

Kick-Off for Kindness

Guelph Community Foundation and Champions Preparing for November 9th Random Act of Kindness Day

September 12, 2012 (Guelph, ON) - Friday, November 9th is Random Act of Kindness Day in Guelph, Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge and close to twenty other communities. That may seem like a long way off but a dedicated group of volunteers is hitting the ground running to let every company, club, classroom and congregation in Guelph know how they can be involved.

“The best thing about Random Act of Kindness Day is that it is a great equalizer,” says 2012 RAK Day Chair and Foundation Board Member, Dominique O’Rourke. “A child can give a hug and a ‘Pay-it-Forward’ card to their crossing guard. The crossing guard buys a coffee for the person behind them in the drive-through and passes the Pay-it-Forward card along. The recipient helps someone at the office who brings home the card with a treat for their child who pays-it-forward to their coach or Girl Guide leader later that night. Everyone has a role to play in building our community.”

It’s free. It’s easy and it’s an amazing community builder. In case you are stumped for suggestions, the Guelph Community Foundation’s web-site has a list of 100 acts of kindness that are absolutely free as well as a synopsis of acts of kindness that took place during the Guelph event last year.

50,000 cards and 250 posters are available for distribution this year – all printed courtesy of KH&A printing and The Co-operators. The business-card simply promotes the day and reads “You have been touched by a Random Act of Kindness. Please Pay it Forward.” Anyone requiring a large quantity of “Pay-it-Forward” cards for a large staff group or for customers can obtain them by contacting RLB LLP at 15 Lewis Road or request them on the group’s Facebook Page. Smaller quantities of cards for personal use can be picked up at any City of Guelph location and a number of organizations during the month of October and until RAK Day. All pick-up locations are listed at www.guelphcf.ca and on a special Google Map.

Organizations are welcome to pre-promote the day with signage, posters, blogs, Tweets, web-links, or by serving as a card distribution point. They can plan a team-building community initiative or use RAK Day to thank their staff or clients. Last year, one local business held a draw for its customers and the winner could direct \$100 to their charity of choice. Another company sent staff home 30 minutes early and asked them to Pay-it-Forward in some way. Some companies offer a special coffee break for staff or surprises for clients. What’s important is that it’s not about money. It’s a day to consciously decide you are going to do something kind whether that’s topping up someone’s parking meter or holding a door open. The ‘Random’ part is more for the recipient and what happens next.

The Community Foundation is also interested in hearing if you've received a Random Act of Kindness and invites everyone to visit their Facebook page or join them @GuelphCF on Twitter.

"If we distribute 50,000 cards and everyone pays-it-forward to one person, we could realistically reach every single resident of Guelph," says O'Rourke. "Sometimes, it's all it takes to make a difference in someone's life."

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About Random Act of Kindness Day

Random Act of Kindness Day, celebrated this year on November 9, 2012 is a great opportunity for community building through kindness. Initiated five years ago by the Kitchener-Waterloo Community Foundation, Random Act of Kindness Day has now grown to include over 16 communities, including Cambridge and Guelph. This year we will distribute 50,000 'pay-it-forward' cards and expect over 200 organizations to participate!

About The Guelph Community Foundation

The Guelph Community Foundation is a charitable public foundation whose purpose is to provide leadership in promoting community philanthropy and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Guelph and surrounding communities. The Foundation pools the charitable gifts of many donors into permanent, income-earning endowments. Income from the endowments supports a wide range of charitable programs and activities. Total assets under administration are over \$9.7 million with almost \$7 million in permanent endowed assets. Since inception, over \$2 million has been distributed to 723 charitable initiatives.

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