

Hamper program brings Christmas cheer to 500 households

Cloverdale Community Kitchen has ran charitable program for 26 years

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Cloverdale Reporter

The Cloverdale Christmas Hamper program is once again in full swing.

Cloverdale's Pacific Community Church runs the program through the Cloverdale Community Kitchen (CCK). It started the hamper program 26 years ago to provide food and gifts to hundreds of families during the holiday season.

"The Christmas hamper program is the big push we do from now until Christmastime," said Matt Campbell, director for CCK.

Campbell said the whole program is based on the generosity of the Cloverdale community as the effort relies

on donated food, gifts, and money.

"The program supports about 500 households and it helps families in the Cloverdale area," he added. "We have recently expanded to offer hampers to Langley, the rest of Surrey, and even White Rock too."

He said they help about 200 families and about 300 seniors each Christmas.

After all the donations are collected, CCK has a hamper-packing week where volunteers come out and fill hampers with various items.

"We want to give people food, but we also want to make sure there are toys to bring happiness to the season



PHOTO: AMANDA GREENALL

Jen Temple (left) and Jacquie Robertson organized the gala dinner at Elements Casino called "An Evening With Friends." The Nov. 2 event raised \$15,000 for the Cloverdale Community Kitchen and their Christmas Hamper Program.

for the kids," Campbell told the *Cloverdale Reporter*. "So they can see that people do care for them and love them. That the community loves them."

Campbell said an army of about 2,000 volunteers work to fill the hampers. He said

last year, about 1,000 school kids and another 1,000 adults volunteered for the program.

"We get school groups, scouts, baseball teams, hockey teams, soccer teams; it's really a wide-range of people. They fill hampers full of food and help

stock a toy area where families can shop for the gifts they want for their kids."

The hamper program accepts unwrapped gifts for children and teens up to the age of 18.

Campbell said each

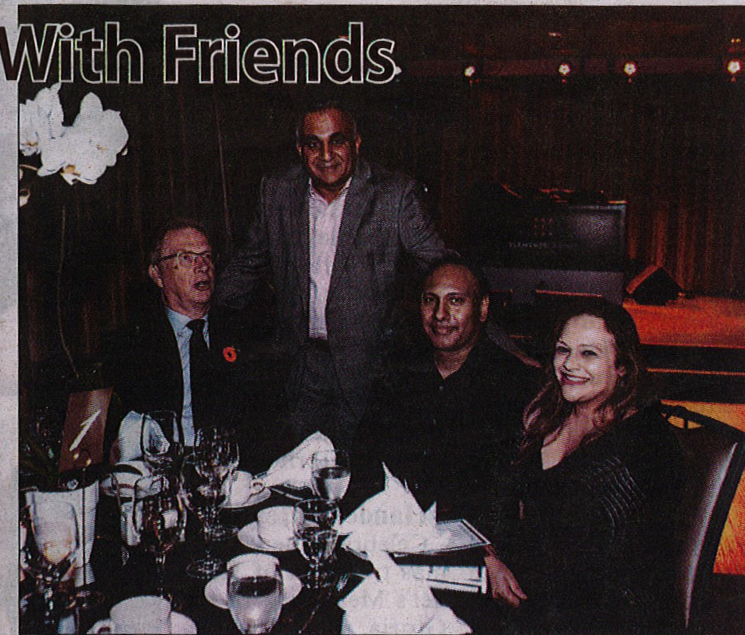


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From left: MLA Marvin Hunt, Surrey Councillor Jack Hundial, and Michael and Geeta Singh attend the gala dinner. The United Way partnered with CUPE 402 to donate an additional \$10,000 for the hamper program.

year they have a hard time filling gift needs for teenagers. He said to fill that need, he suggests donations such as gift cards, headphones, make-up, or clothes for 12 to 14 year olds.

"There are numerous food and toy drives that

are going on [in the community] to support the hamper program, and we'd love people to support them."

Many Cloverdale businesses and schools have have collection boxes. Donations can also be dropped off at

the Pacific Community Church at 5337 180 Street.

For more information on the program, to donate, or to volunteer, please visit www.myccck.ca.