

Bolton TD Canada Trust leads way in fundraising for SickKids

By Bill Rea

The Bolton branch of TD Canada Trust once again leads the country in raising funds for the Children's Miracle Network.

For the fourth year in a row, the branch on Highway 50 was the top fundraiser among branches all over Canada.

This year's efforts raised \$29,305 for the Network, which includes the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, and the cheque was presented at the Highway 50 branch Tuesday in a sometimes very emotional ceremony.

Branch Manager Marisa Kennedy stressed the branch culture is rooted in the community.

"This community is really our home," she said.

She also observed that many involved with the effort have been touched by the hospital.

Kennedy said each branch in the country sets the yearly goal of raising \$1,000 for the Network. After four years, the Bolton branch is approaching the \$100,000 mark.

Children's Miracle Network Director Ameera Virani was on hand, expressing her enthusiasm for her job.

"We get to do some amazing work every day," she said.

She pointed out TD has supported the Network for 20 years, adding the campaign from the individual branches is grass-roots, calling on support from the community.

"There is no better example of that support than right here in Bolton," she declared.

SickKids Foundation Vice-President Adrian Horwood observed that the Network raised about \$40 million last year for children's hospitals throughout the country, with the Toronto facility being one of them.

Offering some statistics, Horwood said there are about 100,000 children making clinic visits to SickKids every year. There are about 15,000 admissions, 64,000 trips to the emergency room and roughly 12,000 surgeries.

He also observed the care is all family centred, with staff all coming together to take care of both the children and their families.

Horwood cited an example about two months ago, where a team was able to remove a tumor from a child's leg bone without surgery, calling it an example of the "kind of magic that happens."

Another example was provided by Caledon resident Colena Johnson, 14, who has already undergone three open-heart surgeries. The first one was when she was just five-days-old.

"The doctors were not optimistic, but they didn't know how stubborn I was," she said.

Also on hand was Jakob Gutt of Palgrave, who will be nine next week. He was treated at the hospital for leukemia, and has now been cancer-free for more than a year.

Cheryl Boston of Loretto had two stories to tell; of the open-heart surgery she had at SickKids in 1980, and of the care she and her family received there when her 21-month-old son Keanan died there early in 2013.

"We're just really thrilled to be part of this hospital and this cause," she said. "You don't ever want to go there, but when you're there, you're sure to be very well cared for."



Those taking part in Tuesday's ceremonies at the Bolton branch of TD Canada Trust included Branch Team Leader Marie Pinto, District Vice-President George Mathew, SickKids Patient Ambassador Colena Johnson, Branch Manager Marisa Kennedy, Jakob Gutt, Cheryl Boston and District Vice-President Faisal Yousuf. Photo by Bill Rea