

Brighten the Night Parade another yuletide success



By Michael Riley

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Maynooth's Brighten the Night parade returned Dec. 14, with a Christmas market at Emond Hall in the Hastings Highlands Centre from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., a rummage sale at the United Church, a tree lighting ceremony at 4 p.m. and then the parade starting at 5 p.m. There were also acoustic performances by Ian Russell and Betty Leister in the library from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Appalachian Celtic in the library from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., and carol singers around town all day long. It was a cold, clear day that was perfect weather for the parade. After the kids' visits with Santa and the vendor markets, the floats participating in the parade congregated in Loggers' Field prior to the start of the parade for judging by a team of children, organized by HHPL. The first prize went to Dillabough Millwrighting and Welding, the second prize went to the Clemmer family, while West Pines Park got third prize honours. Hastings Highlands Mayor Tony Fitzgerald thought the parade and all the festivities in Maynooth beforehand went extremely well. "I am most proud of my staff and all the volunteers who put this day together. Despite the cold temperatures, there was a huge crowd and an amazing array of floats, all lit up with an abundance of lights. The Christmas spirit was very much in evidence in Maynooth on Saturday evening!" he says. Hastings Highlands treasurer Emily Dickinson, who carried the "Happy Holidays for Hastings Highlands" banner with Emily Petzold, the municipality's financial analyst, thought it was a great day. "A bit chilly, but nice to see so many people out and about!" she says. Doole told Bancroft This Week on Dec. 16 that the Brighten the Night Parade was an overwhelming success. "There are too many people to list here that contributed to making Saturday such a festive magical time in Maynooth. People enjoyed exploring the shops in town, the Christmas Market in Emond Hall and vendors in the courtyard outside Hastings Highlands Centre, the United Church Rummage sale, musicians and Santa at the library and beautiful full moon shining on the parade to top it all off," she says. Doole reveals there were 21 entries in the parade, more if walkers and animals are included. She says they were thrilled with the turnout and grateful for all the time and effort that went into lighting up and decorating. "I was amongst the crowd once the parade got going and heard lots of oohs and aahs. People were recognizing friends and community members—there were tons of smiles and waves. A very big thank you to everyone who participated on

Saturday, vendor or customer, parade participant or parade watcher,? she says. ?It takes a village as they say!?