

“Everytime I asked for help, the CAMBMN was there”



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

63-year-old Brendt Schonfelder once owned and operated a company he created in Chomedey Laval called “Au Coin des Services.” Through the years Brendt helped those in need anyway he could.

For the past few years times have proven to be more difficult for Brendt and he has had to call upon the Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre (CAMBN) for help.

“I came to the CAMBN because I

fell into drastic hardship and I was breaking,” said Schonfelder. “I went to my local Town Hall for help and the Mayor there suggested that I should call the CAMBN for help so, I did.”

Help came in the guise of Assistant to the Director, Debra Harding who has been a support to Schonfelder for a few years.

“Every time I asked for help, Debbie was always so good to me and never demeaned me,” said Schonfelder. “After raising four children on my own I found it hard to help myself once things took a bad turn.”

This week, after selling a piece of land, Brendt visited the CAMBN with a \$1,000 donation. Schonfelder presented the contribution for the non-profit organization to Harding who represented the CAMBN in this photo in receiving his gift.

“I thank God for giving me this opportunity to be able to give back to those who helped me,” said Schonfelder. “Giving back sure feels a lot better than receiving,” he added with a smile.

For Harding, this was a very



KRYSTEN VANIER

touching moment and validated for her the effort that she makes without judgement in supporting those in need who come to the CAMBN for help.

“This is my holiday feel good story,” said Harding. “My job at the CAB is

done in the same way that I live my life; without judgement and with a desire to make someone’s day a little better if I can,” she said.

Want to know more about the CAMBN? Visit: www.cabmn.org

Marais-de-la-Rivière-aux-Cerises

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

of documentation and prove that your organization is professional enough to earn this designation. The main reason why we did this was not only because this is a seal of approval of the quality of our organization, but it helps a lot for when we need to ask for grants for our interpretation centre and new exhibits.”

Ever since the interpretation centre was built in 2011, there have been permanent exhibitions and it was one of the main reasons why Marais de la Rivière aux Cerises applied for museum status. “We have one about the marais, the ecosystem, the wildlife, and the flora that people could learn about or the territory and landscapes, but this exhibit is 10 years old. We are working to update it and to get a new one. We would like to have something in the next two or three years. We are working on grant applications and we are working with experts to design this new exhibit right now.”

These exhibitions are important to the association’s education initiatives. “We a lot of education with school, kids, and the general public. Most people they come to us. Most schools, most primary schools, have an end of the year school trip that they go on and a lot of schools in the region here come to see us. We have loads of activities outside, but we sometimes also go in the classrooms, that’s more for high schools. We also host university classes a couple of times a year.”

While the 25th anniversary of the L’Association du Marais-de-la-Rivière-aux-Cerises is coming up on May 6, 2022, citizens were active in wanting to protect the marsh before that. “The citizens of Magog even in the 80s were

worried about what was happening to the land here. There was a bit of development on the periphery of the territory so even 40 years ago citizens were worried and they wanted to act to protect the space. Over the course of ten years they came up with a plan to protect the marais and in 1997 it became official. Ever since then we have been working to protect it.”

As one of the only wetlands designated as a museum in Quebec, Marais-de-la-Rivière-aux-Cerises wants the public to experience what is has to offer. “It’s one of the only wetlands that is designated as such and one of the few open-air museums. I don’t know if it’s their official designation, but we call it an open-air museum because most of our activities are in done in the open. We have a new exhibit that opened just a few weeks ago, a beautiful one about endangered bird species of Quebec, so come walk our trails. We are open all year round, even in the winter.”

Marais de la Rivière aux Cerises is located at 69, Chemin Roy, Magog.



PHOTOS COURTESY MARAIS FACEBOOK