

SJWB raises enough to bring Jarads to Bancroft

By Sarah Sobanski

Social Justice Without Borders has reached its \$60,000 fundraising goal ? but in a different way than expected.

SJWB has raised \$37,000 to bring the Jarads ? a Syrian family who sought asylum in Turkey after fleeing their home country ? and \$23,000 for North Hastings Community Trust.

The organization set out to raise \$30,000 for each last year, but private sponsors have made large donations in hopes that it would be used to help support the refugee family of five.

?There are many people and organizations that we received money from that they asked that the money go to the refugee family,? said Edgar. ?So we're still raising money.?

There was no deadline set to have the funds raised by, except the sooner the better for the Jarads. Edgar said the organization plans to continue fundraising for Community Trust until it has reached its goal. It will also continue fundraising and accepting donations for the Jarads.

?We could use more money for the family,? said Edgar, noting \$30,000 was a recommended starting point to host a refugee family. Supporting a family of five on \$30,000 however, will be tight.

?They have to live on that for a year until they learn the language and they get jobs. It's possible that they could start earning money before the year's up but our obligation is to sustain them for a year.?

Edgar received news that it could still be 18 months before the family is able to come to Canada. That said, Edgar said the organization is ready for the family now. A sponsor has donated a car for the family and SJWB has found a home for them within walking distance of Bancroft until a member of the family can get an international licence.

?We're still looking for volunteers to help because they'll have to be taken to medical appointments and we still need people for English as a second language,? said Edgar, noting furniture and kitchen ware also among the items needed to help the Jarads settle. SJWB has applied for a \$3,000 grant to bring an all cultures celebration event to Bancroft. Edgar said she hopes it will help educate local residents on diversity and its important role to growing a vibrant community. There would be speakers, including from those who were raised here, as well as foods and entertainment from many different cultures.

It's important that people get a chance to speak with people from different cultures when a family from a minority culture is moving to the area, she said.

?There are people who have grown up here that have never left. They don't know that someone from Syria is the same as you and me. To learn about their differences and how they can learn from their differences, I think it's definitely important.?

The best way to donate or get in contact with SJWB is through Facebook at Social Justice Without Borders.