

The Community Fridge holds grand opening

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK AND ASHLEY BOCHEK

Moosomin Thrift Store and Food Share held the grand opening for the Community Fridge on Thursday at noon. The Community Fridge is available to everyone to drop-off or pick-up food. It includes a pantry and a freezer in addition to a fridge.

Larry Tomlinson, the mayor of Moosomin says he welcomes the Community Fridge and the help it will provide for families and locals in Moosomin.

"This is an awesome venture that the Food Bank is doing here. I talked to Sam before we came out here, and the hampers that they're putting out were in the 30s before—the boxes they were putting out for groceries—and it is now up to 48 last month. There is definitely a need here for what is going on and this will just help make everything that much better. I think it is a great asset and I think it can grow bigger going forward."

Sam Campbell, of the Moosomin Thrift Store and Food Share says they feel excited to provide a service to the community to help the people who need it the most and are thankful for the community's support.

"We want to say thank you to everyone who made the grant possible and thank you to everyone who is going to make it a success in the future."

Campbell adds the community fridge will be open every day for everyone.

"It is going to be open 24/7 for 365 days a year. You can drop-off food or pick-up. Eventually we will have a heater once it gets in from Jeannot Electric. We also have our generator running in the event the power goes out then all the food will be kept frozen or cold. Anyone is welcome at any time."

The Community Fridge has listed foods acceptable to donate on the inside of each door. "We have a list on each door what is acceptable, and some cleaning guidelines."

"On the one side anyone who makes donations over \$500 we do a plaque to show their support for the Community Fridge because this would not happen without them. The Moosomin Kinette Club gave us \$1,500 to stock the fridge and then Borderland Co-op gave a discount and we were able to purchase food with that money as well."

Campbell says a group of volunteers from the food bank have donated their time toward getting the community fridge running. "We have been working on the Community Fridge for about two years and it feels so nice to see it open now. We can move forward with another project now. We will look after checking on it to see if it is stocked and maintained, but I think it is going to be very well utilized."

"The Community Fridge is not associated with the food bank, it is members of the community. Yorkton has a complete volunteer group that started theirs," Campbell explained. "There are a couple in Regina and Saskatoon,



At left, Beryl Stewart, Sam Campbell of the Moosomin Thrift Store and Food Share, Larry Tomlinson, the mayor of Moosomin, Trina Brace, and Jaedyn Moore of the Thrift Store and Food share excited to cut the ribbon for the grand opening of the Community Fridge.

and they're all run by volunteers."

There are security cameras surrounding the area. "We have two cameras up as well so we can see what goes on outside around it, and we have night lights," Campbell said.

Campbell says the Community Fridge is to help locals who need the food.

"Hopefully this helps the people that are too proud to come to the food bank or the single mom who needs help, or the family that lost their home to a fire. This gives them something to come to rather than going to the food bank and filling out forms."

The Food Share program has seen an increase in the last year to provide food to local families.

"We had 48 hampers yesterday and 16 kids for our backpack program, which is every Friday. It has changed over the years. We started at seven backpacks and we only started it about a year ago and now we are at 16. With the hampers we started out with around 18 hampers a couple of years ago."

Murray Gray of the Town of Moosomin says the Com-

munity Fridge is a valuable addition to our community. "The fact that is as accessible as it is—you could go for a drive on Tuesday night and help fill the fridge. You can make a donation without people knowing, just like people can pick it up if they need it without anyone knowing, which is good. I think being accessible both ways is valuable."

Campbell adds they can help supply the fridge with extra food bank deliveries. "We get shipments from Food Banks Canada, but when we get a shipment we are getting a pallet of boxes of cereal and we can't go through that much within the time period. So this is a good way to put to use the food we can't use in hampers, taking it to the community fridge for everyone else to still have access, without the food going bad."

Jaedyn Moore of the Moosomin Thrift Store and Food Share says updates of the Community Fridge can be found on social media platforms.

"You can follow our Facebook page too and we will post if it is empty and if you see it then you can come down and fill the pantry, fridge, or freezer. Our Facebook and Instagram is Moosomin Community Fridge."



The Community Fridge fully stocked on grand opening day.



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