

GOOD NEWS

Founder of Calgary charity Hearts and Hammers watching non-profit grow

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Hearts and Hammers founder is Dave Bonk, from Calgary, Alta is pictured in a released Readers' Digest magazine article. Hearts and Hammers was founded to provide renovations for locals in need with mobility challenges. Supplied photo/Calgary Sun/Postmedia Network

Local non-profit Hearts and Hammers is growing, founder Dave Bonk says — the Calgary do-gooder's recent appearance in Reader's Digest magazine is a symbol of that.

Hearts and Hammers provides home renovations to help families facing mobility challenges, and whatever else they might need around that, be it accounting or legal advice — Bonk calls it a holistic approach and something that was much needed in Calgary.

Extra attention brought on by the recent article about Bonk and his group will only help him grow it further, he expects.

“More awareness in Calgary. We have a long way to go with that, so that's very helpful,” he said.

“Someone might call us or get in touch with us and want to start something in their city, and we would look at that.

“And sponsorship. That's a big one that we need.”

No one else serves the same need to the same level in Calgary, Bonk said — that's why he and his group are doing it.

“There is a demand there,” Bonk said.

“This whole experience has definitely enriched my life ... now that Hearts and Hammers is growing, a big part of my life is contribution and I've discovered how fulfilling that is.”

Getting coverage in local media is something Bonk has gotten used to while the group worked two major projects — most recently helping Ramon and Noemi Ramirez live a more accessible life in their home after Ramon found himself paralyzed by a Parkinson-like disease.

But he said the attention from Reader's Digest is a “very new and exciting experience.”

The culmination of two phone interviews and a visit from a contracted photographer, the issue hit shops recently and Bonk bought up a bunch of copies.

“I gave one to my mom, and one to my grandma — and then my grandma wanted me to sign it for her,” he said with a laugh.

Currently, hearts and Hammers has four more major projects lined up.

One is a three-year-old boy named Nickolas, who suffers visual, hearing, and cognitive impairments caused by Pallister Killian Syndrome.

Nickolas lives with his mom and Hearts and Hammers is gearing up to overhaul the sidewalk and steps up and into the front entrance of their home, as well as the staircases inside and the young boy’s bedroom and also the backyard.

“I’ve met Nicholas a few times now and he is just this smiley, friendly, happy little fellow, and we’re going to make it easier on him and his mother,” Bonk said.

More information about Hearts and Hammers can be found at heartsandhammers.ca

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