

agapetable.ca

Inner-city family finds great food at Agape Table's Grocery Cooperative

We sat down with single parent Lauren* and three-year-old Zoe* to talk about how healthy food and balanced meals have made a difference in their family.

The Agape Table Grocery Cooperative provides access to fruit, vegetables, meat, and dairy at wholesale cost. Subsidy is available to low-income families. Families participate in choosing and purchasing fresh, nutritious food for their household.



Tell me about your participation in the Agape Table Grocery Cooperative.

Sure, we were one of the first families to register, we've been there since the beginning. I used to seek out emergency food, but this program is better for us.

What can you tell me about your family?

I'm a single parent of five great kids, aged from two to twelve. We have used the food bank in the past. It certainly helped to stretch our food budget. Places like Agape Table are important for times when you find yourself without any food in the house. About five or six years ago we were in a situation like that. It was very stressful. That's when we started going to the food bank.

What was that like?

Well, at the food bank you mostly get

canned goods, breads, and pastries. There's very little fresh fruit or veggies. That's OK when you're in a tight spot, but I want my kids to have food that's fresh too. I remember having cans, cans, and more cans; it was tough after a while. There was nothing fresh, nothing colourful. So we can definitely buy that stuff at the store near our house, but it costs a lot. We couldn't get enough to carry us through (for the week), so we would go to the food bank.

Why did you join the Grocery Cooperative at Agape Table?

The main reason is the prices - I have a rather large family and our food budget is big. With milk priced the way it is in co-op, it means never running out. The meat is really great. It's much leaner than we would otherwise get. It means always having fruit and vegetables in the house. It's made a big difference. And it gives you more choice and flex-

ibility. It lets you determine what's good for your family.

Have you been able to budget around the program?

Yes, so far, it's working well. I usually make a single large deposit into my account once a month around family allowance time. I try to figure out how much I will need each month and get it in there.

(Turning to Zoe) what do you like about the food on these tables?

Zoe: I love corn on the cob.

And what do you put on your corn on the cob?

Zoe: I like butter! And salt and pepper too. I love the yogurts, the bananas, and the oranges.

Lauren: She loves fruit.

Zoe: I love bananas.

Lauren: It feels better to spend your own money. I'm able to be in control and make choices. So far everything has been excellent quality. Take the hamburger for example. Most low income [households] are used to the regular ground beef. You forget that there is anything else. When I cooked the ground beef the other day, I was amazed. I had to add water to keep it from sticking. It's excellent quality, and we got it for less than the cost of the regular in the store. We are so glad this program is here.

** Names have been changed to protect the anonymity of our guests.*



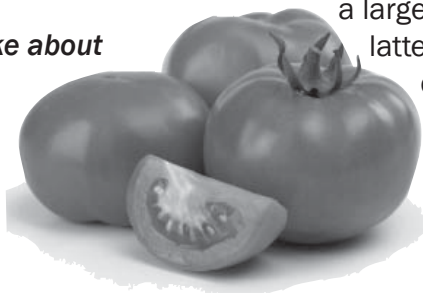
Hustle for Hunger

Our annual fundraising race will return once again to the pavement at Assiniboine Park on October 16. Please consider joining us at this event. More at agapetable.ca

Think of a Simple Tomato

by John Kennett, GM and Community Chef

Think of a simple tomato. When in season, a well sourced and simply prepared tomato is a jewel—a perfect balance of sweetness, acidity, texture and aroma. When out of season the same tomato is tough, unsatisfying to prepare, and can be likened to eating a piece of red-colored cardboard. Sadly, a large proportion of surplus food falls into the latter category. Though it is necessary for a cook to deal with food “as it is”, it is remarkable to see, as I do everyday, the shift in pleasure that our community members experience when they partake of food in an “emergency setting” with higher quality food. By using the buying power of our guests and donors to buy food from for-profit suppliers, Agape Table’s non-profit mandate allows us to subsidize the cost. What this means for me is that I can provide and cultivate in Agape’s clients (and staff) culinary pleasure at a fraction of the cost of a restaurant. The end result is that our money goes a long way indeed.



