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From left to right: Kayla DeRyk, Ken Wowk, Robby Wowk, Shirley Wowk and Amanda Wowk. The St. James family recently launched its Food For Hope project, prepping sandwiches for the Main Street Project.

Photo by Amanda Thorsteinsson

Local family packs a little hope in a paper bag

ST. JAMES-ASSINIBOIA

By AMANDA THORSTEINSSON
SPECIAL TO CANSTAR

Kris Wowk might officially be a sandwich artist at Subway, but in his downtime, he's helping his family organize paper bag lunches for homeless people in Winnipeg.

"I would hope that if I were homeless, people would donate," he says. "I think it's great my parents are doing this, it's good to be a part of it."

Ken and Shirley Wowk, their five biological children and the two they are in the process of adopting, have a new tradition of spending every second Saturday making bagged lunches for Main Street Project, a downtown homeless shelter.

The St. James family was inspired by the Lunches With Love campaign organized by the Unrau family, a Charleswood family that also takes paper bag lunches to different homeless shelters in Winnipeg.

Shirley initially heard about Lunches With Love through Facebook and decided it was something she wanted to get involved with.

She and Ken volunteered for one lunch-making weekend with the Unraus, and helped deliver the lunches to the people at Main Street Project.

After actually seeing people eating the lunches the group had made, Ken was hooked, and Food For Hope was born.

"I've always known about homelessness," he says. "But to be in front of it, it's a different experience. More real. We took down 340 lunches, and it didn't take long for them to go."

See PROJECT on next page

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