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## 'It made more sense': Law firm cancels golf tournament for big food bank donation

GEOFF DAVIES  
METRO HALIFAX  
May 29, 2009 12:44 a.m.

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Feed Nova Scotia executive director Dianne Swinemar was in the food bank's warehouse to accept a big cheque worth big money Thursday.

"We don't see a whole lot of \$50,000 cheques so that's a sizeable donation - a significant donation and a thoughtful donation," Swinemar said.

The donation comes from the Atlantic Canadian law firm Stewart McKelvey, which has several offices, including one in Halifax. The firm usually hosts a golf tournament and lobster dinner for its clients, but decided "it made more sense" to give this money to provincial food bank associations in Atlantic Canada, according to Rick Southcott, the firm's regional managing partner.

Feed Nova Scotia accepted the cheque and is dividing the money with the other associations.



GEOFF DAVIES/METRO HALIFAX

Rick Southcott, left, regional manager for the law firm Stewart McKelvey, and John Rogers, the firm's CEO, present a cheque for \$50,000 to Feed Nova Scotia executive director Dianne Swinemar Thursday. The money will be distributed to provincial food bank associations throughout Atlantic Canada.

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"These are challenging times, and it's a time when businesses need to step up," said John Rogers, the firm's CEO, who was on-hand to deliver the cheque with Southcott.

These "challenging times" have led to a 20 per cent increase in the number of Canadians turning to food banks, according to a release from Food Banks Canada. Dire economic straits make it a tough time for food banks to handle the increase, but Swinemar said the support they've received from the community means "this year has been better than most years."

She said Feed Nova Scotia received more Christmas donations last year than any in its history, but not before struggling through tough times.

"On the first of October, you could see almost every inch of floor space in this warehouse," Swinemar recalled.

Gary Nickerson has been volunteering in Feed Nova Scotia's warehouse for 10 years. He said he usually puts in two full days a week, but the lack of donations meant there wasn't much work for him to do when the recession first hit.




However, he said he's been very busy since Christmas.

"Dianne put out the message that it was low, really low in the warehouse, and the message got through to the public."

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