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Champion Centre finds itself a home

Tenille Tellman

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Since the involvement of local churches, community groups and generous donors, The Champion's Centre has found it's home.

Setting up on North Railway in the former Stardust Restaurant, the Centre will become a unique and permanent home for 10-12 people when construction is completed.

Klaas Klooster, executive director of the centre started this vision in Ponoka in 2002, which proved to be a success.

"I looked into the need for this kind of housing and I was appalled," said Klooster.

Now he has brought the project to Medicine Hat and through donations, purchased the building.

When the facility is completed, it will house tenants who will live in rooms upstairs. The main floor will be a cafe and antique shop with a kitchen. The public will be able to access the cafe and the tenants will use it for regular meals.

A hot lunch program will also run daily.

Klooster said the tenants who live in the building will be required to pay a lower rent, as they will be people who are living with disabilities or suffering from injuries like brain damage. In Medicine Hat, he can see a great need for someone to reach out and help these people.

"I think we're meeting the need because all of our residents or tenants have burned all their other bridges behind them because of their ... condition."

Upstairs will also include an office for the Centre manager, a bathroom, laundry facilities and a lounge.

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