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Blind River Rotary Club hosts 'Bubbles for Polio'

By KELLY JAMES
For The Standard
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Photo by KELLY JAMES/FOR THE STANDARD Jim Smith, owner of Mic's Kwik-Way in Blind River, was honoured by the Rotary Club of Blind River for his continuing efforts to support local initiatives and contributions to the local community. Smith was presented with the Rotary Club's citizenship plaque during the 'Bubbles for Polio' event last week.

Less than 30 years ago, the dreaded childhood disease known as polio was responsible for crippling and killing an estimated 350,000 children around the world.

Now, through the efforts of Rotary International and Rotary Clubs around the world, the number of reported cases of polio has dropped to a mere eight. Rotarians such as the members of the Rotary Club of Blind River have vowed that they will not rest until polio has been completely eradicated worldwide, leading the local club to host its first annual 'Bubbles for Polio' family event last

week.

Children young and old were encouraged to come out with their favourite 'bubble wands' and create scores of fantastic bubbles at stations provided by the Rotary Club. Participants were also treated to music, face and finger painting, ice cream and other activities, and \$550 was raised from donations to assist Rotary International in its fight to completely wipe out polio.

Rotary Club of Blind River member Bea Jensen informed the crowd that polio is typically spread through contaminated water. The disease affects the nervous system and can lead to paralysis and even death.

Although there is no cure for polio, a safe and highly effective vaccine has been developed, which is used by Rotary International and other dedicated volunteer groups to immunize more than 2.5 billion children in 122 countries. The vaccine is more than 99% effective in protecting children from the disease, and the continuing efforts of groups such as the Rotary Club in administering the vaccine have led to the dramatic decline in cases of polio.

Since 2013, the Gates Foundation (founded by Microsoft chairman Bill Gates and wife Melinda) has pledged to match each dollar that Rotary International commits to polio eradication. This translates into a total donation of \$1,100 from the first annual 'Bubbles for Polio' event in Blind River.

The local Rotary Club also took time to honour a local citizen for his efforts to improve the quality of life in the Blind River area.

Jim Smith, owner of Mic's Kwik-Way, was selected as the most recent recipient of the Rotary Club's citizenship award for his consistent and continuing donations to numerous local events and activities.

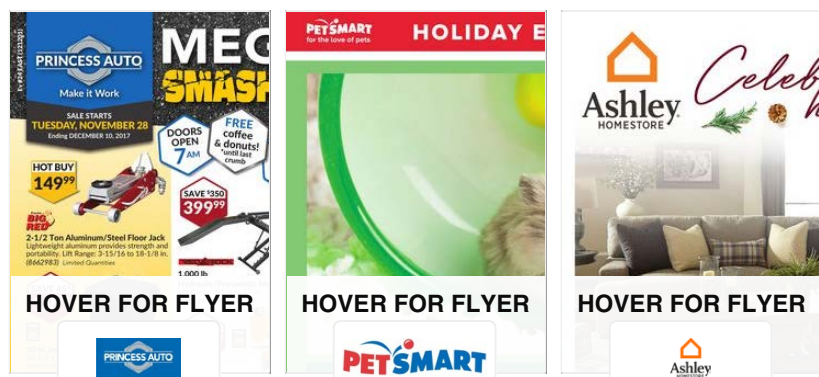
Over the years, Smith has contributed to the annual Senior Games in Blind River, community festivals activities, local fundraisers and is an active supporter of the North Shore Health Network.

Rotary Club of Blind River president Ross Jensen noted that Smith was selected for the award because he reflects the ideals valued by the Rotary Club.

Jensen noted that Smith tries to build goodwill and better relationships, and offers his services fairly and with a genuine desire to help others.

In accepting the award, Smith gave credit to his family, as well as his staff and customers at Mic's Kwik-Way for their support of community activities. He thanked the local Rotarians for choosing him for the prestigious honour, which will be proudly displayed in the local convenience store.

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