

OPINION

Smoother sailing?

Following the economic turbulence of 2009, our message to readers around this time last year was to "fasten your seatbelts" as we headed into 2010.

As it turns out the past year was not as rocky as many had feared it would be.

- Consider the following:
- There was no federal election
 - The stock markets rebounded
 - The previous year's stimulus packages, both here and abroad, appeared to help right the listing economic ship
 - Automakers again started talking about profits rather than restructuring and the closing of dealerships
 - Canada's real estate

market appears to be settling into a balanced state, according to figures released by the Canadian Real Estate Association

• While it's of little comfort to anyone out of work and looking for a job, the national unemployment rate appears to be trending downward. Even the job situation in hard-hit Ontario brightened in November as the employment level rose by 31,000, pushing the unemployment rate down 0.4 percentage points to 8.2 per cent, the lowest since January 2009.

While 2010 certainly had its rocky moments, it appears we weathered the storm.

Here's to smooth sailing in 2011.



ReadersWrite

Email letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com. Letters, which may be edited, must include the writer's name, address and phone number.

Thanks for making Troy's Toy Drive a great success

DEAR EDITOR:

On behalf of my dear friend Troy Newton, his sister Crystal, my father Tiger Jeet Singh and the Tiger Jeet Singh Foundation, our respected families and the entire staff down at Troy's Diner, I'd like to thank our entire community of Milton for making this year's Troy's Toy Drive a tremendous success.

We were blown away by taking in \$60,000 in toys, food, clothing and cash donations.

A small town with a big heart is the best way to describe our community. And with all the media attention this year's event attracted, the secret of our 'little town' is out. In addition to the outpouring of support that was once again shown by Miltonians and area residents, this year we were also blessed to take in close to \$30,000 worth of sponsorship, which were led by Scotia Bank (at Main Street and Thompson Road), Royal Park Homes, Linesteel out from Barrie and Best Buy Mobile from Bramalea City Centre.

Our gratitude also goes for the wonderful music provided by numerous bands at our wrap-up party, including the Salvation Army Brass Quartet and Milton Choristers, in addition to a special 'Christmas Around The World' performance by recording artist Prita Chhabra and bhangra dancers from Sonay Gabroo Punjab De (SGPD) team.

A special mention goes out to Wendy and Dave of Decks by Dave, who not only generously sponsored the drive but were instru-

mental in organizing the raffle prizes, which generated approximately \$5,000. Thanks to hockey great Johnny Bower, Walter Gretzky, Mayor Gord Krantz and Halton MP Ted Chudleigh for lending their time once again to this great cause.

My sincere appreciation goes out to all our volunteers and local councillors — both present and past — for showing up so early and assisting to make the day so very special.

On the top of my list of people to thank is my dear friend Troy. A lot of people aren't aware, but it was approximately a little over a year ago when Troy sat down with my father and I to express his desire in wanting to do a toy drive. From there, we brainstormed together and in addition to collecting toys, we expanded upon the idea to also include the collection of food, clothing and incorporate the vision of bringing people of different faiths and cultures together under one roof to celebrate the holiday season by supporting children and the less fortunate.

It's very difficult to nail down one specific memory that stands out from all the goodwill that was displayed by residents this year. However, if there's one moment that was the pinnacle point for me during the toy drive, it was our visit to Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children. The entire team was on hand as my father and I were honoured to be asked to read to the young patients.

Prior to the reading and taking pictures

with the children, one of the nurses asked if I could make a visit to some patients on the upper floors who were really big wrestling fans, but were unfortunately too ill to attend the reading session. Upon entering one of the rooms, we were met by Stephen, a 17-year-old who didn't look more than 10 years of age. He suddenly broke out with a smile that lit up the room. I realized that all the sleepless nights that Troy, myself and the 'team' endured over the last month leading up to the toy drive was well worth it.

I could see that Troy was overwhelmed with emotion and I too had my eyes swell up with tears, which in the end only reconfirmed my purpose for being there. You see, it wasn't even five years ago that my own nephew was diagnosed with leukemia and treated at SickKids. With God's grace, he's now a very happy, healthy and spirited young boy.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to my fellow Miltonians. Through your support, the two Troy's Toy Drives and TigerFest at this past year's Milton Street Festival have brought in more than \$150,000, which has contributed to supporting such worthy causes as the Milton District Hospital Foundation, Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, Halton Women's Place and the Salvation Army.

Wishing you all the very best for 2011.

TIGER JEET SINGH JR.
MILTON

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