

Funds raised for Kidz in Caledon initiative in memory of Orangeville teen

By Zachary Roman

An Orangeville family organized a beautiful fundraiser alongside a Caledon East farm in memory of their late son.?

Edward Malette-Matthews was killed in a car crash in 2020 when he was just 16.

After the tragic accident, his mom came to Rock Garden Farms in Caledon East looking for flowers for his burial site.

Rock Garden Farms manager Margaret Galati gave her flowers and strawberries, and this year, Malette-Matthews' mom returned to the farm with money. The pair decided to put it towards a fundraiser for Caledon Community Services' (CCS) Kidz in Caledon initiative, held in Malette-Matthews' memory.

On July 3, a portion of all u-pick strawberry and pre-picked strawberry sales at Rock Garden Farms went to Kidz in Caledon. This totaled \$600, a number that Rock Garden Farms then matched.

Malette-Matthews' family, and former employer, each contributed \$100 more to bring the total money raised to \$1,400, said Galati.

Kidz in Caledon is an initiative to ensure Caledon children are not left out of summer camps or organized sports. It also ensures children have the nutritious food they need to enjoy the aforementioned activities so they can make friends and memories.

Galati said the fundraiser went well and that it was heartwarming to know Malette-Matthews' memory inspired people to help out other kids. She said Malette-Matthews was the type of person who was always trying to help others and that the Kidz in Caledon initiative represents him well.

Caledon Community Services' Director of Communications and Marketing, Donna Cragg, said it was wonderful to see Malette-Matthews' family pass on some goodness to other children in the Caledon community.

Cragg said Kidz in Caledon lets kids be kids. She told the story of how someone who once benefited from Kidz in Caledon came back later in life to thank CCS for alleviating the stress on their single mother and allowing them to just be a kid.

Caledon is a very caring community, said Cragg, and it's not uncommon for people to host fundraising events such as the one at Rock Garden Farms. She explained that CCS has what's called its Changemakers program, which gives any Caledon resident the tools they need to host a fundraiser of their own.

She also said she was not surprised to hear that Rock Garden Farms was doing a fundraiser, as she said they have always supported a variety of different charitable causes in Caledon.