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Mallard

Mayor Promotes Healthy Living

Liz Dano says she wouldn't be the mayor of Mallard if it wasn't for the Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative. No, CDPI funding did not pay for her campaign, but working on CDPI projects pushed Dano to want to continue to work for the health of her community. She felt that being in the mayor's seat would allow her to do that. "But sometimes I do wonder what I got myself into," she laughed.

As mayor, Dano is not afraid to get her hands dirty, and she worked alongside families in the community garden this year. She advertised the garden by word of mouth and had a sign-up sheet at the council office. The garden plot is located in an area within the townsite, about a five-minute walk from most of the houses. Handily, it was next door to one of the elders, an avid gardener, who gave helpful pointers to first-timers. The CDPI program purchased seeds and volunteers packaged them up for the gardeners. People grew a

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variety of vegetables, including potatoes, tomatoes, celery, peppers, corn, radishes, carrots, beans and onions. Some even planted flowers. A community tiller was made available for everybody to use free of charge and there were also shovels and hoes at the site.

The garden not only provided people with good, healthy, chemical-free food, but also brought community people together and proved to be good exercise for participants. "It was nice to be there and see everyone working together," said Dano, who got involved by planting one row for an injured friend and one row for a single parent in the community. The gardens were small and most of the vegetables were eaten as they ripened, leaving little, if any for canning or freezing. "But it was enough to get them started and at least we know what we're eating," said Dano, who predicts the community garden will grow.

Another CDPI project in the area was the 'no smoking' campaign at the school. A poster contest was held for students from Kindergarten to Grade 9 and cash prizes were given for the best poster in each grade.

A walking challenge took place between the Dauphin Friendship Centre and surrounding communities. Each community was supposed to walk across Canada and the first community that got across would be the winner. Dano said to begin with, people got walking just to win the challenge, but before long she noticed people were buddying up and walking just

for fun. “After a little while it didn’t matter about the challenge. They just wanted to walk,” she said.

For those that prefer their exercise on the water rather than on land, the community has acquired two canoes through an *in motion* grant. People over the age of 18 can use the canoes for no charge. Thirty life jackets in various sizes were purchased through the Lifesaving Society Manitoba

and the Manitoba Coalition for Safer Waters PFD Loaner program. And you never know who you’ll meet on the water. That person paddling towards you just might be the mayor of Mallard!

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Take Note

Paddle sports like canoeing and kayaking are low-impact exercises that benefit your entire body:

- A good stroke starts at the feet and resonates up through the legs, abdomen, and torso to the paddle shaft.
- You will tone upper-body muscles, increase your flexibility, and improve circulation, which benefits your joints by bringing them nutrients.
- Paddlers can expect to do about 300 paddle strokes per kilometre. A brisk pace of 8 km/hour burns around 400 calories, which means several hours of paddling is a great way to lose weight!

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