



THE SALVATION ARMY

MEDIA ADVISORY

Giving Hope Today

Restoring Dignity after Devastating Loss

The Salvation Army Distributing Furniture to Sherbrook Apartment Fire Evacuees

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www.salvationarmy.ca/prairie

Winnipeg, MB – When fire devastated an apartment complex in the 500 block of Sherbrook Street, the building's tenants witnessed the loss of valuables, memories, heirlooms and other personal belongings as they disappeared in the raging inferno. On that fateful day, The Salvation Army was called to assist. The Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services' Community Response vehicle quickly arrived on scene and began providing emotional and spiritual care to victims who escaped with only the clothes on their backs.

"When we first received word about the fire, we opened the doors to our church to provide the evacuees with a safe and warm place to go while things were sorted out for them," explains Jeff Hamel – Community Ministries Supervisor at The Salvation Army Weetamah, "When the evacuees showed up we met their immediate needs by feeding them soup and hot dogs, as well as pastries, juice and coffee. We sat and talked with them, comforting them as they dealt with feelings of hopelessness and despair."

The work did not stop there.

Since that day, The Salvation Army has been helping coordinate efforts to restore dignity and give hope to the victims of this fire. In addition to providing clothing, food, and helping arrange living accommodations for those displaced, The Salvation Army Weetamah location has been collecting many donations from the generous people of the city of Winnipeg.

On Wednesday, January 25 from 1 pm to 4 pm The Salvation Army is hosting an afternoon tea and coffee for the Sherbrook fire evacuees at its Weetamah location at 324 Logan Avenue. The evacuees will have an opportunity to view and select donated items they can use to help rebuild their lives. These donations include such things as clothing, house wares, televisions, couches, dining tables, coffee tables, wall units and much more. These items have been donated by people like Winnipeg Firefighter Keith Dixon who have opened up their hearts and wallets in response to this need.

Mr. Dixon happened to be one of the firefighters who responded to the blaze at the Sherbrook Street apartments. While rescuing a person trapped inside, Dixon injured himself and subsequently found himself off duty to recover. As he was recovering, he began to think about those who lost everything and how he could still help.

"These people are members of our community. Our fire hall is just around the corner from where this fire took place," explains Dixon, "When things happen in our community, we feel it too. Responding to the fire I got to see firsthand the devastation. Many of these people couldn't even afford insurance for their homes and they lost everything. I decided I wanted to do something to help."

Immediately Mr. Dixon began to inquire about how best he could help these people in a very practical way. One of the ways he learned he could help was through the provision of items like underwear and personal hygiene items. Through his contacts, he got in touch with The North West Company who agreed to help.

“We are very happy to be able to help provide these families with a care package of every day necessities,” says Christine Reimer, Vice President and General Manager, Giant Tiger West. “While we cannot replace memories lost, we hope at the very least we can offer some comforts of home during this difficult time.”

The care packages being supplied by The North West Company include socks, tooth brush and toothpaste, deodorant, body wash, 2 in 1 shampoo, toques and mitts. Also being provided are \$20 Giant Tiger Gift Cards.

“The Salvation Army is grateful for the support of our community members such as firefighter Keith Dixon and The North West Company as they join with many others in helping give hope and dignity to those devastated by the recent fires that have taken place in our city,” states Hamel, “We would like to remind the generous people in our community that if they would like to support the efforts of The Salvation Army by making a donation, please call us at (204) 975-1033. Donations can also be made by calling 1.800.SAL.ARMY or visiting us online at www.salvationarmy.ca/prairie.”

About Giant Tiger

Giant Tiger junior discount stores specialize in offering family fashion, household products and food to rural and urban centres in Western Canada. As a “master franchisee”, The North West Company owns and operates 35 Giant Tiger stores throughout Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

About The North West Company

The North West Company is a leading retailer of food and everyday products and services to rural communities and urban neighbourhoods in Canada, Alaska, the South Pacific and Caribbean. North West operates under the retail Banners of Northern, NorthMart, Giant Tiger, AC Value Center and Cost-U-Less, and has annualized revenue of approximately CDN\$1.5 billion.

About The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army provides direct, compassionate, hands-on service to more than 1.6 million people in Canada each year, restoring hope and dignity to the most vulnerable in society. As an international Christian church that welcomes everyone, The Salvation Army’s faith motivates its mission to serve and treat everyone with dignity and respect.

Learn more at dignity.salvationarmy.ca or www.salvationarmy.ca

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