

Hampers Spread Holiday Cheer

By Marianne Curtis

In response to the growing need to make Christmas special for everyone, several organizations throughout the region are devoting their efforts to make Christmas special for everyone. Donations of all kinds including food, toys and gifts for children from newborn to seventeen are still needed by all these organizations. Monetary donations are always needed. There is also a need for volunteers to assist each community organization with sorting, packing and delivery.

RM of Ste. Anne, Town of Ste. Anne and Richer register for a Christmas Hamper from Accueil Kateri Centre fill out the only form at accueilkatericentre.ca.

RM of Tache for residents to register for a Christmas Hamper, please call Irene Bialek at 204-878-3562. Registrations will be accepted from Monday, November 26 to Wednesday, December 19. If you have received a Hamper in past years and wish to receive one this

year, you must call to register. New applicants and referrals are welcome.

RM of De Salaberry including St. Malo, Dufrost, Otterburne and St. Pierre-Jolys call Marcelle/Robert Lahaie 204-433-7227 or email requests to robmarlahaie@gmail.com.

RM of Stuartburn if you are in need of a Christmas hamper or know of someone that who does please contact Elda at 204-425-3105. For your sealed, non-perishable donations, we will have bins at the following locations until December 14, Shevchenko School, Sumthing Special and the Fresh Factory.

RM of Ritchot including Ile des Chenes, St. Adolphe, and Grande Pointe are available from the IDC Foodbank at 878-3359.

RM of Reynolds including Hadashville, Prawda, McMunn, East Braintree, Rennie, Molson/Julius, Ste. Rita, Reynolds Ponds, Whitemouth call Elsie Henderson 204-348-2313.

RM of Piney including Sprague, Vasar, South Junction, Menisino, Wam-

pum, Piney, and Middlebro call Victor or Shawny Prevost 204-437-2600 or email vsprevo@mts.net.

Grunthal Caring Hands Foodbank is serving Grunthal, Kleefeld, Pansy, and Sarto. Contact Tracy Klippenstein at 204-371-1409 or Liz Heese at 204-434-6718 email grunthalcommunitychristmas@gmail.com.

Niverville and New Bothwell recipients can register online only at nivervillehelpinghands.org.

Steinbach Community Christmas Hamper for residents of the City of Steinbach,

and RM of La Broquerie including La Broquerie, Marchand, Zhoda, and RM of Piney including Sandilands, St. Labre, and Woodridge. Sign up at steinbachcommunitychristmas.com.

Dominion City for residents in the RM of Franklin including Arnaud, Tolstoi, Ridgeville, Woodmore, Greenridge, Carlowrie, Dominion City, Rosa, Roseau River contact Linda Steinert 204-427-2622 or linda@mynetsnet.com.

Ste. Anne Man's Invention No Snow Job

By Marianne Curtis

If you have a large cement driveway, you may want to check out a new invention created by a former aircraft engineer from Ste. Anne.

The idea for the Snowdozer began back in 2013, when shortly after retiring as an aircraft engineer Lorne Stoddart and his wife moved to Ste. Anne. That first winter, he was out cleaning the large cement driveway, and he started to wonder if there was a faster way of getting the job done. Taking a broomstick and a one-by-four, he created the first prototype.

After spending three years, with long hours researching specific material and then testing the durability and effectiveness of each piece, Stoddart said, "It feels satisfying to develop a product that is beneficial and time saving."

With the help of neighbours, friends and family members who were given prototypes and gave valuable feedback regarding the performance of the Snowdozer, two designs were developed, the solid pole/rubber ball handle and a D-grip/extendable handle. The high abrasion resistance blade is UHMW (ultra high molecular weight) polyethylene. "The uniqueness of the Snowdozer is the curvature of the blade, in which it acts as a snow plow and gathers the snow in front without spilling over the sides," Stoddart explained. It is light weight and does not require the user to lift snow, thus reducing personal injury. It also allows users to clear out snow from underneath their vehicles.

Once Stoddart was happy with the design, the decision was made to proceed with the venture due to costs. Deciding to move forward, the couple incorporated the company, obtained a Canadian trademark and applied for US and Canadian patents. "The most fulfilling part of

creating the Snowdozer is to be able to say that the units are Made-in-Canada. Most of our suppliers are in the vicinity of Winnipeg and Steinbach," Stoddart explained. He added that the most daunting was, "The tedious task of designing a quality product that was safe, durable and affordable."

Stoddart admitted he never planned on becoming an inventor, and he encourages others with unique ideas to do their homework before chasing that dream. "Ask yourself realistically how many consumers would want your product.

Confirm that the invention is different from anything else on the market. Do so, by seeking assistance from a patent officer. It will cost money, but best to find out beforehand before proceeding on with additional expenses," he advised.

In 2015, the first Snowdozers were sold at Ste. Anne's Builder's Supply and EG Penner in Steinbach. The following year, several other retailers across Canada ordered and this year, Snowdozer units are available in Canada and the US.



Ste. Anne inventor Lorne Stoddart shows how to use his innovative Snowdozer, which is designed to clear cement driveways quickly and effortlessly. *Supplied photo.*

When it comes to serving you, the pleasure's been all ours.

With a multitude of best warm wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season to all of you from all of us.

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