

Firefighters, Rockford's raise \$20K for family

By Mark Pavilons

The King community has come together to extend heart-felt support to a Vaughan family.

King firefighters responded to the call to help one of their own and staged a one-night fundraising event at Rockford's in King City.

That event, which included donations, draws and support from Rockford's itself, raised an incredible \$20,165.

The King City Firefighters Association lined up candidates who received an "epic mustache" in support of Rebecca Grace Silva.

Rebecca, daughter of Vaughan firefighter Mark Silva, is fighting Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) Type 1.

King firefighter Guerino Maccagnan said it's all about the fire department and everyone in it. Support for the event came from Chief Jim Wall right down to the new recruits.

Mark Silva said his family really appreciates the efforts from King firefighters and Rockford's, calling the fundraiser "fantastic."

Mayor Steve Pellegrini noted that Rockford's is well known for its support of any project or cause.

Fundraising efforts have been ongoing to raise enough money to get a very expensive drug in the United States. Zolgensma, not available in Canada, costs \$2.124 million U.S. It's heralded as the most expensive treatment in the world. The one-time treatment will extend Rebecca's life.

This disease affects Rebecca's motor nerve cells in her spinal cord, taking away her ability to walk, eat, and breathe. SMA does not affect Rebecca's mental or cognitive abilities. Sadly, 95% of babies with SMA type 1 do not reach their 2nd birthday and it is the number one genetic cause of death in infants.

Donations are being accepted through their page at gofundme.com/f/hope-for-rebecca-grace