



**Society of Saint Vincent de Paul  
Western Region  
North of 60 Project  
Annual Report 2023**

**Father's House in Paulatuk Restored**



**Father's House was always 'Open' and Father always welcoming," said Paulatuk Mayor  
Ray Ruben**

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**SSVP Western Region North of 60 Team**

Peter Ouellette

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## Executive Summary

Thank you for your support. We have had a great year despite the disastrous fires that hit the Community of Hay River and caused a significant amount of rerouting of the McKenzie River barges. All the sea cans made it to their final destinations shown on the map.



For more than 10 years the Society members in Edmonton and Calgary have been providing food, household items, beds and bedding, sewing machines and fabric as well as other items requested from members of the nine [Communities](#) that we serve.

Sea containers are loaded by our Vincentian members in Church parking lots, shipped by truck to Hay River and barged by [Marine Transportation Services](#) down the Mackenzie River to reach their Community. For three of the Communities, the sea cans are repositioned from a River barge at Tuktoyaktuk to an ocean barge and shipped along the Beaufort Sea to their destinations.



*Youth helping to load the Paulatuk Sea Can*

This project is managed by a team of [SSVP](#) volunteers. There are no paid employees. Team members are assigned to a community. They work with members of their home Parish/Conference to learn about the needs of those living in this Community. Their role is to develop knowledge and most importantly - long term rapport, which allows for an

accurate listing of the community needs as well as confidence in fair distribution of the product shipped. The team members try to make Community visits every couple of years. Team members also meet their contacts or other Community Elders when they are in Edmonton on personal or medical visits.

Our program will continue in 2024 thanks to the support of so many.

After several years of dedicated volunteer work from Vincentians in Sherwood Park AB, we were able to complete the restoration of [Father's House](#) in Paulatuk. We have witnessed the value of this Community support and have a few similar projects under review.

We again are grateful to our corporate benefactors who made this project financially viable. The transportation logistics, food supply and household product donations continue to be strong as well as the dollar donations that many of you have made. Please continue to be generous.

Thank you for helping us to help others, and blessings to all of you.

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## The Beginning of the Project

Sister Fay Trombley of Tuktoyaktuk, Eileen Orysiuk of Calgary and other members of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul had no idea that the work they started in 2010 would build to what it is today. Sister Fay and this SSVP Work has been recognized with the award of the [Governor General's Polar Medal](#). The North of 60 Program in Tuktoyaktuk has expanded to include several other Communities across Canada. Systemic change programs have been started and these programs are led by the hamlet residents for their Community. Our Society and donations provide the materials and equipment needed to run these programs.

If you are interested in participating in this project, you can contact [Peter.Ouellette@ssvp.ca](mailto:Peter.Ouellette@ssvp.ca) or financial donations can be made at [Canada Helps](#). Please specify the North of 60 Project when you donate.



*Sister Fay Trombley*

## Arctic Communities and the Southern Paired Conference

**Tuktoyaktuk** – St Andrews Conference in Edmonton – Daryl Dittrich

The majority of space in the sea can was devoted to mattresses and building materials.

Mattresses are always in great demand due to the poverty level in Tuk. The building materials



*SSVP Clothing Room in Tuk*

and tools are going to outfit the newly formed [Men's Shed](#) program. Sr. Fay Trombley has been behind the development of the Men's Shed program from the beginning and tells us that this movement is to build a fraternity of men, a community, a social network. The men will have an "ATCO" style trailer to gather, socialize, work on projects, and develop skills they can take into the community of Tuk. Some of next year's supplies have already been received

and stored. The priority is adult winter clothing. As usual there was no wasted space in the 2023 sea can – filled to the brim.

**Paulatuk** – Our Lady of Perpetual Help Conference in Sherwood Park AB - Stef Michniewski  
A Parish reverse collection was used to involve the Parishioners in the food collection to ship to Paulatuk. Bishop Jon blessed Father House at an official re-opening on July 19, 2023

followed by a community feast and celebration. The upstairs will become a food and clothing distribution centre. There will be a weekly schedule for opening. Donations of Country Food (fish, goose, whale meat, berries, caribou) from local hunters is expected. The sea can arrived in Sept. Distribution of food was handled by Jessie Illasiak who has been our Community contact for several years. Clothing was distributed on a one-day Community event directly from the sea container. Beds were provided directly to those in need. Father's House is being prepared to store and distribute all the sea container product next year. Our SSVP volunteer team will work on insulation, wall paneling and heater installation in June 2024.



