

MEDIA RELEASE

Smiths Falls, Ontario, February 9, 2023 – Rideau Community Health Services in partnership with The Table Community Food Centre would like to extend the deepest gratitude to the many community partners for their assistance in supporting food security in the area, including the Brown Bag Lunch program and other initiatives throughout the pandemic.

Brown Bag Lunches and the Meals on Wheels Frozen Meal Program was a joint effort between the Smiths Falls Legion, Branch 95 Legion Ladies Auxiliary, Community Home Support Lanark County, the Table Community Food Centre, and Rideau Community Health Services. These programs provided over 21,000 bagged lunches and 4,125 frozen Meals on Wheels meals to members of our communities from September 2020 to December 2022. These programs were supported through grants provided by the Town of Smiths Falls, and generous donations from individuals and businesses in our communities.

The program began as a response to food insecurity during the pandemic. Along with other lunches offered by St. Francis Catholic Church, the Salvation Army, Trinity United Church, Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, and St. John's Anglican Church, it helped to fill gaps in community members' ability to access food. Food insecurity is an issue for many people in Smiths Falls, which has been exacerbated by the effects of the pandemic, rising housing costs, and extreme inflation of food prices. The 2017 Canadian Community Health Survey shows that 9.4% or 6,449 households in Lanark, Leeds, and Grenville experience food insecurity. For more information about local food insecurity, see the Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's [Food Insecurity Infographic](#).

The Brown Bag Lunch program has now ended. In its place, [The Table Community Food Centre](#) is hosting a hot lunch, dine-in meal program weekly in Smiths Falls at Hanley Hall (30 McGill St. N). Everyone is welcome. Doors open at 11am and lunch is served from 12 to 1. [Community Home Support Lanark County](#) continues to provide frozen Meals on Wheels meals at all locations across Lanark County.

A special mention to Helen Wilkinson, Iris Dorin, Jean Lasenba, Melissa Mickle, Penny Irish, Joane Morin, Debbie Foster, Heather Hogan, Bettyann Thompson, Shirley Brown, JoAnne James, and Pat Lafontaine of the Branch 95 Legion Ladies Auxiliary, and St. Francis Catholic Church for allowing use of their space at Hanley Hall.



The Branch 95 Smiths Falls Legion Ladies Auxiliary

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the**Table**
community food centre