

# the Jolly Old Man

Brad.

Five years ago, Brad asked LePoidevin if he was interested in working for the Bulls' marketing department.

"I said I'd give it a try and I've been with them ever since. I'm having lots of fun in this job."

He's responsible for advertising on the boards, on-ice logos, illuminated balcony signs and getting ads for the souvenir programs. He's one of two marketing employees, the other being Eric Harvey.

His eyes light up when the subject of Santa Claus comes into the conversation.

"I've been Santa Claus for 30-plus years, starting in Montreal for Bell Canada's Christmas parties and I continued to be him here in Belleville."

He even bought his own Santa suit and beard, for about \$2,000.

He visits several nursing homes over the holiday period and is the man everyone comes out to see the past three years during the Belleville Santa Claus parade.

LePoidevin is especially proud of his tradition of spending every Christmas Eve inside the Belleville hospital, visiting with patients on all floors and even those waiting inside the emergency department. He also hands out close to 1,000 candy canes and teddy bears to newborns and older female patients.

"I do it because it gives me great pleasure in seeing someone happy on Christmas Eve. I'm a clown at heart."

The LePoidevins are also used to having young kids around the house. He and his wife have four children of their own and they adopted a Korean girl, Sue-Lyn, as a baby. (She died of leukemia in 1988 at the age of 17).

They've also had 101 foster children over the years, looking after newborns anywhere from one month to two years.

One foster child, Eddie, has been with them since he was a week old. The 25-year-old now works behind the bench for the Belleville Bulls.

"My wife likes to take in newborns as foster children and I like to play golf. That's the agreement we've had...seriously, it's been a way of life to have young children around the house. We don't know what it's like not to have kids around."

The death of his adopted daughter, Sue-Lyn, got him involved in raising funds for Ronald McDonald House in Toronto. The LePoidevins spent 15 months at the home while their daughter was at Sick Children's Hospital.

He started and co-ordinated a golf tournament locally for seven years and raised more than \$55,000 in support of Ronald McDonald Home.

LePoidevin's hobbies include woodworking, wine-making, ceramics and oil painting.

"I used to play golf five days a week. Now I'm lucky to play once a month. I guess I've slowed down there, at least."