

Bancroft Legion donates \$7,000 to local organizations



By **Michael Riley**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Bancroft Legion, branch 181 handed out cheques worth \$7,000 on Dec. 13 to various worthy local organizations at their branch location at 16 Station Street. Many of the recipients were there in person receiving these donations in amounts from \$500 to \$3,000. Stacy Talsma, the president of the Bancroft Legion, comments on this disbursement of funds to local worthy causes. Each year, the Bancroft Legion raises funds throughout the year to donate to various local organizations. Cheques were handed out by Talsma, Bancroft Legion public relations officer Larran LeGassicke, and Bancroft Legion members Eric Lavoy and Caroline Davis at the Legion's branch location on Station Street. Talsma told Bancroft This Week that when they do events and activities at the Legion, like the dance they have coming up, those proceeds go toward helping with these donations. "Throughout the year, we do stuff [like dances, euchre, and meat darts] and this year locally, we've donated \$7,000 between everybody," she says. Kristin Wodzak, the vice president of the Bancroft Skating Club (www.bancroftskatingclub.com), was there to accept a cheque for \$500 and said they were super excited to receive it. "It's great. We've decided for this year that we're paying all the non-user fees for our skaters. So that was a big chunk of money out of our account. A lot of our fundraising this year is going to our non-user fee," she says. John Torrens was there for Bancroft and area Kids in Need (www.facebook.com/bancroftkidsinneed/), which got \$500, and he thought it was great. "Times are hard right now. Donations are down. The community always seems to come through," he says. Millenium Capital Concerts (www.mineralcapitalconcerts.ca) received \$500 and Steve Scally was there to accept the cheque. He thought it was fantastic and that it was great to have the Legion involved in this. "It goes a long way to make sure we can bring in quality bands. The program runs pretty much on this kind of sponsorship so it's pretty important to us and making sure it can continue. That's really what we're excited about mostly and being able to give back to the community. We'll be certain to bring in as much local talent as we can and we like to mix it up. We'll hear some of the familiar local talent and some talent we wouldn't otherwise hear," he says. Brennan Bierworth, second vice president and health and safety officer with the Bancroft and District Minor Hockey Association (www.bancroftjets.com), accepted \$3,000 from the Legion. "It's fantastic. It's really important for minor hockey," he says. Jo Pearson from North Hastings Community Cupboard (www.northhastingscommunitycupboard.com) was there to accept a cheque for \$1,000 and thought it was wonderful. "It helps a lot because there's always gaps in what gets donated. To save money, people buy in bulk. We can't give a senior a giant bulk peanut butter, so we'll use this to buy the small peanut butters, or things like pet food donations or sanitary products. So yeah, when we get cash donations, that's what those things go towards," she says. Paula and Stefanie were there with Home Again Bancroft (www.homeagainbancroft.ca), and Paula, who is the treasurer, said she thought it was excellent to get the donation for \$500. "Every cent we can get, we need. The prices are going through the roof and our vet bills are phenomenal. Last year alone, our vet bills were over \$130,000 and that's just vet bills. We fundraise as much as we can. We have

our Give Back raffle on right now. [go to www.homeagainbancroft.ca for more information on this raffle and the organization]. This is our way of giving back to our community because they've always supported us," she says. The North Hastings High School Band (www.nhhs.hpedsb.on.ca) and the North Hastings Community Fish Hatchery (www.fishhatchery.ca) could not be in attendance that day, but received donations for \$500 and \$1000 respectively. Talsma told Bancroft This Week that they try to do as much as they possibly can for the community. "Everything we do, of course we have to keep back some to run the Legion, but as much as we can afford it goes back into our community. Internationally, as well, we donated over \$24,000 for all different causes. We're always looking for more community to come through the doors. That's what we're focused on this year is to have our community back in post COVID-19," she says. "We're trying to get out in the community and be more recognized in our uniforms because I think that's important that people realize that the Legion is still here and we're still respectful to the people who fought for us."