



SUMMER 2023

# NEWSLETTER



**It's hard to believe that we're nearing the halfway point of 2023! There is something about the busyness and daily pulse of Niagara Christian Gleaners (NCG) that makes it feel like time just flies by.**

Each new day at the Gleaners brings new opportunities to serve others. Nearly every day we get to introduce others to the mission of NCG, whether they are first time volunteers or visitors. Telling the story of NCG never gets old and it's always received with a certain level of awe as to what is possible and how many lives are being touched through this ministry. One of the ways we were able to raise the profile of NCG was through the recent fundraising dinners. Over 600 guests were treated to an amazing meal while hearing the latest updates from NCG. Our guest speakers, Dr's Harry and Echo Vanderwal from The Lukes Commission (Eswatini) gave an inspiring talk on their important work in that small country. NCG has been blessed by a strong partnership with them since 2019 and it was a joy to hear how our food is a valuable support to their work.

The general daily operation of NCG involves many volunteers and they are an amazing, joyful and energetic group of people. We love hearing their stories and each volunteer is valued. Each person

## PETE'S PEN

coming to the Gleaners makes an impactful difference while sharing their unique gifts and abilities. There really is something for everyone at NCG and we are always seeking ways to involve as many people as possible. Every hand helping out has a direct correlation with how much food aid we will be able to share - it really is that simple. We're looking forward to our students returning this summer. We love the shift in dynamics that comes with involving the additional younger aged volunteers. They naturally bring another level of energy that makes things fun and exciting. By the end of the summer holidays we've signed quite a large number of high school volunteer hour sheets. NCG is a great place to make best use of a rather vast range of ages and abilities. It's one of those characteristics of NCG that makes serving at the Gleaners pretty special. Even elementary school age children are welcome to join in, providing they come with an older sibling, parent, or grandparent. If you haven't done so yet, please consider getting involved. It's easily done from our website where you can click the link: "Join our Army". Our food aid continues to be in strong demand all over the globe. Admittedly there are times when



our frustration level is high as the bureaucratic red tape seems to be the single greatest obstacle preventing some of our food from meeting its intended destination in timely ways. It can be quite a test of patience when we have food ready for shipping, only to have to “park” it until we can work through the paperwork. Simply put, our food isn’t benefiting others when it’s stored in our warehouse - even temporarily. We regularly pray for God to open those doors of opportunity. In all things we give God the glory. We’re humbled that He has seen fit to involve us, His people, in this important work. PW



## BOARD REPORT

**The first steps of moving soil and installing footings have started this week, and we look with eager anticipation to seeing our building addition being constructed over the coming months. Our volunteers are looking forward to having roomier work conditions.**

Thank you to all the supporters who attended our dinners on April 14 and 15, enabling us to raise \$115,000 towards our 2023 budget. Thank you also to the 100 volunteers who managed, prepared and served the meals. We couldn’t have done this without you. Our speaker for these evenings, Dr.

Echo Vanderwal, opened our eyes to the needs of the people of Eswatini, Africa and showed us how the Lord is working in that country through The Luke Commission. We are grateful to be a part of that work with our nutritious dried produce.

So far in 2023, we have processed 1.3 million pounds (600,000 kg) of fresh produce. This is on track with last year. The top 7 items in volume are potatoes, cabbage, carrots, beets, pears, parsnips and apples. These donations of quality produce are sincerely appreciated.

Not all of our volunteers work at the Gleaners. Elsewhere you will find information on our committees, those (often behind the scenes members) who provide the ground work to keep the NCG operating smoothly. They are an integral part of who we are.

We look forward to seeing many of you at our strawberry social (details elsewhere.) We will be happy to show you around the plant and share some of the Gleaner stories.

On behalf of the board, Arthur Struyk, Chairman



*Pictured: NCG Board*

## A COMMUNITY OF GIVING • • • VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES AT NCG

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 7 directors of the NCG provide oversight to ensure that the NCG meets its goal of providing from our abundance of food, to those who do not have enough. This is done in accordance with the NCG constitution and bylaws. We strive to provide the tools and guidance for our volunteers and management, so they can be effective in their work. We operate with joy and purpose, as our organization’s response to our heavenly Father, and as a witness to Him in our daily operations and in the food that we process.

### HEALTH, SAFETY & HARASSMENT

The two Health and Safety Committee members work alongside the managers in a relaxed approach, identifying any potential hazards or risks on site, which we then communicate and follow-up on correcting. Our ear is tuned to our volunteers who also point out any equipment that needs attention or procedures that can be performed more efficiently. As well, we regularly keep the first aid kit supplied with basic essentials. Our managers have completed a Safety Course and often remind volunteers to wear closed toed footwear, to work safely with tools and within their physical capabilities.

### BUILDING, EQUIPMENT & MAINTENANCE

We, as the Building Committee, are presently busy with the renovation and addition to the present building, which includes dealing with the contractors, engineered drawings and Upper Canada for a new site plan. We are also responsible for obtaining building permits and getting all appropriate approvals. Because our NCG building is relatively new, maintenance needs are relatively low. We work in close contact with the manager, Peter Wierenga. There are 8 volunteers who work on this committee.

### FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The NCG Distribution Committee is composed of 2 board members, 1 volunteer and Pete Wierenga, the General Manager. The mandate of the committee is to discern which countries and organizations will be granted permission to share the NCG food aid. The committee manages all import/export documents, inspection records, application forms and follow up reports from the receiving organizations. Organizations that provide this service as part of the gospel message are given high priority.

### PERSONNEL

The Personnel Committee is responsible for advertising job openings and assist in the interview process of candidates. We provide recommendations on who we think will offer the most to the Gleaners and who is the most suitable candidate. We aim to meet with each assistant manager and managers at least once a year and we also report to the board. We have 4 volunteers that work on this committee.

### PROMOTIONS

As the Promotion Committee of the NCG, our committee of 9 love to share the exciting things that happen at NCG through published newsletters, social media, presentations, and booths at public events. We publish over 5000 newsletters 4 times a year and have a team of designers making all the promotional material. Please help us Promote the NCG by liking us on social media.

### ADVISORY

This committee receives and reviews all correspondence from the board and the other committees. It is in place to provide oversight of the board’s activities, as well as to help in any matters of dispute or disagreement. It works in an advisory capacity. Consists of 4-5 members.

### AD HOC

This committee was put into place by the board to raise the funds for our new addition. It is a short term committee whose task will be complete once the addition is complete. Consists of 5 members.

### FINANCE

Our responsibilities are oversight of our finances. We prepare the yearly budgets, and track and issue receipts for all donations. We are in the starting stages of integrating long term giving, including through charitable estate planning, endowments, and beneficiary giving. We currently have 3 members.

### BOOKKEEPER

Our volunteer bookkeeper is Joyce Sonneveld. She generously gives of her time keeping our financial records in good order. This includes handling all of our Accounts Payable, Payroll, and Monthly and Yearend Reports for our Board Meetings. She works closely with our accountant, Dwight TeBrake to ensure that all of our government remittances etc are in compliance.

### ACQUISITION OF PRODUCE

This Committee of 9 is primarily made up of volunteers who are connected to the produce industry. They may be growers themselves or in the produce transportation and distribution sector. They serve as advisors for our General Manager as fresh produce donations are handled and produce partnerships are developed.



*An overview of the many volunteer committees that make Niagara Christian Gleaners run so smoothly. Some prefer behind the scenes work as they cannot help in the warehouse processing produce. These committees are a great way to stay involved in a different capacity.*

## CHEERFUL CHOPPERS

### VOLUNTEER PROFILE



**Vern Dorr is one of those valuable volunteers who readily uses his gifts and abilities to make quite a difference at NCG. Vern began his working career in a small electric motor shop in Hamilton, Ontario. Quickly Vern became a licensed electrician and has been working in the area of controls and automation for most of his career. In 2020 Vern retired from Gypsum Technologies following years of international service and installation work**

that brought him to many foreign countries. It was when Vern stepped into retirement that he was introduced to NCG by a member of his congregation who encouraged him to get involved. He was told there was so much work to be done and he could use his skills to bless the ministry. Vern's talents are certainly in demand because he also volunteers as part of a maintenance crew at Oneida Baptist Camp in Nanticoke, Ontario. Additionally, Vern humbly helps out as a member of his church's audio and visual team and is part of New Life Prison Ministries, which provides online Bible instruction for inmates. With all the volunteer opportunities available, we wanted to ask Vern what it is that draws him to serve at NCG. He said that Christ has directed us all to show compassion, to love those who are poor and needy, and to share the gospel. Vern said, "NCG checks each of those boxes in real ways. That's why I serve here as we try to make a difference in people's lives." Vern shared that he appreciates how NCG operates and how each volunteer is made to feel valued. "I've been part of countless work settings in my career and I have experienced a vast range of work environments. I can say that nothing compares to the atmosphere we have at the Gleaners," says Vern, "It's a joy to serve!" Vern knows better than to show up at the Gleaners without his bag of tools as the management team always seems to have something mechanical that needs his attention. As NCG enters into year 5 of production, much of the equipment has worked through literally millions of pounds of produce, meaning that some things, understandably, begin to

wear out. Vern is a very resourceful volunteer who is not afraid to take on any challenge. He didn't shy away from taking a lead in assembling and installing Dryer #2 when it arrived. If he's not attending to something mechanical, he's likely to be found capably handling our tow motor as one of our certified operators. We hope Vern provides inspiration for other retirees to come out and make a difference while using their own unique God-given gifts and talents for His service. Thank-you, Vern, for all you do - you are appreciated!





# Strawberry SOCIAL

**SATURDAY, JUNE 24**

Niagara Christian Gleaners is once again hosting a  
*Walk-Through and Strawberry Social.*

**YOU'RE INVITED TO COME VISIT OUR FACILITIES**  
and learn more about the mission of NCG

**COMPLIMENTARY STRAWBERRIES AND  
ICE CREAM FOR OUR GUESTS.**

**SATURDAY, 24 JUNE 2023/ 1-4 PM.**  
6251 Spring Creek Rd, Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0.

## YOUR DONATION MAKES AN IMPACT!

As a non-profit organization, we rely on donations from people just like you.

### 3 WAYS TO GIVE:

#### DONATE ONLINE

[niagaragleaners.org/donate](https://niagaragleaners.org/donate)

#### E-TRANSFER

[givingncc@gmail.com](mailto:givingncc@gmail.com)

#### CHEQUE BY MAIL

TO: Niagara Christian Gleaners