



SORTERS AND PACKERS: Some of the volunteers who sorted food and packed 89 hampers for the Acton Christmas Hamper committees before Christmas. The volunteers worked on the Thursday and Friday prior to Christmas Day. The hampers were delivered on Saturday – Submitted photo

Volunteers sort, pack hampers for 89 needy Acton families

Acton Christmas Hamper Committee again provided Christmas happiness for needy families in Acton. On Thursday Dec. 18, volunteers in the church hall of St. Joseph

Patron of Canada sorted the tremendous amount of food that was donated by children in local schools. The next day the volunteers packed 89 large food hampers.

As well as the non-perishable food, each family was also given a gift card for purchasing meat from Sobeys and a gift card donated by Giant Tiger.

On Saturday, Dec. 20, volunteers distributed the 89 Christmas hampers. Some hampers were delivered, and the rest were picked up at the church hall.

Police widen area, nab drivers

By Frances Niblock

Halton police actively “hunt” for impaired drivers and they found them this holiday season.

“I’d hate the message to be that impaired driving is up, because I’m not convinced that it is. I think that we’re hunting for [impaired drivers] and we’re finding them,” said Halton Police Services traffic services co-ordinator Constable Richard Solecki said on Monday as he released the R.I.D.E (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) statistics for the holiday season in Halton.

In One District, Acton, Georgetown and Milton, Halton police stopped approximately 14,000 cars and administered roadside screening tests to 57 drivers. They arrested seven people for having more than 80-milligrams of alcohol in 100-millilitres of blood and issued 22 12-hour suspensions.

As well in District One, police laid one liquor licence act charge, four drug charges, caught one driver using a suspended licence and notified five drivers that their licences had been suspended. The seven drivers who were charged with

impaired were also issued 90-day licence suspensions related to the impaired driving charges.

Patrol back roads

Constable Solecki said Halton police “aggressively” look for impaired drivers – patrolling back roads and areas near bars, not just setting up R.I.D.E. spot checks on main roads – and they are finding them.

Last year, Halton police laid five impaired driving charges in District One – officers caught them on regular patrol, not at R.I.D.E spot checks. Halton-wide, 24,644 drivers were stopped at R.I.D.E spot checks this holiday season compared to 35,877 last year.

Roadside breath tests were administered to 236 motorists in the Region, compared with 190 last year resulting in 44 12-hour licence suspensions, compared with 28 last year.

In addition to the charges laid at R.I.D.E spot checks last year, 22 drivers were charged with impaired driving by community patrol officers, including three in Halton Hills. At press time, Halton police did not have the number of drivers charged by community patrol officers for this holiday season.

Constable Solecki is pleased that the province is toughening up the rules governing impaired driving this spring, changing the current 12-hour licence suspension to a three-day suspension. A second offence would result in a seven-day suspension and a subsequent charge would lead to a 30-day licence suspension.

“The suspension would be entered onto your permanent driving history – that’s a huge change – where it is accessible to your insurance company and will be treated like a careless driving conviction,” Solecki said, adding there is on-going debate about changing the charge of having over 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100-millilitres of blood to 50 milligrams of alcohol.

This year the province doubled the funding to police to fight impaired driving with R.I.D.E – Solecki declined to say how much that was in Halton – adding that with provincially-funded RIDE they did 236 roadside tests with a dozen impaired charges being laid and 44 12-hour suspensions being issued.

“That’s pretty impressive, but again we are out there hunting them down and moving to locations where they don’t expect us.”



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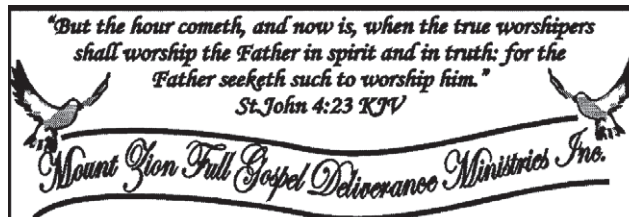


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