

Jingle, jingle, jingle.....

Activities at the Lower Mills North Pole continue, as the official season was kicked off with Santa's Holiday party at the Bank, Tuesday the 11th. Tony (Santa) hosted his annual holiday party, a tradition for as long as he has been here, some seven years now.

A packed foyer spilled over with people, cheer, food and spirits, as a larger crowd than usual squeezed in through the doors. The Lower Mills Merchant community and beyond crushed into Meetinghouse bank for a great night of meeting and greeting and maybe a kiss under the mistletoe. Familiar faces and a few new comers mingled and jingled the night away while nibbling and imbibing on the sinfully delicious pastries of Sweet Life Café (little naughty) and the very generous array of food and spirits provided by the Ledge (very nice). But there is no sleeping at the North Pole at this time of the year.

Tony's crew where hard at work the next day (elves never sleep) buying wrapping paper, gathering their tools; tape, markers, scissors getting right into their next holiday project—wrapping gifts for the toy drive! Santa's work shop (the bank conference room) already packed with food, as the food drive also continues, was equally jammed with gifts donated for the Area C Police toy drive. Papers and gifts flying everywhere, scissors and tape sliding across the conference room table, individual wrapping styles fell in sync with the rhythm of the Christmas carols in the background. Gift needing batteries were set aside so that the appropriate batteries could be purchased and wrapped with the gift. Santa does not like to disappoint eager children who cannot play with new toys because of no batteries. Elves worked at elf speed and gifts were wrapped and marked in record time and the pile of wrapped gifts just grew and grew. Magic!

But again, elves never sleep. Soon they will be separating not gifts, but food, as deliveries for needy families will start Christmas week. Towers of non-perishables are amassing in Santa's conference room, and generous donations of gift cards and cash have been collected for another year of secret Santa food deliveries. The food gifts are anonymous. If you recommend a family you bring the food to them without revealing from where it comes. While the generosity of Lower Mills is never to be doubted with piles of toys and piles of food, Santa still needs help finding needy families to whom he can deliver food.

There is still time to recommend a needy family to Tony. He loves to be out and about his neighborhood, tending his garden as it were and this time of year he is particularly on top of things looking for needs or gaps in holiday cheer. His mission is to fill those gaps and provide what he can and he rallies the incredible neighbors and generous merchants of Lower Mills to get on board his sleigh!

While the song may go "Jolly old Kris Kringle is the king of jingle-ling..." here in Lower Mills we all know that our King of jingle-ling is Tony, always trying to make it a little merrier and a little brighter.

Stay tuned for the follow up on the food drive, follow us on Facebook, and don't forget to nominate a needy family to receive a gift of food this season!