

Auction benefiting families displaced by fire closes Friday]

By Zachary Roman

Caledon residents have a chance to support the families who lost their homes in a fire last week in Bolton.

On December 7, around 3 p.m., Caledon Fire and Emergency Services responded to a residential fire call on Stella Crescent in Bolton. According to the OPP, four townhouse units were impacted by the blaze, and all people and pets in the houses got out safely.

On December 8, Mayor Annette Groves released a statement expressing her heartbreak for the families impacted and her thanks to Caledon's Fire and Emergency Services team.

"Our hearts are breaking for the families of the Stella Crescent house fires. I can't imagine how devastating it is to be displaced from your home, especially so close to the holidays," said Groves in her statement. "I want the families to know Caledon is here for you."

Groves said Caledon Fire was on the scene of the blaze in less than five minutes and ensured everyone got out safe, a feat she called miraculous.

Groves went on to say she knows that Caledon Community Services and the Red Cross will be doing everything they can to support the families.

"I am confident, knowing Caledon residents as I do, that everyone will find ways to reach out and help the families the best way they can. We at the Town will work closely with those impacted to ensure they get the support they need," said Groves. "I would like to remind everyone to check their smoke alarms and have escape plans ready to ensure a safe holiday season as this is when house fires are most common."

Since the fire, a group of five volunteers - Mira Budd, Sara Clarkson, Sherry Brioschi, Vilma LaManna Tarquini and Joanna Valeriani - have been working hard to set up an online auction to benefit the families who lost their homes to the fire. The volunteers have obtained donations from various local businesses and are auctioning them off with proceeds going directly to the families by way of certified cheque.

"We have organized other online auction fundraisers in the past with great success and thought it would be a good way to raise funds for the families affected," said Clarkson. "Being so close to the Christmas season, we wanted to bring some joy to these families as they have lost so much and it also brings our community together in the spirit of giving."

The online auction began on December 14 at 7 a.m. at the following web address: bit.ly/3WdJnkP

The auction will be live until Friday, December 16 at 8 p.m. when it will close so that the volunteers will have time to get the funds to the families before Christmas.

Auction participants can expect to bid on donations from many local businesses, such as: Bake Shoppe, Wine Spot, the Villa Caledon Inn, Coffee Time, Four Corners Bakery, Spirit Tree Estate Cidery, the Toby Jug and more.

There are also items like Toronto Maple Leafs tickets and personalized artisan gifts available in the auction.

"We are extremely grateful to all of our local businesses and residents for their generous donations," said Clarkson. "Because of their contributions we were able to organize this auction. Thank you for making a difference, you make the community a great place to live!"