*Bishop Jon joins in blessing with  
Community of Paulatuk*

**Fort Good Hope** – Divine Mercy Conference in Edmonton – Lou Normand

The following is a report from the Community: *The sea container arrived on Sept 19 and the volunteers offloaded the food items and some of the clothes, diapers, and sewing supplies. The items are currently stored in the Fort Good Hope Mission House. We have been invited to a local interagency meeting to help make sure the supplies are getting to the right places. We have made contact with the Healthy Families coordinator to possibly accept the donations for the baby supplies and diapers. We have contacted the coordinator of the local sewing group to take stock of the sewing materials and fabrics that have arrived. We have*



*donated 2 fire extinguishers to private homeowners in need. We have contacted a housing representative to identify other homes that can use the other 8 extinguishers .The mattresses are already finding their way to young people that are living independently, but unemployed. The food bank will be reorganized over the next couple of weeks. We have already begun using the new supplies in food hampers. Thank you very much for all the efforts in having these necessary supplies donated to our Community.... Mahsi,*



**Ulukhaktok** – St Albert Conference in St Albert AB – Linda Tutt

In early spring discussions on specific needs began in collaboration with the several community groups. Pulpit talks at both Holy Family and St Albert Parish followed with notes in the bulletin for non-food donations. Money raised was used to purchase food from Freson Brothers Grocers. The sea can was loaded early May and arrived in Ulukhaktok on Sept 6. The Hamlet of Ulukhaktok Food Bank coordinator and Hamlet staff distributed the food, clothing, recreation equipment, necessities and household items to the appropriate recipients,



school, and community groups. The Hamlet purchased the sea container. The old Catholic Church in Ulu is being considered for restoration. Phylcia Kagyut, food bank coordinator says, "Koana so much to the amazing volunteers and organizers at the amazing St Vincent De Paul, and the North of 60 Project. We are amazed by the amount of love that has gone into organizing these precious items. Ulukhaktok sure felt the love. We are grateful for everyone's hard work in putting projects like this together.

**Inuvik** – St Pius X Conference in Calgary – Lance Berrington

A group of Vincentians at Our Lady of Victory Parish in Inuvik directed Calgary SSVP on the needs of their Community and specifically the replenishing of their Food Bank and the establishment of a new Food Kitchen. The St Pius Youth Group made a major contribution in sorting, packing, and painting the sea container. Donations and support that made it all happen came from the SSVP North Particular and Calgary Conferences, Co-Op Brentwood Food Centre, CCA Truck Driver Training, Secure Rite Mobile Storage, and the Parishioners of St Pius Parish.



**Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson** – St Theresa Conference in Edmonton - Mike Mravinec  
These two Communities are located on the opposite side of the Peel River. Transportation logistics are more complicated. The sea container is offloaded in Inuvik and must be trucked down to Tsiigehtchic. To reach Fort McPherson requires a barge across the Peel River or waiting for the winter ice road to open. Last year the sea container was outfitted with shelves for storage and distribution of goods. With help from the Knights of Columbus, the Parishioners of St Theresa have provided food, bedding sewing materials, sewing machines, beds, and tools to help those in need in these two Communities.

**Aklavik and Sachs Harbour** – Good Shepard Conference in Edmonton – Rita John  
Sea cans shipped to Aklavik and Sach's Harbour included thirty family size food hampers along with extra basics such as flour, sugar, oil, oatmeal, etc. Also shipped were quilts, mattress pads, Christmas decorations (Aklavik) to sell at the Anglican Church rummage sale, underwear, socks, shirts, winter wear, household goods such as frying pans. Each community received five queens and five twin mattresses. The focus is food security. Both communities expressed how grateful they are to have this working relationship as 2023 was an exceedingly difficult year. The price of food skyrocketed and there was very little work available.

### **Collaboration with the Catholic Women's League**

Forest fires had a disastrous effect on those living in the Northwest Territories. Working with the SSVP National Disaster Relief Program and in collaboration with the Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Catholic Women's League Council a support program was started. [Helping Feed the North](#) provided food and other support to victims of the fires in both Hay River and Fort Smith. A continuation of collaboration in support of these two communities is being considered.

### **Where does it all come from?**

Normally our preference in this project is to get small food donations from church parishioners and to involve as many supporters as possible to enhance their awareness of Arctic needs.

We do enjoy the opportunity to talk to young people in the south and to discuss with them the differences in living in the Arctic. Kids are extremely helpful with donations and with spreading the word about the good Work of the North of 60 Project. Many of the donations come from parishioners. When we have a truck or a sea container in the Church parking lot, our team members have the opportunity for discussion and understanding of the needs.

Much of the bulk food and nonfood items are collected this way. We are grateful that so many see the value of our Work and want to help.

Used sewing machines and fabric have now become standard items for our shipments to the Arctic. Technicians then refurbish these machines so that they are ready to use. The fabric comes from many donors but the [Grannies](#) of Edmonton also continue to support our Work.



