

New grocery boss in town

Northmart manager says it's hard to find a community like Inuvik



Matthew Clark is the new manager of Inuvik's Northmart store.
L. Shaw/Inuvik.com

by T. Shawn Gillick
Northern News Services

Matthew Clark knows what he wants in a career.

"I want to be an entrepreneur, I want to make my own decisions and I want to lead a team," said Clark, the new manager of Inuvik's Northmart, who started in January.

Those are qualities he brought over from a long stint in Canada's navy.

"I spent 22 years in the navy," Clark said. "Then I did a human resources degree."

The navy thing may have come naturally for the native of Lunenburg, N.S. The human resources and retail experience, perhaps not so much.

He worked for the Loblaws chain for several years after graduating. Then, feeling stifled and hemmed in by company policy, he decided to re-think his approach.

He narrowed his list down to several possibilities. Some he rejected because he concluded they would be too

much like his situation at Loblaws.

Eventually, he settled on The North West Company, Canada's oldest business. It operates a variety of chains, including Northmart and Northern Stores. Not as well-known is the fact the company also runs a chain in the Caribbean.

Clark said he had no interest in being transferred there, though.

"I don't really like heat." The North West Company specializes in serving more remote and hard-to-reach areas with most of its stores, including the Caribbean.

"I really felt good about the company," Clark said. "It was very team-oriented and still provides some flexibility and independence."

He worked for a time in Goose Bay, N.L., cutting his teeth on a Northern way of life. After that, he worked in Iqaluit for three years.

Clark said he enjoyed his time there as assistant manager but had some mixed feelings about the community. He said Iqaluit wasn't the happiest of places at times.

Things are different here in Inuvik, where Clark said he's been made to feel very welcome. After arriving in January, he said he can see himself staying here for 10 to 15 years as he finishes up his career.

His wife and children will be joining him in the summer, once the school year is out.

"I don't see any need to leave this store," he said enthusiastically. "It's pretty hard to find a community like this in the North."

For the moment, he plans no huge changes at the local landmark, but he does hope to inject a new dose of enthusiasm and some fresh ideas.

"I'm going to bring in some new kinds of programs and events," he said. "I want to add excitement and fun and give value to the customers."

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THE MACE OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES TO VISIT INUVIK AND FORT MCPHERSON

The Honourable Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Jackie Jacobson, invites residents of the Mackenzie Delta to see the Official Mace of the Northwest Territories on display in Inuvik and Fort McPherson

The Mace will be on display in Inuvik at: East Three Elementary School Gymnasium
Wednesday, April 10, 2013 at 5:30 - 7:30pm
A light supper will be served during this informal gathering

The MLA for Inuvik Bool Lake, Alfred Mosas, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and the Sergeant-at-Arms will accompany the Honourable Speaker to this event

The Mace will be on display in Fort McPherson at: Chief Julius School Gymnasium
Thursday, April 11, 2013 at 3:30 - 5:00 pm
Light snacks will be served during this informal gathering

The MLA for Mackenzie Delta, Frederick Blake Jr., the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and the Sergeant-at-Arms will accompany the Honourable Speaker to this event

For more information, please call the Public Affairs and Communications Advisor for the Legislative Assembly at: 867-669-2230 or toll-free 1-800-661-0784

