

## Nobleton Christmas Drive makes spirits bright

**By Mark Pavilons**

Santa and his elves are already busy, gearing up for another Nobleton Christmas Drive.

The 19th annual drive, spearheaded by 43-year resident Mary "Mimi" Buchanan, will bring smiles to some precious young faces again this year.

Buchanan is in full gear. She's on her usual mission because "we don't want anyone overlooked."

She expects numbers to be on par with last year, and the drive will help several local families and between 20-30 children, with everything including basic necessities, food, clothing and toys.

While it may seem like a small number, outfitting everyone in the family with things like snowsuits, boots and the hottest new toys does add up.

Buchanan is lucky and blessed that the community has responded.

"We're happy with everything we get," she said.

The Tim Hortons Smile Cookie proceeds this year are coming to her cause. This fundraiser and local publicity, has increased awareness and she's been getting more inquiries this season.

Her task is a bit of a challenge. She had some veteran volunteers leave and it's important for her to have discreet helpers. As well, she's in a wheelchair which makes her shopping trips a bit more difficult. But she won't slow down until the drive is wrapped up.

She also gets a great deal of help from her husband and her children.

Financial donations go a long way to helping the local families, she pointed out. This way, they can purchase items from the families' "wish lists."

Co-ordinated through Nobleton Public School, the wish lists go home with students in inconspicuous brown envelopes and families fill out the specifics relating to age, gender, size and colour preferences.

She tries to give priority to outerwear, since winter clothing is not only important but can be quite costly.

Toy donations are quite healthy, thanks to efforts by the King Chamber of Commerce and the King Fire and Emergency Services.

Local businesses have come to help and King Automotive Repair Service has donated turkeys for all the families.

Over the years, she has received many heartfelt sentiments in letters and notes from appreciative families. That, and the wide-eyed wonderment of children on Christmas morning, keep her going strong.

"I think we should all be giving back," she said.

Buchanan admitted she's been blessed and her father had a long history of community involvement.

"It's important that we instill this (giving back) in our kids," she observed.

While the school supplies a list of names, Buchanan is more than willing to help anyone in need in her community.

You can drop off your donations to Nobleton Public School. If you can't make it there, you can call her at 905- 859-5456 or email her at [mimi\\_girl93@hotmail.com](mailto:mimi_girl93@hotmail.com).