We have had many requests to ship sleeping pads to the North. There is often many living under one roof in these Arctic Communities. Again, Alberta Health Services came through with used mattresses that are light weight yet strong, easy to clean and offering great support for the children, They pads are easily moved to the side to provide room for family time.

Larger volume food donations were made by:



- Cooking oil from the [Alberta Canola Producers Commission](#) .
- [OneMeal](#) a high-quality meal pack from the Emmanuel Foundation.

Appendix 2 is a complete list of organizations with which our North of 60 project has established collaboration.



## Corporate Logistics Assistance

Transport is the most expensive and complicated aspect of reaching those in need in Arctic Canada. Loaded sea cans must be picked up from various locations around Alberta, marshalled at the Manitoulin Trucking Terminal, trucked to the Marine Transportation Services Terminal in Hay River, loaded on the barge to travel north, down the Mackenzie River, unloaded at the destination and then spotted or positioned in the Arctic Community for contents to be distributed. We thank the Corporations which help. We hope that they will continue supporting the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul in the future. These companies, like so many others, value the future opportunities that will result from collaborating with the Peoples of the Arctic.



*Manitoulin Transport and GNWT Marine Transportation Service*

## Appendix 1: Typical Product Shipped in the Sea Container

Over the last few years, we have developed two basic rules of operations:

1. We ship only what the Community asks for.
2. We continue to support the Community for as long as they want us.

This approach requires the development of rapport between the SSVP team members here in Alberta and their Community contact member in the Arctic. Take a tour of some of the Arctic Communities that we assist by [clicking on the North of 60 video](#) .

Using the example of Ulukhaktok which has a population of about 400, the following contents were shipped in the sea container this past year.

120 2 kg sugar, white	72 225 g baking powder
96 chicken noodle soup	72 500g baking soda
96 Brown Beans	96 10kg flour all purpose
24 454 g pasta, Macaroni	12 5 km flour all purpose
24 454 g pasta, spaghetti	60 398ml fruit cocktail
17 454 g pasta, rotini	108 1lb Lard
24 corn beef	120 1kg oats quick
18 sardines	120 905g pancake mix
72 tuna cloverleaf solid	48 750g pancake syrup
96 640 ml Catelli spaghetti sauce tomato/basil	60 398g peaches
60 900 g pasta Catelli spaghetti	120 907g rice white
60 pasta Catelli macaroni	56 72g soup base powder beef-like oxo
60 pasta Catelli rotini	56 72g soup base powder chicken
49 72 g oxo chicken broth	60 2-2.5kg sugar brown
49 72 g oxo beef broth	3 x 8 g 24" Yeast traditional
4 boxes -Brooklyn Bundles Children clothing sets size newborn to 6 yrs.	1 box Sheep skin, wool mattress covers
1 box underwear M and F	1 box men's medium snowsuit
1 box shampoo, Conditioner, Lotion	1 box winter and fall adult jackets
2 boxes 10 quilts - all sizes	1 box 4 cases travel size toothpaste
1 box sewing notions, ribbons, threads, buttons, etc.	2 cases floss
1 box cereal, rice, hot chocolate	1 box Tupperware containers and toy truck
1 box hamper, liquid laundry soap, toiletries	1 box coffee, tea, and electric kettle
1 box laundry soap	1 box fur coats, leather jacket, toys
1 box art notions, paper, and craft supplies	4 sewing machines
1 box bedding	1 box coffee maker and towels
1 box towels	1 box 4 XL hand knit Afghans/blankets
For Sports:	1 box Adult disposable underwear
1 box skates: figure and hockey	1 box 3 lap sized quilts
2 sets Men's goalie pads	1 box assorted balls, 4 frisbees, baseball glove1 canvas bat bag 11 baseball bats
1 XL net bag -assorted balls: 3 basketballs, 1 football, 15 soccer	1 hockey bag-complete goalie set - small men's- pads, helmet, skates, bag & about 55 hockey and goalie sticks
For the Greenhouse:	gardening tools and gloves
about 10 XL bags soil	
about 10 XL gardening pots	



For the School:

1 presentation board, 2 boxes books and bookmarks (for library or give aways), games, markers

For the Anglican Church:

2 wooden, long, church pews

For the Food Bank:

