

Insurance brokers give back to humanity

Hammers and nails replace forms and rate sheets for Red River Mutual and their brokers.

Greg Vandermeulen
Red River Valley Echo

Red River Mutual employees and brokers spent Sept. 20-24 giving back. They spent that time working on a build site for Habitat for Humanity on the 900 block of Nairn Ave in Winnipeg.

Company president Brian Esau said they had already given a financial gift.

"We funded part of that home with donations last year," he said.

This year they followed it up with action, sending at least five people per day all

week. "We've recruited our brokers and had them partner with us," he said.

Although helping out communities in which they do business is part of their mandate, this is the first time they have rolled up their sleeves on a Habitat for Humanity project.

Yet Esau said there was no hesitation from brokers or employees when the idea came out. "It was overwhelmingly favourable," Esau said of the reaction.

Even those without much in the way of building skills were put to work. "Habitat is really good at organizing volunteers who may not be good at that kind of work," he said.

And the day had an unexpected benefit. "As much as we're helping someone..., it also creates a really good camaraderie with the team that's making it happen,"

he said. Red River Mutual is active in the community, raising money for the Empty Stocking Fund in Altona, among other fundraising ventures. "We believe that we should give back to the community in some way," he said.

And when that way turns out to be fun and include team building components, that's even better. "It's one thing to send money, but it's quite another to send money and actual hands on participation," he said.

This may not be the last time Red River Mutual employees and brokers get their hands dirty.

"Based on the response, we would consider doing it in the future," he said. "I'd encourage any corporation to consider this kind of initiative."

The homes they helped build are considered "sus-

tainable" which are designed to decrease the environmental footprint of the home and reduce the owner's utility bills over the long term.

Brokers that took part included Horizon Insurance,

PMC Insurance, BSI Insurance, Essex Insurance, King Insurance, Lakeview Insurance, Reider Insurance and One Insurance.

Red River Mutual is one of Canada's largest poli-

cy holder-owned casualty insurance companies. With over 60,000 policy holders, premium revenue exceeds \$60 million. Reserves in excess of \$45 million are carried.

