

LACOMBE EXPRESS

Lacombe and District Volunteer Link continues to serve the community



[Mark Weber](#)

Jan 3, 2024 12:20 PM

Updated Jan 3, 2024 12:22 PM



Jean Cheek is the office coordinator for Lacombe and District Volunteer Link. (Mark Weber/Lacombe Express)

Those looking for a vital way of helping folks in the community can sign up with Lacombe and District Volunteer Link.

The main activity of Volunteer Link is to provide rides for people who need to get to medical appointments, and tests, or to visit loved ones in long-term care who may live in a nearby community, for example.

With the office based out of St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, the organization's beginnings stretch back to around 2004, said Jean Cheek, office coordinator.

"A gentleman from the united church saw the need for folks with lower incomes, or who may be retired, or who don't drive anymore – they can often find it difficult to get to medical tests and appointments," she said.

"They saw this need, and so they decided to start this up. They contacted all of the churches in the area to see if they could get some help."

A partnership amongst several churches began to take shape, and today, there is a set of amazing volunteers who regularly provide transportation for folks in Lacombe and the surrounding area, said Cheek, who works out of St. Cyprian's Anglican Church on a part-time basis.

She also volunteers as a driver when she can.

"Every church that is involved has to join as a member, and as part of that, they donate \$1,000. They also will have someone who will go on our board for a two-year commitment," she said.

"With that money they give, we also donate to the benevolent fund which is run by the Lacombe FCSS, so that helps people who are in need financially or who are having trouble paying their rent or their bills," she said, adding that these donations are made to the benevolent fund a couple of times each year.

"It is a volunteer service – people are volunteering their time and their vehicle. But if it's a long distance, say to Calgary or Edmonton or Innisfail or Camrose, for example, we do appreciate it when people can give the volunteer driver enough money to help cover the gas, or if there are costs incurred for meals or parking, for example," she explained.

Of course, some clients can't afford to do this, and that is absolutely fine.

"We would not deny anyone a ride if they couldn't afford it."

Cheek said there is a cushion to help the volunteers with expenses as well, should the need arise.

"We can give them money to help cover their costs if they need it," she said.

Looking back, the organization once offered a few more services, such as visiting folks, helping with

yard work, and also assisting residents when they had to move, to name a few examples.

“We don’t have enough people to do (those things) anymore,” she said, adding that there is always room for more helping hands.

For Cheek, both working at and volunteering with the organization are very fulfilling.

“I love helping people,” she said “If you new in town, for example, what a good thing! You are helping people and you get to meet others, too. It’s a good way to get involved in the community.

“I’ve met some really nice people doing this.”

For more information about Lacombe and District Volunteer Link, call 403-782-0110 or email volunteerlink@gmail.com.



About the Author: Mark Weber

I've been a part of the Black Press Media family for about a dozen years now, with stints at the Red Deer Express, the Stettler Independent, and now the Lacombe Express.

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