1 box 3 coffee makers, toilet paper, bedding

1 box girls baby snowsuits

1 box flour tea

1 box feminine products

1 box coffee maker, coffee, sanitary napkins

1 box 2 x 30 toilet paper

1 box 2 x 40 toilet paper

1 box 12 pkg paper towels

1 box boots

1 box XL double size hand croqueted

afghan/blanket

2 boxes sewing fabrics

1 box 2 winter vest

1 box boots and footwear - 4 pr

1 box boots and footwear - 8 pr

1 box hand knit toques

1 box socks

1 box cushions and 1 quilt

1 box 4 warm blankets

1 box fur coats and leather jackets

2 box fabrics

1 box hand knit baby sweaters

1 box leathers

1 box toys and stuffies

1 box 4 pillows

1 box quilt and sleeping bag

1 box 20 snow pants

1 box pot and pans

1 box baby receiving blankets Jocelyn Kirk

1 box 5 duvets and blankets

1 box mittens and ball hat

1 box blankets and drapes

1 box feminine products

1 box work gloves

1 box bedding

1 box towels, bedding and fragile glass casserole dish

1 box 1- spring and fall adult jackets

1 box 6 youth winter jackets

1 box 4 adult winter jackets

1 box 10 adult winter jacket

1 box Halloween and costumes

10 pkg each pkg with 2 blankets

1 xl box 10 small TVs with remotes

6 single mattresses

4 double mattresses

10 single mattress pads Alberta Health Services

12 cases canola oil Canola Oil Association

3+ cases Food for Hunger meals

## Appendix 2: Corporate and Private Collaboration

Many of you have asked who has been involved in this project. Below is a list of those organizations which have collaborated with our team and made donations of products or services to help us do an amazing amount of good work. Click on the organization name below and see what they are about. All Vincentians are proud that our name and our mission are being shared by so many.

A special recognition goes to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The financial support that they gave SSVP to purchase beds to those in need in Edmonton was extended to those in these nine Arctic Communities. Each sea container was provided with some new box springs and mattresses to supply to those in need.

[Canadian North Airlines](#)

[Aklak Air](#)

[Gleaners Oliver BC](#)

[Gleaners Medicine Hat AB](#)

[Emanuel Foundation](#)

[Cobs Bread](#)

[Alberta Canola Oil Association](#)

[Gov AB, Alberta Health Services](#)

[GNWT, Marine Services](#)

[Gordon Food Services](#)

[Second Harvest Canada](#)

[Freson Brothers Fresh Market](#)

[Brooklyn Bundles](#)

[Edmonton Quilt Guild](#)

[Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception](#)

[Manitoulin Transport](#)

[Grannies Fabric Frenzy, Stephen Lewis Foundation](#)

[Knights of Columbus Foundation](#)

[St Theresa Knitting Group](#)

[Southgate Dental Centre](#)

[Anonymous Family Foundation](#)

[Edmonton Catholic Schools](#)

[Banff Sunshine, Lake Louise and Norquay](#)

[Tip Off Constructing, Edmonton](#)

## Appendix 3: Thanks to so many who have had direct involvement in the North of 60 Project this last year

We thank God for the North of 60 Project, as another example of God's demonstrated abundance for all our neighbours, near and far, wherever there is need.

**The North of 60 Arctic Contacts:** Sr. Fay Trombley, Dorothy Loreen, Sheila Okane, Ruth Anne Blake, Michelle Lennie, Abdallah from the Inuvik Midnight Sun Mosque Food Bank, Lisa Alikamik, Emily Kudlak, Mary Kudlak, Nick Kopot, Joyce Banksland and the Ulukhaktok Health Centre Nurse in charge, Derek Squirrel, Helen Kitekudlak, Phylisia Kagyut, Grace Blake, Therese Steiner, Jacinta Illasiak, Joey Carpenter, Elizabeth Semple, Heather Bourassa, Roger Plouffe, Bishop Jon Hansen, Darrell Taylor

**The Western Region SSVP North of 60 Team:** Stef Michniewski, Daryl Dittrich, Linda Tutt, Linda Wan, Rita John, Mike Mravinec, Lou Normand, Mary Dunnigan, Colleen Braun, Lance Berrington, Peter Ouellette

### **Society of Saint Vincent de Paul :**

Western Region Council

Edmonton Central Council and their Conferences specifically:

Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sherwood Park AB,  
St Albert/Holy Family Conferences in St Albert,  
St Michaels Conference in Leduc,  
St Joseph Basilica,  
Good Shepherd,  
St Theresa Conference,  
St John /Holy Spirit,  
Divine Mercy( St Thomas More, St Agnes, and St Anthony Parishes),  
Mother Teresa,  
All Saints,  
St Andrew Conferences.

Central Council in Calgary

South Particular Council in Calgary

St Pius X Conference in Calgary

St Timothy Conference in Winnipeg MN

St Mary/St Jude Conference in Brooks AB

St Mathews Conference in Surrey BC

And so many more volunteers that have lifted, sorted, packaged, and helped in many ways.