

Red Nose busy on first weekend

BY RACHEL STERN
THE NEWS BULLETIN

Whether holiday revelers had too much holiday cheer or just didn't feel comfortable driving on the slick, rainy roads, Operation Red Nose volunteers were there to drive them safely home.

The service kicked off to a busy start Nov. 25-26, with Rudy's little helpers driving 1,682 kilometres during 69 rides to get 157 people to their destinations.

Although the service is free, donations are accepted and passengers were generous with their pocketbooks, donating \$1,400.

Money raised from Operation Red Nose supports Pacific Sport's Active Star and Xplore-Sportz camps for children and youth, youth leadership programs in elementary schools and athlete services.

Demand increased from last year's launch weekend – volunteers provided eight more rides than last year on Friday night and nine on Saturday.

Volunteers are needed to help fill shifts and get people home safely, especially because Red Nose is providing 12 nights of service this year instead of its regular 10 nights.

Operation Red Nose offers services from Lantzville to Ladysmith from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. People can call the Red Nose hotline at 250-755-6969 for a ride. Operation Red Nose offers service Dec. 2-3, 9-10, 16-17, 22-23, 30 and New Year's Eve.

To volunteer, please e-mail nanaimo@operationrednose.com or call 250-740-6572.

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Stores support coin collection

BY MELISSA FRYER
THE NEWS BULLETIN



CHRIS BUSH/THE NEWS BULLETIN

Randy Henson, Quality Foods University Village store manager, drops his stash of pennies in a donation jar. Quality Foods has joined the News Bulletin's Pennies for Presents drive for the first time this year and is collecting pennies at the cash out counters at its Harewood store.

You often see cut up coffee cans, peanut butter jars or other containers nestled at the cash register of stores in Nanaimo.

They have our Pennies for Presents stickers with the stuffed stocking logo attached and invite customers to toss their change – the latest being Quality Foods in University Village.

The store is one of many drop-off points for donations to the News Bulletin's annual Pennies for Presents campaign.

"We just feel it's a good support system for the community," said Randy Henson, store manager at Quality Foods University Village.

"We have a lot of customers coming through our store and we wanted to get on board with another local charity."

Through readers' penny and coin donations, the News Bulletin collects, rolls and deposits the money at TD Canada Trust in Terminal Park mall and donates the money to three charities – the Great Nanaimo Toy Drive, the Salvation Army and the Nanaimo Boys and Girls Club – to buy gifts for children at Christmas.

In addition to Quality Foods in Harewood, donations can also be dropped off at InPrint downtown, John's Bedroom Barn, Northridge Fitness, Canadian Tire, Sink or Swim Scuba, La-Z-Boy, Royal LePage at Brooks Landing and Coast Realty downtown.

Many of the businesses have been part of the campaign since its inception in 1996.

Black Press, the News Bulletin's parent company, sponsors advertising and staff resources to the campaign, which runs in most of our papers across Vancouver Island.

Quality Foods also participates in Hamperville, which is a partnership between the Salvation Army and the Loaves and Fishes community food bank to provide food for families at Christmas; they help load up the Big Boys Toys motorhome with food; and promote the buy a bag program, where people can donate to the food bank throughout the year.

The store also sponsors festive dinners for students and their families in Harewood schools, where staff also help serve the food.

"There's lots of different ways we try to help," Henson said. Through community involvement, as well as day-to-day activity in the store, Henson said he sees an increasing need for charity services in Nanaimo this year, but heartening is the increase in support for less privileged people as well.

"There's more demand but there's more support, too," Henson said.

Pennies for Presents accepts all monetary donations at community drop-off points listed above, as well as the News Bulletin office at 777 Poplar St. For more information, please call 250-734-4627.

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Health authority leads radiology peer review system

BY NATALIE NORTH
BLACK PRESS

Patients receiving x-rays, CT scans and other medical imaging services on the Island will soon be able to rest assured about the qualifications of radiologists interpreting the data.

Last week, the Vancouver Island Health Authority sent out a request

for proposals in search of a software technology system to peer review medical imaging in B.C.

The RFP springs from a report on medical imaging issued last September by Dr. Doug Cochrane, chair of the B.C. Patient Safety and Quality Council, who outlined the case of a radiologist in Comox who began using a new CT scanner without training on the equipment.

"We're going to be working together with coastal and Fraser health authorities who have recently begun a manual peer review process," said Shannon Marshall, VIHA spokeswoman.

"VIHA is taking the lead on the project because we do have advanced, existing infrastructure in our electronic imaging systems."

The system should allow random

or selected interception of medical imaging interpretations to verify, or challenge, the initial interpretation.

The first phase of this project, aimed at sharing data between health authorities, the ministry and the B.C. College of Physicians, is expected to be in place within VIHA late next spring.

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