

## Bancroft 2018: A community with a heart

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Every year at this time, Bancroft This Week takes a look back on the previous year. Looking back at 2018, made me realize just how big of a heart this community really has. Yes, there have been issues, lawsuits and curious happenings that still do not quite add up, but the majority of the stories published in 2018 have a similar theme. The theme for 2018 in my opinion is that the people of Bancroft and the surrounding area are always there for one another. It didn't matter where a person came from, what organization needed help or what fundraiser was hosted, someone was always there waiting to lend a hand. I think the best example of this was on Thursday, March 15 when the R.J. Brooks Building had a fire in a residence on the second floor. Unfortunately one life was lost, and another person was sent to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries. Thankfully the majority of residents were able to make it out of the building safely and unharmed. However, this event left 47 people, all 65 years of age or older, out in the cold at 2 a.m. Luckily, these people did not remain out in the cold for long. The moment the news began circulating throughout the community, people started showing up with blankets, clothes and food. The congregation of the Bancroft Bible Chapel open its doors and within a matter of minutes the seniors were able to get in out of the weather and warm up with a hot cup of tea and some breakfast. Area businesses showed up with everything from food to bathroom supplies to ensure the building's residents were happy and healthy. Once the emergency was over and the main investigation was completed, the Bancroft firefighters and paramedics switched gears and worked with each other to make sure that all medical supplies and other needed items got to their rightful owners. At the same time, other community groups worked to ensure that the seniors' families and friends were contacted to guarantee them that their loved ones were all right, and that they had a place to stay for a while until the building was repaired. The fire had been contained in one room but the smoke had travelled throughout the building. This meant that those who lived in rooms closest to where the fire had been would not be able to return to their homes until the beginning of April. Those that did not have someone to pick them up did not go unattended. Volunteers came forward, offering spare bedrooms, and hotels offered rooms for people to stay in until they could return home. To ensure the safety of others, all North Hastings went above and beyond without anyone asking them.