

# Community Kitchen in need of warehouse space to help with Christmas hamper program

## Local MLA helps deliver toques for hamper program

Malin Jordan  
Cloverdale Reporter

The Cloverdale Community Kitchen's annual Christmas hamper program is back.

Local politician Mike Starchuk was at the Kitchen Oct. 13 donating some toques his mother knitted for the hamper program.

Starchuk, the NDP MLA for Surrey-Cloverdale, said his mom Flo is knitting 100 and each one will be stuffed into a Christmas hamper.

"My mom was knitting toques and scarves for the food bank in Campbell River," said Starchuk. "But she recently moved to West Kelowna and on the drive there she was wondering who she'd knit

for this year."

That's when Starchuk told his mom about the Community Kitchen and their Christmas hamper program. By the time Flo got settled in in the Okanagan, she had already knitted 30 toques.

"She said in Campbell River she'd see people wearing her toques and it brought a lot of joy to her," added Starchuk.

Starchuk has delivered 80 toques to the Kitchen so far and will bring another 20 later, once the hamper program gets going.

Starchuk added that as the program gears up, there is a concern for space to sort and pack the hampers.

"Unfortunately, the space they were reliant



Mike Starchuk, MLA for Surrey-Cloverdale, donates hand-knitted toques to Matthew Campbell and the Cloverdale Community Kitchen. Starchuk's mom knitted the toques. (Photo: Malin Jordan)

on is not available," said Starchuk. "So we've got a one-off situation this year."

Starchuk said the Community Kitchen

needs an open space that is about 7,000 sq. ft. as they need to be able to operate a forklift in that space. This helps offloading trucks as an army of

volunteers work to help fill hundreds of Christmas hampers.

"We are trying, as a constituency office, reaching out to those

people that we know that may have space, but so far we haven't been successful in finding that 7,000 sq. ft."

Starchuk urged anyone in the community that may have some space to donate to reach out to the Kitchen.

Community Kitchen director Matthew Campbell said they are pretty excited about being able to give the toques out to those in need.

"The best thing about homemade toques like this is that the people that receive them know that people took time and effort to make these. So they wear them a little bit prouder and they can feel the love that went into making them."

Campbell said hamper registrations will open up in early November and will be open for three weeks. He expects to give out about 600 to 700

hampers this year.

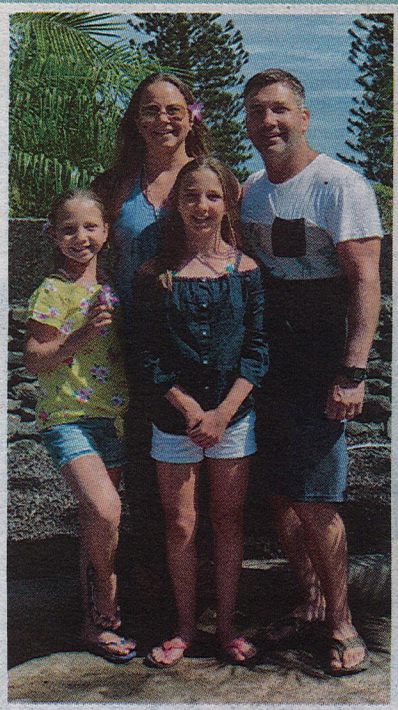
"We're gearing up for it and we're looking for volunteers. We have several already, but we still need many more."

Campbell said volunteers are needed to sort donations and pack hampers, to distribute donation boxes to businesses and to collect the boxes, and to organize hamper pick up.

In terms of the warehouse space, Campbell said they need it for approximately two weeks in December, from about Dec. 6 to Dec. 18.

"We'll take warehouse space anywhere in the surrounding area, Cloverdale, Campbell Heights, Fleetwood, Port Kells. So within 10 to 15 kilometres of Cloverdale if the right space came up."

The Christmas hamper program is now in its 30th year.



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