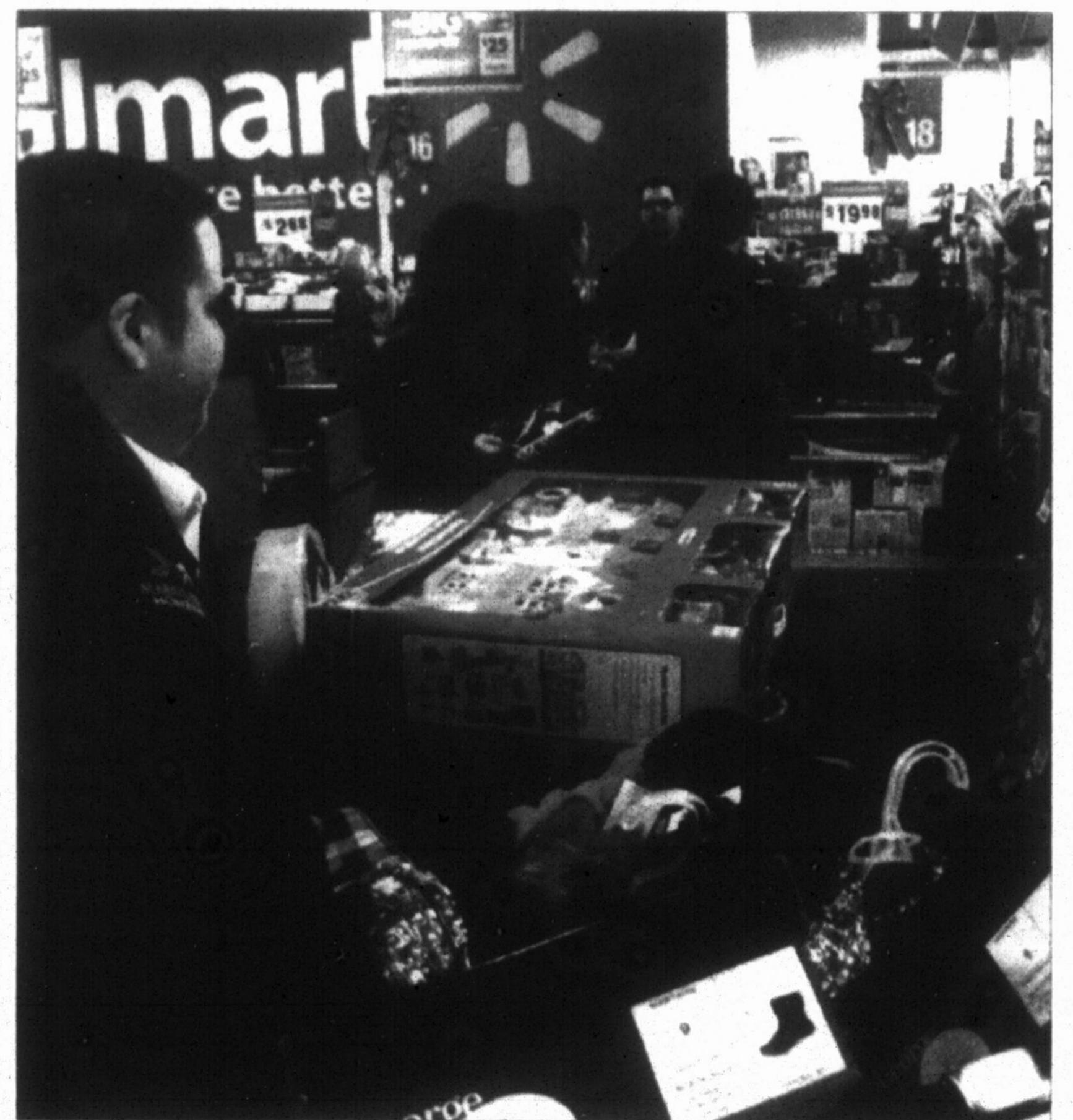
NEWSPAPER STAFFERS PLAY SANTA

The Sun-Tribune's York Region Media Group Santa Fund helped make the holidays brighter for 49 families, many of them much larger than usual, including 17 from Yellow Brick House. These less-fortunate families were able to enjoy presents and the joys of the season thanks to the incredible \$4,300 in cash received from generous readers and clients. Here office manager Melanie Attridge and marketing staffer Tyler Duncan line up at Walmart to cash out all the gifts. In fact, it took Santa Fund shoppers — including Mike Banville, Courtney Atherton, Joe Castaldi, Sabrina Holt and Alex Leclerc — an incredible 45 minutes just to pay for all the items at the checkout! Thank you to all our readers and advertisers and staff who support this fund year-round.



POLICE: Seven impaired charges

RIDE program in Twitter-sphere

BY JOE FANTAUZZI
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The battle against impaired driving in York Region has taken an off-ramp into the Twitter-sphere.

As part of its annual enhanced seasonal RIDE spot check program, York police has taken to social media to spread awareness of the dangers of being boozy or drugged behind the wheel.

When combined with more traditional impaired driving campaigns, the use of social media, through the hashtag #FestiveRIDE, is a way to keep pushing the message, Sgt. Sarah Riddell said.

So far, seven people have been arrested for driving drunk during this year's festive season RIDE, compared to six last year, she said. As usual, officers are stopping cars at spot checks and uniform officers are responding to emergency calls about suspected impaired drivers.

In one such case Dec. 15, police received a 911 call from a motorist at about 5:10 p.m. The vehicle that became the focus of police attention collided with another car on Bathurst Street near Carrville Road in Richmond Hill, police said. Two people were hospitalized with serious injuries.

An Aurora man, 31, is charged with dangerous driving, impaired driving causing bodily harm and driving with more than 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood.

In a month's worth of RIDE blitzing, police have stopped more than 21,500 vehicles and administered 98 roadside tests.

