



SDCF Chair Deborah Vitt is flanked by Clandeboye Firefighters Aaron Goertzn, left, and Calvin Croy.

Follow Clandeboye Fire Department's lead – give and stretch during SDCF's Giving Week

Members of the Clandeboye Fire Department know more than a little about giving.

The current 28 members of the department, along with all of their predecessors, give of their time to ensure the safety of the community. On top of that, they fundraise to help take further care and support groups important to everyone who calls the northern portion of St. Andrews home.

The department donates as well to the Selkirk & District Community Foundation each year and last year did so at a very opportune time – during the annual Endow Manitoba Giving Week, held every November. This year, Giving Week is Nov. 10-16.

During Giving Week, dollars are stretched by funds from the Winnipeg Foundation and the Provincial Government.

Aaron Goertzn, a Clandeboyne firefighter and chair of the department's social committee, said Giving Week is a great time to donate because of the stretch dollars and he encourages those who are donating to do so at that time.

The Clandeboyne Fire Department has taken its commitment to the Foundation, and the community, one step further this year, by establishing the Clandeboyne Firefighters Fund.

Goertzn said it was St. Andrews Councillor Laurie Hunt who suggested the firefighters create a fund with the Foundation. The fund will ensure long-term, stable funding for the various community groups the firefighters have been supporting for so many years.

"By setting up the fund we can designate where our funds go and the pot just keeps building," Goertzn said.

"We'll always do our fundraisers...but how much we could give back to the community just depended annually on how things went. This way we always know, we have this much we can give away every year, it's always going to build."

When establishing a fund, a minimum of \$10,000 is needed for the fund to begin paying out. The principle is never spent, it is invested and the earnings off the fund are donated. Goertzn said last year they set a goal of having the \$10,000 in place within three years, but were thrilled when the base amount was raised in just one year.

He said the Aaron Pritchett concerts held at the Clandeboyne Community Club last spring helped.

"We were able to do it all within a year of starting this, so it worked out really well," he said.

The department's history of community support goes back at least 50 years, and they've donated money to many groups including the Petersfield Curling Club, Clandeboyne Community Club and outdoor rink, palliative care and the Peter Pan Burn Fund through Health Sciences Centre, to name a few.

Their main fundraiser used to be the annual Fireman's Ball, but Goertzn said as time went on interest in the dinner and dance format began to wane, and they are now in their fourth year of hosting a rib dinner at the Petersfield Hotel. It's less work for the firefighters, he says, noting the hotel owners and staff handle almost everything.

"It's been a success," Goertzn said.

They also hold an annual pancake breakfast that raises some money, but he said it's really more just a community get together.

With the new Clandeboye Firefighter Fund at the Foundation, Goertzn says the firefighters will now donate money to the fund every year and grants will be given out to local groups who apply through the Foundation during the two grant application intake periods.

And, he encourages community members to come out during Giving Week and support the Foundation.

To make a donation during Giving Week, you can do so online at endowMB.org (click 'Make a donation to my foundation' to find SDCF); drop off a cheque at the City of Selkirk office at 200 Eaton Ave., in the outdoor drop box; call the Foundation at 204-785-9755 and a staff member will assist you; or visit the Foundation team at the Gaynor Family Regional Library on Saturday, Nov. 15 between 10am and 1pm, make a donation and enjoy a cup of tea.