Read more from Chef John on our Facebook page: [link from agapetable.ca](http://link.from.agapetable.ca)

Commitment to Nutrition

Agape Table introduced John Kennett to our community in March 2010. As a certified Red Seal chef, he brings a wealth of food expertise to our meal and grocery programs.

We are excited to announce that as of June 2010, we have obtained the services of a volunteer registered dietician.

Phyllis Reid-Jarvis, RD, CDE, will be working closely with our staff in setting nutritional targets for our services and addressing the diverse and complex dietary needs of our community. She will also be working directly with families in our pre-school program, food bank, and Grocery Cooperative. We are excited to have Phyllis on our team and look forward to working with her this summer.

www.PhyllisReidJarvis.com

Art at Agape Table

The artists at Agape Table sought us out because of food, but found nourishment for the creative spirit was also on the menu. Featured below are the of three of the many stories in our creative circles.



Alex's Bear

When and where did you start carving?

I started carving when I was 9, and in Rankin Inlet. It was a nice place to grow up - it's a mining town. My father and uncles worked for the nickel mine. We had the mine so we had the things that come with economic prosperity. We had community supports like schools, dance halls, community center, stores - that sort of stuff. I also spent some of my early years in Churchill, where I went to residential school.

How do you begin a piece?

I never visualize beforehand, I just do it. I just let my body move with the blade. I try not to think, in fact if I tried to think about what I was doing, I wouldn't be able to do it.

The Canadian Arctic Producers sent me on a five week demonstration tour, all around North America. I've had shows in many galleries. The farthest away that my work has taken me was Finland.

Is traditional carving at risk of disappearing?

I hope not. I've seen many very talented youngsters. They need to be nurtured. It's an important form of expression and culture. It's also an important source of income for the Inuit. Personally, I focus on the future so preserving tradition is not as important to me as to some. I actually prefer abstract carving and contemporary art.

Anything we should know about the piece you donated to Agape Table?

No, it will speak to who it speaks to. I hope it helps you to raise money for this place.

Alex's bear will be available for auction in September. If you are interested in bidding on his piece please contact mark@agapetable.ca. Photos and videos of Alex creating this piece are available on our web site, agapetable.ca

Ashok's Flute

You've played many times in our musicians circle, but I have never seen you play that particular flute.

What can you tell me about it?

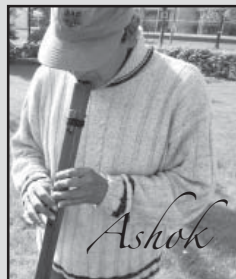


Photo printed with permission

It's made from cedar. I've been carving it for four months. It's traditional name can be translated as *The Sacred Whistle*. It's origin story says that a woodpecker formed it and gave it to a boy who was lost in the forest for 3 days. He was rescued after playing the whistle.

Tell me about working on the flute.

Well, I started it while I was dealing with being homeless. It was really difficult to work on it when I didn't have a place to live. But now that I'm housed, and now that I have some decent wood-working tools, I was able to complete it.

I've worked really hard to put my life back together in the last few months. In fact the work I put into this instrument is much like the inner work

that I'm doing these days. It was quite a moment when I realized it was done. I hope to do some more recording at Agape soon.

Tell me a little about your musical journey.

I've played traditional music at many schools in the city. I really like merging Anishinabe and Cree music with other forms. I've even had a chance to work with a composer from the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. These days, I'm looking to work in the hip-hop scene.

This one is really quite a piece. Someone who plays professionally asked me to carve this one. I'm going to ask \$700 for it. I can make some smaller ones in a lot less time that I can sell for \$100 each if anyone is interested.

If you are interested in purchasing or commissioning a sacred whistle you can contact Ashok via our office, general@agapetable.ca. To hear our musicians latest work visit agapetable.ca

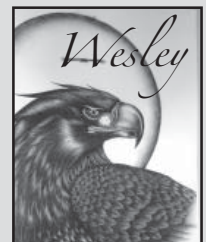
Wes's Eagle

Wesley paints to provoke strong feelings. He works with acrylic and pencil. He is proud of his Ojibway heritage, and his work mingles his Christian faith with traditional native art.

