

ELIM VILLAGE VOICE

A Newsletter by the Residents and for the Residents of Elim Village † A Caring Christian Community

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Residents Reach \$10,000... A Recycling Milestone

When residents first moved into Elim in 2001, one of them kept coming back from her daily walks with plastic grocery bags that clinked. Neighbours soon found out that the bags were full of return-for-refund bottles and cans that Ann Van Harten found along the way. Then they found out that through her church, Ann donated all the money to the *Canadian Foodgrains Bank – a Christian response to world hunger*. Soon the project became a community effort and over the years, the nickels and dimes added up. Last month the return-for-refund containers rattled the \$10,000 mark.

What started as one person's personal project became contagious. Neighbours started coming back from their own walks with clinking bags. One resident says, "We can't leave the house till Onne has stuffed some grocery bags into his pockets. He's attracted to cans like a magnet."

Specially marked bins were placed in the garbage rooms of all the buildings as Elim grew so that anyone could donate their returnable bottles and cans. Some men built a mini bottle depot in the Bowron's basement, the central collection area, so that items could be sorted, counted and bagged before being taken to the Fleetwood Bottle Depot.

Bottle fever spread further. "We even bring back bottles from our Okanagan holidays," says another resident. "We pull down the seats and stuff our van full!" Other times bags just appear in the lobbies, dropped off by friends and family. Some houses in the neighbourhood save their bottles for Elim.

The story stretches well beyond community involvement and the \$10,000 milestone. Every donation is matched 4:1 by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) so eventually the dimes and nickels quadruple. Furthermore, over 114,000 thousand containers have passed through Elim and been saved from the garbage heap. Bottle by bottle, can by can, this project has both a worldwide and an environmental impact. Not bad for humble Elim return-for-refund containers. □

RETURN-FOR-REFUND UPDATE

*Since January 1, 2009, Elim residents
have raised...*

\$150.50

*In 2008, the Elim community raised \$2,077
for the Canadian Foodgrains Banks. Every
January the balance drops to zero and we
start off fresh.*

*This update appears on the back page of
every newsletter. Watch for it and help that
number grow.*

*"Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees,
so they camped there by the waters." Exodus 15:27 (New King James Version)*