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# Anonymous Donor Provides Christmas Dinner For Hundreds of Local Residents In Need

By [Pamela Vanmeer](#) - December 23, 2020

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KAWARTHA LAKES-He's known as Marco Polo to those who receive their Christmas Dinner, although Santa Claus might be more fitting.

It's obviously not his real name, he's not doing it for the recognition. For the last three years "Marco Polo" has delivered the ingredients for a full Christmas dinner with all the fixings to 50 families, feeding up to 8 people each.

"When it comes to Christmas time, it's a time of giving." Polo told Kawartha 411 News. Giving the only way I could ever enjoy my Christmas dinner, knowing I have helped others enjoy theirs."

The dinner consists of a large turkey, bag of potatoes, corn, cranberries, Perrier water and more. The donations are provided to the families anonymously through community organizations such as Women's Resources, The Bobcaygeon and Area COVID Relief Fund and more.

At this time, especially when so many are struggling, the generosity of this gentleman has brightened the hearts of many in our community." said Councillor Kathleen Seymour Fagan.

While he's been doing the great turkey give away for three years Polo has been giving back for more than three decades.

The man, who lives in Bobcaygeon says it all started with supplying Christmas dinner for his 60 employees. Over the years he's sponsored numerous sports organizations, made donations to the Boys and Girls Club, The Academy Theatre and Ross Memorial Hospital to name a few.

"I've always had a philosophy that if you give you will certainly get back in return. I've just always done it. But I don't need a great whoo whoo about it."

The philanthropist says he has owned a number of businesses over the years that have allowed him the means and opportunity to help others.

"It's selfish really because I get internal, intrinsic joy from it."

This year Polo has teamed up with Mark Knoester the owner of Sobeys in Fenelon Falls to provide an additional 10 families with gift cards for Christmas.

"I think it's a great idea and certainly a wonderful cause." Knoester told Kawartha 411 News.

Knoester says while his business has seen a jump in sales due to the pandemic he feels for other local



businesses who aren't as lucky and he wants to give back.

"We've been taking \$2 donations at the till for the Fenelon Falls Salvation Army."

The Fenelon Falls Sobeys is also second in Ontario for bag sales for the local food bank.

"The local food bank has been overwhelmed with people in need this year with the pandemic and our bag sales have had overwhelming support from the community, it's amazing." Knoester says.

Staff at Sobeys fill bags with \$5 or \$10 worth of food as suggested by the food bank and then people wanting to give can simply purchase a bag.

In the mean time he and Polo are still looking to give away 10 gift cards for Sobeys. If you know of someone in need you can email us at info@kawartha411.ca.

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**Pamela Vanmeer**



Pamela VanMeer is a two time winner of the prestigious Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) Award. Her investigative reports on abuse in Long Term Care Homes garnered international attention for the issue and won the Ron Laidlaw Award. She is a former reporter and anchor at CHEX News, now Global Peterborough and helped launch the New CHEX Daily, a daily half hour talk show. While at CHCH News in Hamilton she covered some of the biggest news stories of the day.

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