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## Gravenhurst kids turn nobody into somebody with kindness, compassion

Students taught to put others before themselves

COMMUNITY Jun 30, 2017 by Mary Beth Hartill Gravenhurst Banner



Alison Durocher's Grade 6 class at Muskoka Beechgrove Public School learns they can make a difference in their community through  $the \ Nobody \ Doll \ Project-turning \ nobody \ into \ some body. \ They \ were \ joined \ by \ Chris \ Eby \ of \ Muskoka \ Victim \ Service \ and \ therapy \ dog$ Willow to chat about the importance of thinking of others. - Mary Beth Hartill/Metroland

GRAVENHURST — It began as nobody and by the time the kids were done, it was somebody — somebody important, somebody who was the embodiment of love, kindness, and compassion

The kids in Alison Durocher's grade six class at Muskoka Beechgrove Public School in Gravenhurst have been giving back to their community throughout the school year with acts of kindness, and the community has

It all began with a doll — a nobody doll — a clean slate. As each child did something wonderful, an act of goodness, they added something to this doll. A hat and boots for shovelling, a bandage for helping Sick Kids Hospital, a small bag of garbage for picking up trash in the neighbourhood ... each good deed a new item. The doll went from "nobody" to "somebody" - somebody special.

One child helped Muskoka Victim Services, raising nearly \$275 for their therapy dog program, educating the public on what they do, and attracting two potential volunteers to the organization. Another child raised and donated money to the Salvation Army and books to the public library; another donated her hair to make a wig for a child without hair; another taught her brother with autism how to do his ABCs. A bake sale raked in more than \$600 for Jake Thomas who was in an accident, money for sick kids, donations of clothes and blankets, money to help a friend with travel costs to hospital, helping a neighbour shovel the drive, visiting the elderly. The list goes on.

"It's just something that teaches kids to think of others before they think of themselves," Alison Durocher's grade six teacher at Muskoka Beechgrove Public School

"It's just something that teaches kids to think of others before they think of themselves," she said.

For Chris Eby, executive director of Muskoka Victim Services, it meant so much more.

Durocher has done this with her class in the past and got the idea

from a teacher in Bracebridge several years ago.

"There are things in our happen in our community that make us sad," he said. "When Seth came into my work, he inspired me.

He told the children he hopes others, when they learn how big an impact they had on their community, will realize that they can too

"It's about touching hearts," he said.

by Mary Beth Hartill Mary Beth Hartill is a reporter with the Bracebridge Examiner. She

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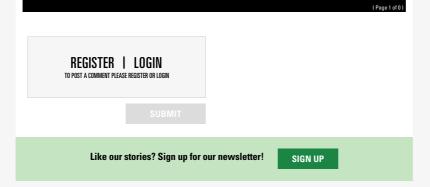




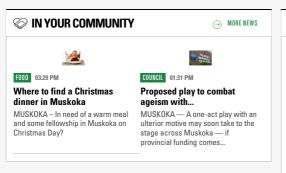
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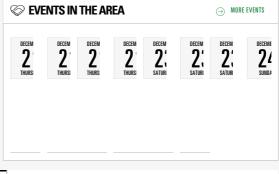


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