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'I knew there would be a Santa ...'

Toronto Police and Burlington elves come through for St. James Town

By [JOE WARMINGTON](#)

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If they write about 2008 as they do about pre-depression 1929, the one thing I hope historians highlight is just how generous Torontonians were in a time of uncertainty during this economic no-man's land.

They should, because Toronto's generosity is real. And it is Toronto the Good.

I saw all of it first-hand yesterday in St. James Town.

It was quite a sight at 240 Wellesley St. when a Toronto Police bus arrived under police escort carrying officers, auxiliary officers from 41, 42 and 43 Division and more than 700 toys. Throw in Santa Claus along for the ride and you had some Christmas scene.

The kids were pretty excited. And the volunteers who had a toy shortage relieved -- and appreciative.

"Usually when you see this many police in St. James Town the news is not good but not this time," said an emotional Pastor Kevin Moore of the St. James Town Christmas Appeal. "They are something else. We can't thank them enough."

What it means is no kid in St. James Town will go without a gift this Christmas.

Remember last week, when they had six toys and 1,000 kids and things looked bleak. Well, now they have triple the amount of toys -- more than enough to help the 1,500 other children who were not on the list and send what they don't need to the Salvation Army to get out to other organizations.

Last May, the Salvation Army lost its warehouse due to a fire so this influx will help them get toys to all of the organizations they service. "It will go to good use," committee chairman Gene Lara said. "We will make sure of that."

You can go to torontosun.com and see the video on this event yesterday. And our toy drive event at Sun TV, 25 Ontario St., is still on at noon today -- with a chance to win hockey and basketball tickets and to listen to recording star Naomi Striemer perform.

Every present brought here will get to a child who may not receive one this Christmas.

"I am blown away by the generosity of our readers," said Christina Fleming, executive assistant to publisher and CEO Kin-Man Lee.

"And thank you to the Toronto Police for putting smiles on the faces of hundreds of children at St. James Town. Your donations will mean that they will wake up Christmas morning knowing that someone cares. This is a true Christmas miracle. Toronto is truly a wonderful city with a huge heart. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

Special thanks to Sgt. Fanny Lau, Const. Bill Campbell, Insp. Margaret Miklas, Sgt. Claire Holmes, Insp. Bernadette Button, Ward 43 Councillor Paul Ainslie and volunteers Tarug Elamin, Nick Anzovino and Paul Sherman for all of their help.

Big thanks, too, to the Toronto Firefighters for all their efforts who, along with Global TV, also made a huge donation.

And to Ultimate Home and Garden in Burlington, who sent over a truck with 1,000 toys.

"We are so happy," volunteer Everett Collrin said. "We did not want to have to tell any family there were no toys this year."

Toronto would not let that happen. "I knew there would be a Santa and a Christmas miracle," added Lara.

Whatever they write about 2008 in the history books, they won't be able to say people didn't care.