

BBQ fundraiser coming to Orangeville for woman who lost family and home in tragic fire

By Sam Odrowski

The community is coming together to support a woman who lost her three children and both parents in a house fire earlier in the year.

A fundraising BBQ is coming to the shopping plaza at 47 Broadway on Saturday, April 13 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., to help Kristyne (Woodcock) Klassen deal with costs related to the tragedy.

She grew up in East Garafraxa and lived in Orangeville for several years.

The fire took place on February 18, while Kristyne and her husband were away and her parents Pauline and Michael Woodcock were babysitting her three kids, Andrew, William and George.

Jennifer Pratt, who's been close friends with Kristyne since elementary school, is helping to organize the community BBQ.

"We're trying to help just with the financial burden of it all because she's had to bury five people," Pratt said. "Kristyne grew up in East Gary, so we all knew her family very well, growing up in that small community. It's just one way we can give back."

Kristyne currently lives in Davidson, Sask., as she moved there with her family a few years ago.

It's been a difficult couple of months for Kristyne, losing five members of her immediate family and her home.

But support has been coming in to help Kristyne and her husband with the funeral costs and overall recovery from the blaze. A GoFundMe Page generated nearly \$60,000 in the weeks following the fire.

The children's funeral costs have been covered, so Pratt is hoping the community BBQ will generate a few extra dollars to help with the funeral costs for Kristyne's parents.

The event is being catered by Smoke on the Water BBQ, with all the food generously donated by M&M Food Market in Barrie and Orangeville.

All of the money raised will support the Klassen Family Fund.

Pratt said she'd encourage everyone to stop by the BBQ next Saturday and show their support.

"Nothing's going to bring these people back, but we can help alleviate some of the financial burden by raising money," she said.

(Editor's note: While the Woodcocks raised Kristyne, and she would like them remembered as her parents, they are technically her grandparents)