

THE HERALD

"The world is hugged by the faithful arms of volunteers." - Terri Guillemets

Willie Lee, Board Chair

Family traditions are instilled in many of us at a very young age. Our family tradition was celebrated on Christmas Eve as each family member munched on appetizers and snacks, we would open one gift each and then watch, as a family, a Christmas movie. Many times it was "A Wonderful Life".

As we grow, start our own families, pieces of our childhood traditions come together to form new family traditions. One tradition that I hear about at the Christmas Bureau is 'I started volunteering with my parents and now I bring my children and/or grandchildren to volunteer. As in

'A Wonderful Life', by working together as a community, you help provide for those in need at Christmas time. Thank you for keeping the tradition of providing a festive meal to Edmonton families in need going for 73 years.



Linda Romaniuk, Volunteer Committee Chair

Growing up, my family and I would always decorate our Christmas tree on December 20th – my father's birthday.

Dad would turn the Christmas music on while my 5 siblings and I sang, decorated the tree and drank eggnog. This year my dad will be turning 80 and I plan on being with him and the rest of our family to celebrate exactly as we have for the last 50 years.

73 years ago, a tradition was started here in Edmonton; a tradition of giving that has grown to provide a festive meal to over 62,000 Edmontonians in need. Much like the collaborative spirit of preparing for Christmas with those you love, over 800 volunteers now come together each year to provide the invaluable support needed to foster a spirit of compassion, generosity and hope. Without the continued support of a huge team of dedicated individuals, the Christmas Bureau could not provide a festive meal to families in need.

Thank you for the commitment you have given over the years.



BECOME PART OF THE TRADITION

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE CHRISTMAS BUREAU

Volunteers: The success of the Christmas Bureau relies heavily on the continued support of volunteers. Donation Desk Ambassadors, Office Assistants, and Walk-In Days are just a few examples of available opportunities to individuals, friends, families or groups looking to get involved. For more information on volunteer opportunities, please visit:

www.christmasbureau.ca/volunteers

or call **Renée at 780 414 7682.**

Volunteer registration begins in September.



Aqua Insurance Brokers Ltd. Staff setting up Walk-In Days



Third Party Fundraiser: There are a number of ways a group of friends or an organization can contribute in helping over 62,000 Edmontonians in need this Christmas season.

To register your fundraiser with the Christmas Bureau, please visit:
www.christmasbureau.ca/fundraising or contact
Darlene at 780 414 7681 for more information

Hamper Sponsorship: A perfect way for a group to begin or continue their own tradition of giving during the Christmas season, organizations or groups purchase the food and hand deliver the hamper to a Christmas Bureau family in need. This is a very rewarding program for all! For more details on the hamper sponsorship program, please visit:

www.christmasbureau.ca/sponsorship or call **Ann at 780 414 7686.** (Please note that the Hamper Sponsorship program opens November 18)





OFFICE ASSISTANTS (Weekdays, 9 am to 4 pm):

A campaign like this isn't possible without the behind the scenes heroes. Tasks included answering phones, database entry, certificate stuffing, opening mail and counting donations.

HAMPER PROGRAM (Dec 11, 13 and 14):

A volunteer favourite, this busy area focuses on the festive hampers; unloading trucks, hamper packing and hamper delivery.

DONATION DESK AMBASSADORS (Dec 1 – Dec 24):

As well as accepting donations, paired volunteers serve as front line ambassadors offering information about the services and events of the Christmas Bureau.

DONATION DESK TEAM LEADERS (Nov 14 – Dec 24):

Team leaders are essential to the success of the donation desks. These volunteers act as liaison and coach for the Donation Desk Ambassadors by overseeing the day to day operation of the desk and scheduling of shifts.

SPECIAL EVENT ASSISTANTS (throughout campaign):

There are a number of special events throughout the year that require the support of dedicated volunteers. Volunteers assist with event set up, donation collection, and coat check at various events.

WALK-IN DAYS (set up Dec 21 and operational Dec 22 – 23):

This is the final opportunity for families and individuals to apply and receive support by way of food certificates, toys, and teen gift cards. Volunteers participate in this tradition and foster a spirit of caring and dignity. Help is needed with set up, greeting people, distributing toys, hospitality and data entry.

Join our volunteer family! 800 members and growing!



Renée Cabana-Marshall, Volunteer Coordinator

Fostering a spirit of community engagement is an integral part of the Christmas Bureau campaign and its services—invaluable.

With the support of over 800 volunteers and a slew of generous donors, a festive dinner is available for those who would otherwise have none. It is the gift of compassion and dignity that bring these individuals together each year to build upon the Christmas Bureau's tradition of giving.

Being offered the role of Volunteer Coordinator with the Christmas Bureau for the 2013 campaign is an absolute honour. I look forward to a very successful 2013 campaign and working with so many inspiring individuals.



“Be someone who makes someone else look forward to tomorrow”—Unknown

Traditionally speaking...



15 year volunteer veteran, Narmin Hassam-Clark shares with us the story of her family's tradition of volunteering, the impact it had on her life, and her reasons for continuing to support the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton and other organizations.