Wesley is originally from Shoal Lake Ontario, and has been living in Winnipeg for more than a year. Life in Winnipeg has not been easy. Wesley was homeless for several months, but is now housed.

Making art helps him to refocus, and to be present in the moment of creation.

You can contact Wes through our artist's circle at general@agapetable.ca



Sunshine and Great Food

The signs of the approaching summer season at Agape Table are unmistakable. Our attendance is on the rise with the addition of some new faces, produce prices are beginning to fall making them more accessible, and the heat has begun to billow from our kitchen. Yet, these next few months will be anything but summer-as-usual here at Agape Table.

Our low-cost breakfast will hit its stride this summer. We served over 1660 fresh, nutritious breakfasts in May. Our guests provided over \$1670 towards the costs of these meals, and our generous donors covered the remaining costs of \$1520. As participation in our low-cost meal has increased, demand for our emergency meal has been reduced. We believe that, before September, more than half our of community will participate regularly.

Families participating in our food bank are also stepping out of the emergency food loop and into our Grocery Cooperative program. After funding their account, families shop - farmers' market style - for fresh fruit, vegetables, dairy, and meat. We purchase food directly from wholesalers and offer it to families at our cost. Families can also apply for a subsidy, extending the purchasing power of each low-income dollar. For families like Katherine's (inset) or Lauren's (page 1), this program engages them in a way that food bank cannot.

Our Grocery Cooperative launched quietly in March of this year, and within the first week, we were filled to capacity. To date, we have 32 families waiting for access to it. This demand has spread strictly by word-of-mouth! These families are ready to step out of the food-bank system and begin purchasing the nutritious food they need.

Beginning in July, we will open the doors wide to our Grocery Cooperative. Our volunteer registered dietician will be working with our community chef John Kennett to develop meal plans and recipes. Low-income families are mobilizing, will you partner with them?

When a household food emergency occurs, Agape Table supports families with free meals and non-perishable food served in a welcoming and non-judgemental environment. Agape Table is also a place where families and individuals can step out of the cycle of crisis and into nutrition, choice, and empowerment.

You can partner with these families by selecting Grocery Co-op on the donation form below. Will you help us unlock the power in food?

With Gratitude,
Mark Courtney, Executive Manager, Agape Table Inc.

Thank you

PRA, Inc.
The Cardinal Foundation
Agriculture in the Classroom
Phyllis Reid-Jarvis
James Rodgers
Stan Scott
st. benedict's table
Jim Brennan of Letterall Signs
60th Cub pack

via e-mail

Hi! My name is Katherine. I'm a single mother to a one year old little boy named Traverse*. I'm on social assistance and like so many single parents in my position, I struggle to make ends meet.*

*I so wish I'd known about your services sooner. They are exactly what I need. I'm very interested in the "Grocery Cooperative". I'm just beginning to try to get things back on track as far as bills and money go. At the moment, however, my bills are taking up most of my grocery budget and I would love and very much appreciate any help and support that you could provide. I'm currently without a phone, but you can email me back at this address, and I'll get back to you ASAP. Thanks so much. -Kat**

LAST NAME _____
FIRST NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY, PROVINCE _____
POSTAL CODE _____
TELEPHONE/EMAIL _____

WITH A:
 Contribution of \$ _____ . ____
 Cheque Telpay
 Visa MasterCard

CARD NUMBER _____
EXPIRY _____
SIGNATURE _____

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING AGAPE TABLE

Please send your donation to:
Agape Table Inc
PO Box 26111, Winnipeg, MB R3G 3R3

Registered Canadian Charity
10668 7833 RR0001

I WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT:

- Most Needed
- Emergency Food
- Grocery Co-op
- Agape Table for Kids
- Endowment Fund
- Subsidized Breakfast

I would like to contribute monthly in the amount of \$ _____ . ____
Withdraw on: ____ / ____ / ____
(MM/DD/YY)

- I would like to remain anonymous
- I would like the Chair of the Board to contact me about a gift of securities or a bequest