

Boyer GM Christmas Toy Drive has collection box overflowing



By Mike Riley

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Boyer GM Bancroft had their fifth annual Christmas toy drive on Dec. 7 at their dealership on Hwy 62 North. Held since 2017, it was a successful evening, with a lot of the community showing up to drop off toys and food items for the food bank and nearly 80 families got photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Kristena Schutt-Moore, social media marketing coordinator with Boyer GM, comments on this holiday event. On Dec. 4, Schutt-Moore told Bancroft This Week that preparations were going well and that Santa and Mrs. Claus were excited to come by. She revealed that Boyer GM Bancroft was surprising some very close friends of the Clauses, Wayne and Jewels Wiggins, with a \$250 donation each to charities they're passionate about; the Algonquin Shriners' Club (for the Shriners' Pediatric and Burn Hospital) and the North Hastings Hospital Auxiliary, respectively. Schutt-Moore said they had one of their giant shipping containers decorated like a present in their showroom and they also have a box for the North Hastings Community Cupboard, and community members can drop off items any time when the dealership is open until Dec. 11. "This is our first year doing two collection fundraisers at once. The hope is that it will make it easier for community members to give what they can to those in need. Not everyone can donate a toy or food item this time of year as funds are tight however it might be easier if there is a choice and we ask that people only give what they can if they can when they come to participate in the event," she says. Schutt-Moore wanted to extend a big thank you to those who donated to the Kids in Need Toy Drive and the NHCC. "The goal for the NHCC food drive is to help them create holiday baskets that help those who use the food bank make a holiday dinner. This event is a way for us to give back to the community. In total this year there will be four local organizations helped thanks to our awesome community; the Algonquin Shriners Club, the North Hastings District Manor Auxiliary, the NHCC, and Bancroft and Area Kids in Need. So, a big thank you to the staff, volunteers, and community members who make this event a great success," she

says. The event began at 4 p.m. and Santa and Mrs. Claus were in place by the tree in the dealership foyer, ready to get photos taken with the community's families. As the families came in, sales team members Brook and Ryan signed them in and they were placed in line for their photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Those who gave their email address could have the photos emailed directly to them. As they waited, they could enjoy hot chocolate, Christmas cookies, and crafts for the kids. Brandon Boyer, dealer principal, said the event was going really well and that they had a lot of first-time Santa pictures, which was nice. "It's our fifth year so far, but we have an overflowing bin of toys which is incredible. So, it's going well. We have a food drive going to so a bunch of food which is good," he says. According to controller Maria Klein, there was a big rush of attendees at 4 p.m. then it slowed a bit around 5 p.m. for dinnertime, and then picked up a bit later in the evening. "It's nice to have something for the kids here instead of going to the city to get a picture with Santa. And it's free too," she says. Schutt-Moore told Bancroft This Week on Dec. 8 that they hadn't counted the toys yet as the donations were being accepted until Dec. 11, but the donation bin was overflowing. "So, I'd say it was a great turnout and the community was very generous," she says. "Almost 80 families got their pictures taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus."