

Mennonite Disaster Service Canada **REPORT**

MDS Canada 2022: "We became friends."

2022 was a busy year for MDS Canada. After the inactivity of 2020-21, due to the pandemic, we were busy responding to many needs across the country.

Through Hay West, farmers in Ontario who had good crops supported farmers in Saskatchewan who were threatened with the loss of their herds due to severe drought.

"I want to thank you," said Saskatchewan cattle farmer Curtis Mattson. "I was really up against it. It gave me some optimism to know there are people out there trying to help us."

In August 2021, the White Rock Lake Wildfire in Monte Lake, B.C. ravaged that community near Kamloops. MDS volunteers built four new homes in that community.

"The words don't come for how grateful we feel towards MDS," said Robert Hugh, who received a new home in Monte Lake. "Awesome, fantastic, incredible, that's what comes to mind when I think about what MDS is doing."

Following the devastating November 2021 flood in B.C., volunteers responded in Princeton and the Fraser Valley in B.C. Volunteers repaired 45 homes in both locations.

"I can honestly say we wouldn't be where we are today without your help," said Princeton Mayor Spencer Coyne. "You will never be forgotten. You will always be a part of our community." Added Dian Brooks, who lives with her brother, Danie, in a home that was repaired by volunteers in Princeton: "I don't know a better way to put it, but MDS

helped with that sense of hope," she said. Said Danie: "We became friends."

In the Fraser Valley, Tom Johnstone not only saw his house badly damaged by flood waters, but also lost his wife to cancer during that time. Help from MDS not only repaired his house—it helped him at a dark time.



Shelley Dueck presents a quilt to Michelle and Ted Swanson



Jobin family in front of their house, Barry's Bay

"MDS was there when I needed it the most," he said.

In Barry's Bay, Ontario, MDS volunteers worked with the Roman Catholic Knights of Columbus to help a family with a severely disabled child who needed special accommodation. Prior to building an addition to the farmhouse, the family had been separated so the child could have the controlled environment she needed. With help from MDS volunteers and the Knights, the family was reunited.

"God brought us together in an act of love," said the mother, grateful to be reunited with the rest of her family after living apart with her disabled child for about two years.

MDS volunteers also responded to Hurricane Fiona in Atlantic Canada. 133 volunteers spent ten weeks doing 179 tree clean-up jobs and 28 roof repair or rebuild jobs in Cape Breton. Homeowners were grateful. "It's beautiful what they did," said Edith Ball, a widow, of the volunteers who cleaned up the trees on her yard. Added Johnny Parson, a person living with a disability: "People here appreciate what MDS did."

For MDS Canada, it was privilege to be the hands and feet of Jesus for our neighbours across Canada in 2022.

Thanks for your support

—Ross Penner, Director of Canadian Operations



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