

dardbred and thoroughbred sector. The deal, finalized by the B.C. Horse Racing Industry Management Committee, is subject to approval by the provincial Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch. "We feel this will create an atmosphere of stability that will benefit breeders, owners, trainers, bettors and race track personnel," management committee chair Douglas S. Scott said in a statement, explaining racing and funding arrangements are in place for the thoroughbred sector for the next three years and provides for a six-month

in 2015, and to just six months in 2016, something local horsemen have been lobbying against. "Of course we would like more race dates," said Jackson Whittup, executive director of Harness Racing B.C., the association representing standardbred breeders, owners, trainers and drivers. "The major component of this for us is the five-year deal," he said. "We've been told we have government backing for five years. We have race dates for five years. I think a lot of other jurisdictions would be jealous that we have it."

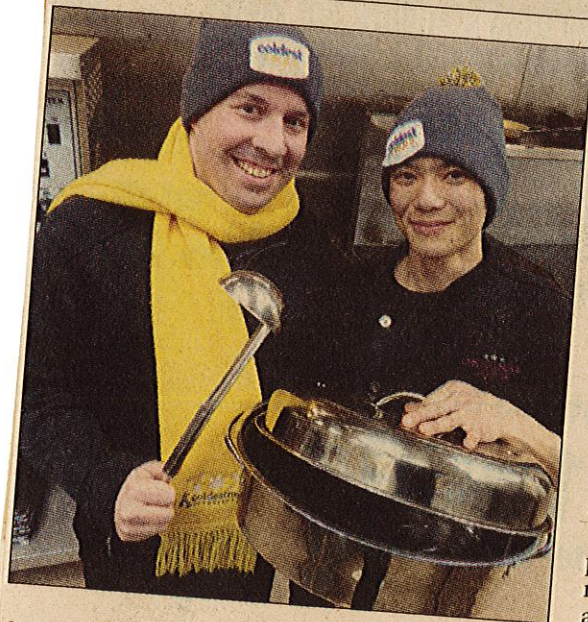
A standardbred horse and driver out for a jog at Fraser Downs Racetrack in 2011.

LESLIE MCKELLAR FILE PHOTO

The deal says income from a portion of slot machine profits at the casinos at Fraser Downs and at Hastings Racecourse will continue to be divided between the standardbred and thoroughbred sector. Reaction in the backstretch to the deal is mixed because it means a six-month racing schedule for

four years, says standardbred owner and trainer Sandra Roberts. "Some people believe we've just slit our own throats," she said. "I look at it as an opportunity to grow." Five years of guaranteed racing means breeders, for example, will have an incentive to breed foals, a lifeline for the industry.

ed racing will begin at Hastings in late April or early May, continuing to November. The deal ends several months of tense negotiations. "Call it reluctant consensus," said Chuck Keeling, executive director of stakeholder relations at Great Canadian Gaming, which operates both race tracks. "We wanted to see some certainty and some stability over a multiple number of years," he said. "Over the last couple of years, it's been done on a year-to-year basis."



Sean Davie and Alex Suenaga of Original Joe's in Cloverdale will be serving up Irish Stew for walk participants.

JENNIFER LANG PHOTO

Walk marks kitchen's grand opening

By Jennifer Lang

It may be billed as the Coldest Night of the Year, but a delicious reward awaits participants in this Saturday evening's walk to raise operating funds for the new Cloverdale Community Kitchen – a bowl of hearty Irish stew.

Volunteers from Original Joe's, a trendy eatery in the historic Cloverdale town centre, will be serving up bowls full of their St. Patrick's Day delicacy: Guinness Irish Stew – enough for 300 hungry hikers and assorted volunteers.

Earlier this week, 26 teams had already pledged upwards of \$29,000 towards the new kitchen – well on the way to meeting a target of \$30,000 for the Cloverdale walk.

The Feb. 22 event, part of a nation-wide initiative focusing on homelessness and raising money to address their needs, in-

volves a two-, five- or 10-km walk on behalf of the new kitchen, hosted and built by Pacific Community Church.

The event also marks the grand opening of the kitchen, a commercial-grade facility constructed this fall after the congregation raised \$400,000 in cash and in-kind donations. Now complete, the kitchen is already serving up hot meals and nourishment for local individuals and families, but it's not yet known what the operational costs will be, said Cloverdale walk director Jim Heuvig.

Currently, there's a Monday Night Cafe run by volunteers from Pacific Community Church, and a hot lunch Thursdays offered by volunteers from the Korean Presbyterian church, but more community participation will be encouraged to help meet the need through new programs.

"The question will be how to we make the kitchen more accessible?" he said. Heuvig expects at least 200 walkers, but they're bracing for more, particularly as new registrations come in this week.

It's one of three walks taking place in Surrey – the other two are helping the Surrey Urban Mission and Sources Community Resources Society – but as of Tuesday, Cloverdale was sitting at 11th out of 63 communities in terms of pledges.

"Cloverdale has really responded in a great way, they should be proud," he said.

Several local sponsors are helping out with the walk, including PriceSmart and Original Joe's restaurant, which will be serving up stew. Sean Davie, general manager, said he jumped at the chance to get

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Rest stops are planned

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involved after receiving an email from the Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce. "It's the first large local event we've taken on," he said.

Rest stops along the way include Surrey Covenant Reformed Church, the Cloverdale Recreation Centre foyer, and MLA Stephanie Cadieux's office. Surrey RCMP auxiliary will be helping monitor the walkers, who will be on the road from 4:45 p.m. to about 8 p.m.

– For more, visit www.ColdestNightoftheYear.org/

Cloverdale.