

Walk 'feeds body and soul'

Proceeds will help Cloverdale Community Kitchen spread its reach

By Jennifer Lang

Fueled by hot coffee and hearty stew, more than 200 people took to the streets of Cloverdale to raise money as part of the Coldest Night of the Year walk.

This year's walk, held Feb. 21, raised more than \$40,000 – money that will be used to help support the Cloverdale Community Kitchen.

Ingredients for the stew were provided by Save-On-Foods, and the meal was cooked up by volunteers from the Cloverdale Community Kitchen, said organizer Jim Heuvig, executive pastor of Pacific Community Church.

"Even McCafe set up their mobile unit and served us a full selection of hot beverages," he added. "It was a great night!"

Thirty teams took part. Local realtor Edith Katronis and team were lead sponsor, contributing \$2,500 and raising another \$2,000.

"We are really thankful for the Katronis team," Heuvig said. "They were outstanding!"

Based out of Pacific Community Church, the industrial-grade community kitchen is home to three existing programs assisting Cloverdale's less fortunate.

Last year's walk coincided with the kitchen's

launch, and helped pay for a consultant who spoke with community organizations and individuals in Cloverdale about the direction of the kitchen.

Funds raised at this year's walk – one of 60 walks organized by charities assisting homeless across Canada – will be used to bring in a full-time coordinator for the kitchen.

The goal is to broaden the number of programs offered.

To Edith Katronis, the walk is important because it directly helps and benefits the community – after all, people who are well fed and cared for are more productive. The community kitchen is also helping seniors and some children.

"This is something where you can see the results," she added.

"These folk who serve meals to the needy are also there to talk to them and help a poor soul along who needs it. I call it feeding the body and soul."

She notes the funds are well spent, because there are many volunteers who are donating their time.

"Cloverdale can be proud that a small community like we are is successful in hosting such a worthwhile endeavour."