

The 42nd edition of Kinsmen Christmas Hampers service project has been like none of the forty-one that have gone before. In the year of COVID-19 and all the protocols and restrictions that it placed on every aspect of our society, every Kinsmen stepped up and did the necessary pivot to make sure that this service project not only survived but thrived.

The 2020 Christmas Hamper project turned out to be terrifically successful!

Some of the challenges presented new opportunities. For example, the distribution of the food portion of the hampers was handled by the Parkland Food Bank. Some commented that they missed the camaraderie generated when up to 200 volunteers gathered at the Stony Plain Pavilion to receive, sort, and redistribute literally tonnes of donated food items. The amount of human resources needed on-site were drastically cut yet it was evident through conversations with the community they felt very involved due to the high visibility of the project. Sixty (60) local businesses and all the Stony Plain schools served as key drop off locations. Red Apple Store and Safeway Canada provided us with an opportunity for face to face interaction with our community.

There were huge savings of space, packaging, sore backs and feet. Generally, it was acknowledged that Parkland Food Bank knows the food distribution business better than us and distribution of the “upsized” December food hampers appears to have gone without any major hitches. Hampers were available each day from Dec 1- 23. This gave recipients a whole range of convenient days to pick up as opposed to the one day that we provided in the past.

“Upsized” food hamper refers to the envelope that was supplied to the food bank by both the Kinsmen and Kinettes. In addition to an extra amount of food items, each recipient client/family received a food give card, a Tri Leisure Pass, and a note explaining that the upsizing came from the Kinsmen and Kinettes.

The estimated number of families was 675. It is anticipated that the community’s generosity will cover 100% of this years’ service project!!

**Stony Plain Kinsmen**