

There are no poor people in Antigonish

Karen Boyd

Sometimes a good idea is not enough.

The Antigonish Women's Resource Center thought they had a good idea when they decided to have a Poverty Awareness Day in Antigonish - others didn't. The project has been plagued by petty town politics. The Town Council refused to support the day by officially proclaiming it, and the County Council would only support a "Community Needs Day". So, Community Needs Day will take place on Saturday, March 27 (in the county anyway). There will be an Information Fair in the St. James United Church Hall from 10 am to 4 pm which will have booths representing

several local groups.

There will also be a food drive. The food was initially to be collected for the Antigonish Community Food Bank, but under threats of discontinued support from various members of the community, they have pulled their support of the day.

Katherine Reed of the Women's Resource Centre said she was "disappointed" by the lack of support from the major food bank in Antigonish. She went on to explain that there is a negative "stigma" attached to the word poverty. The intent of the day is not to blame anyone, but to help the poor of Antigonish. The food collected will be distributed as the Center sees need, with

help from the food bank of the Pentacostal Church. If there is enough food some may be donated to the Off-Campus Bank.

The Off-Campus Society is not directly participating in the day, but it recognizes poverty as a problem for some students. Between twenty and thirty students have used the food bank which is sponsored and run by the Off-Campus Society. The food bank is located in the basement of Lane Hall and is open Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 2 - 5. If you need food you can go to

either Financial Aid or the Off-Campus Society for help. If you would like to make a donation to the food bank (which is dependent on students), bring non-perishable goods to the Off-Campus Office on 4th SUB. Not everyone at St. F. X. has a meal plan; many people off-campus are living week to week and could use your help.

It is a shame that something as innocent as a day set aside to increase awareness of a problem has been marred by the denial of a few. There are people in An-

tigonish who are hungry. There are children who had Xmas stockings for the first time in their lives this year thanks to the Community Food Bank. The people of Antigonish are known for their generosity, but they are also known for their tendency to stick their heads in the sand. Poverty is a serious problem which is being addressed by some people in the community, but it cannot be solved with cash and denial. We, as a community, have to admit our problems to understand and solve them.

REMINDER