

Thomson Financial donates bus to Cassellholme



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Published on: April 5, 2018 | Last Updated: April 5, 2018 10:05 AM EDT



Freedom is something that should never be taken for granted just ask Francine Therrien.

The Cassellholme Home For the Aged resident could hardly contain her excitement Thursday during the unveiling of a shuttle van.

The bus, which can accommodate up to 11 passengers or can be configured to accommodate eight wheelchairs, was donated by Thomson Financial Partners – Ted Thomson, Rob Fry, Chris Winrow and Eric Thomson.

The cost of the bus is pegged at \$79,000. Thomson Financial Partners have donated \$60,000 and Cassellholme will pick up the remaining \$19,000.

“This donation is all about freedom,” Therrien said. “This will allow us to be part of the community. This will allow us to get outside and do what we want to do,” she said.

Therrien said the Para Bus is a great service, however the bus is booked regularly and often residents don’t meet all of the qualifications to use the service.

She said she can’t wait for the nice weather and maybe take a trip to the waterfront.

“Some residents at Cassellholme don’t have family that can help them or take them out,” Therrien said.

“It’s nice to be able to just get out and visit a grocery store and be part of the community. It makes you smile and feel happy.”

Jamie Lowery, chief executive officer at Cassellholme, said many residents have limited resources to get around the community.

He said events like taking a ride on the Chief Commanda II, visiting

the Capitol Centre, watching an OHL game at Memorial Gardens are outings residents really enjoy.

“The problem is for a lot of them they have no way to get around. That is the big issue,” Lowery said.

“During the Ford World Women’s Curling Championship we had tickets, but we couldn’t use them because we had no way to get our residents there. A lot of these venues are busy and they need support.”

The unveiling took place at Cassellholme and was witnessed by several residents who eagerly wanted to know when it would be available for use.

It’s expected to be up and running by July 1 – Canada Day. Ted Thomson joked that Lowery is a good negotiator.

“We had invited Jamie to the box we have at Memorial Gardens to watch a Battalion game and he presented us with the idea,” he said.

“It was easy for us to say yes. My mother-in-law is living at another long-term care facility, but she has a lot of family to help her. Unfortunately we see all kinds of people just sitting there.”

Thomson said he has been in business for 52 years and has a lot of senior clients.

“The community has been very good to us and this was a great opportunity to give back.”