

Easter egg hunt at the Riverside Chateau



By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Gail Ross and Leeanni Renaud took on the role of the Easter Bunny at the Riverside Chateau seniors' residence on April 2 by putting on an Easter egg hunt for the residents. The hunt had initially been scheduled for April 4, but due to the provincial lockdown that commenced on April 3 at 12:01 a.m., the date was moved forward. Ross and Renaud had dozens of plastic eggs placed around the parkland beside the Chateau, and residents were invited to collect the eggs in the Easter baskets provided. While most of the eggs contained smaller chocolate eggs, one very special egg held a grand prize of an Easter card with \$25 cash, which was found by Barry Robinson.

Contacted by phone a couple of days before the event, Renaud said that they had put notices up in the Chateau to give people a good amount of notice about the date change, so it wouldn't be that big a deal.

Ross added that they decided to do the Easter egg hunt because her sister-in-law lives in the Chateau.

'She's very good with all those neighbours of hers, and we thought we could help her a little more with her neighbours,' she says.

Ross and Renaud said it took about a day to come up with the idea to do it, about a week to get the helpers together to implement it and about half a day to stuff all the plastic eggs with the 200 or so smaller chocolate eggs. They said they got the plastic eggs at Vintage on Hastings in town, and the chocolate eggs were bought at Shoppers' Drug Mart and Dollarama.

They had some volunteers to help them put out all the eggs at around 1:30 p.m.; Anne Humphrey, her grandson Kohlson Humphrey and his friend Timothy Bowman. The Easter egg hunt began at 2 p.m. and went until 2:30 p.m.

'There's one egg that doesn't open. It has no chocolate, but whomever finds it does get the grand prize, which is \$25 cash,' she says.

Ross says the residents' reaction to it changed as time went on.

'In the beginning, it was like 'I'm not a kid, I'm not going Easter egg hunting,' to 'Hey, they changed it. They're going to still have it. That's great.' So, some of them, we told them to bring their grandchildren. And we got little baskets for some of them to find more, especially if their grandchildren help them,' she says.

While only a handful of residents showed up to hunt the Easter eggs, which was a little disappointing, it was still an enjoyable event and the sunny day was perfect for the occasion. While it was an outdoor event, everyone in attendance wore masks and kept their distance as much as possible.

Barry and Joyce Robinson were there getting in on the egg hunting fun. As it turned out, after a bit of searching with his basket in hand, Barry Robinson ended up finding the special egg with the grand prize; an Easter card with \$25 cash.

?This is great,? he says. ?I'm so glad they thought of us when they organized this!?