

Food bank users down, donations keep coming

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Foodbank has had no trouble keeping its shelves stocked at a time when food banks in many other municipalities are facing serious food shortages.

"We don't really need the Thanksgiving and Easter drives," said Esther Powell, the co-ordinator of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Foodbank.

Unlike other areas of the Greater Toronto Area, donations come in steadily throughout the entire year from Whitchurch-Stouffville's residents, and not just at Christmas and Easter.

"We have never experienced shortages as they have in the big cities," Mrs. Powell said.

The food bank, located in the Churchill Community Church on Ninth Line north of Aurora Road, receives non-perishable food, monetary donations and some clothing year-round.

The food bank's bins at the A & P, NoFrills and Sobey's grocery stores in Stouffville are filled regularly by shoppers. Bags of food are also dropped off at Stouffville's fire hall.

"I appreciate that it is on an ongoing basis," said Mrs. Powell. The Whitchurch-Stouffville Foodbank helps other food banks when it has a surplus.

The number of food bank users in Whitchurch-Stouffville has dropped for the fifth year in a row to around 40 families.

The food bank is open just one morning a week, on

Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11 a.m. That's down from two mornings a week last year.

Fifteen volunteers sort groceries and clothing and purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.

Many people will ask for food bank donations instead of gifts when hosting birthday parties, open houses and other events. Local businesses and schools hold food drives throughout the year.

Most of those requiring the food bank's help are single people and single moms. And a majority of them will just need help for four to six months, said Mrs. Powell.

Anyone who needs the food bank's help can call 905-640-3222.

Musical Mosaic supports Emmanuel

Emmanuel International is a hosting a Musical Mosaic fundraiser on Sunday at 7 p.m. at St. James Presbyterian Church, 6432 Main St., Stouffville.

Featured will be the Bach to Blues Company and guest artists. The St. Bede's Anglican Choir will provide a touch of Tamil music.

Admission is \$10 for adults and \$6 for children 12 and younger. Tickets can be purchased by calling Emmanuel International (905-640-2111) or St. James (905-640-3151) or at the door.

Emmanuel International, a holistic ministry

with headquarters on Stouffville Road, works with poor families in several needy countries such as Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, South Africa, Ethiopia, Sudan, Philippines, Indonesia, Brazil and Haiti.

Emmanuel's mission is "to satisfy the entire need of a person — body, mind and soul."

Almost five million lives have been transformed through the Emmanuel ministry, said spokesperson Ravi Chandran.

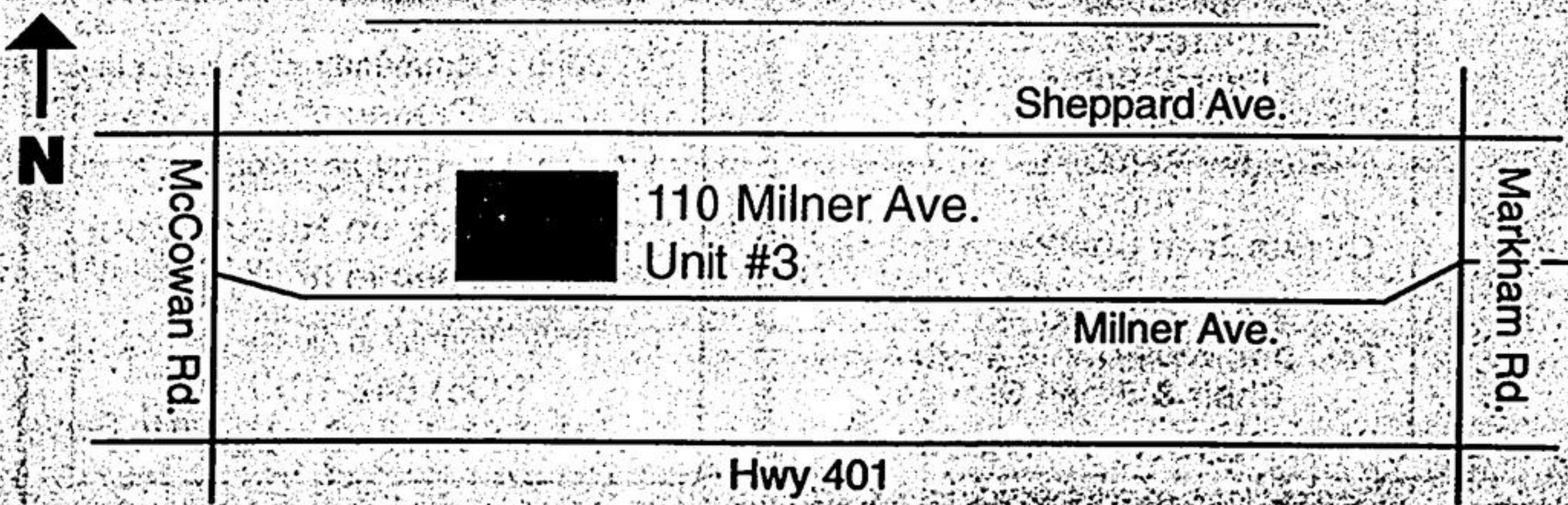
Emmanuel receives support from 10,000 partners, 450 churches, the Canadian government and non-governmental organizations.

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