Reaping the Rewards

Narmin Hassam-Clark

My commitment to volunteerism was born of parental expectations; however, I agree with Ralph Waldo Emerson's assertion that "one of the most beautiful compensations in life is that no person can help another without helping themselves."

My parents came to Canada as African refugees in 1972. By the time I was born, my parents had survived re-starting their lives and had realized that their new country had much in common with their former homeland – notwithstanding the polar opposite weather patterns, of course. One commonality was the spirit of volunteerism. From an early age, my siblings and I were encouraged to join my parents in volunteer work, whether it was assisting seniors in the community or donating to the food bank. We were expected to "give back" as a way of celebrating the good fortune of making Canada our home.

Upon entering the work force in 1999, I lost access to the plethora of volunteering opportunities associated with student life. As a result, I began volunteering for the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton (CBE). Although I am Muslim, Christmas is my favourite holiday because it brings ample opportunities for showcasing generosity and performing good deeds. To date, I have participated in 14 annual CBE campaigns. Along the way I have rallied friends, colleagues and family members to join me in packing and delivering hampers, sponsoring families, staffing donation desks and providing support at the annual Walk-In Days. For instance, in December 2012, I was joined by 40 RCMP colleagues to sponsor hampers for 8 families.

I'm looking forward to 2013's CBE campaign and hoping that even more of my RCMP colleagues will join me. So, why do I choose to volunteer now? I volunteer because it's the easiest way to "be the change you wish to see in the world." (Mahatma Gandhi.)

AN EVENING OF CELEBRATION

2012 AWARD WINNERS

Each campaign year is closed out with an Evening of Celebration where all volunteers are invited to share in the campaign success. Over 200 volunteers attended this event at City Hall. We are pleased to share with you our 2012 Award Winners.

First Year Volunteer Contribution Award:

Bill Boyd was introduced to our volunteer program through his wife, Vienna. He contributed over 50 hours in the office stuffing envelopes, helping with mail outs, and completing computer work. It didn't matter what we asked of him, he was quick to say "yes" and completed each job perfectly. Bill is an outstanding Christmas Bureau representative and we hope to see him and Vienna back for 2013.



Outstanding Volunteer Awards:

Patrick Finnan has been part of our Donation Desk Ambassador program for over twelve years and has accumulated more than 300 hours of service. Always dependable, willing to assist where needed, a true example of Christmas Bureau spirit.

Angie De Haan In addition to being a Team Leader at Bonnie Doon, Angie helped with coat check at the FMC Breakfast and parking control duty at both of the Walk-In Days.

Nancy Yatscoff has been a part of our Hamper Sponsorship Program since 1997. Nancy diligently matches up sponsors to families requesting hampers, and completes all paperwork to ensure the transactions are complete. Each year she dedicates a full day each week, beginning in November and ending just before Christmas.

Chairman's Award:

Ann Wilson has been with the Christmas Bureau for 6 years. On average, she gifts 225 hours per year as the Hamper Coordinator and volunteers full time from mid-November to Christmas. In her time with the Christmas Bureau, Ann has grown this program from 800 to over 1,350 families, seniors, and individuals receiving a hamper from a private sponsor.



Kevin Lowe Award:

Len Acker began volunteering as a boy while delivering Hampers with his father. He continued this tradition and acted as a Team Leader at Kingsway Mall and Winspear Caroling. Len exemplifies all the criteria of this award and is a wonderful Ambassador for the Christmas Bureau.



This year's Evening of Celebration will be held on January, 30.
All volunteers are invited to celebrate and be appreciated.

Special Thanks to our 2012 Volunteer Program Sponsors

A Sign Promotion
Albert's—Londonderry Mall
Align Fence Inc.
Aramark Refreshment Services
Booster Juice
Café O'Play
Capital Transport Ltd.
Chop Steakhouse & Bar
City of Edmonton
Costco West Edmonton
Cookies By George
Corus Entertainment
Culligan Water
Devonian Botanic Garden
Dollarama
Edmonton Eskimos
Edmonton Rush
Edmonton Symphony Orchestra
Empire Theatres
Great Canadian Wholesale
ION Print Solutions
Italian Centre
King Stamp and Sign
La Prep—Londonderry Mall
Lite 95.7

Lumberjacks on 75st
McDonald's Restaurant
McEwen's Esso
Packrat Louie Kitchen & Bar
Pizza 73
Purdy's Chocolate
Rabbit Hill Snow Resort
Rapid Fire Theatre
River Cree Resort
Royal Alberta Museum
Safety West Inc
Servus Credit Union
Snow Valley Ski Club
Staples—Crossroads
Starbucks—Southgate Mall
Superstore 178 St & Stony Plain Rd.
Sunterra Market—Commerce Place
Tim Hortons—Bonnie Doon Mall
Tim Hortons—Kingsway
Tim Hortons—West Edmonton Mall
Unisource Canada Inc.
Universal Music
Vertically Inclined
West Edmonton Mall
Zaika Indian Bistro Bar
630 CHED Santas Anonymous

We gratefully acknowledge Servus Credit Union for its generous donation of office space for over 14 years

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