



365 West Street, Simcoe, Ontario N3Y 1T7
www.ngh.on.ca
519-426-0130 Ext.6977

MEDIA RELEASE:

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Valentine's Day Monkey Business

The Norfolk General Hospital Emergency Department received a very special Valentine's Day treat. More than 100 stuffed monkeys were delivered on February 14 by Keith Urban Fan Club president Debbie Oliver and her daughter Autumn Miller. For the past 12 years Urban's worldwide fan club has collected thousands of stuffed monkeys through an on line drive during the month of January. This year, 2711 of the stuffed toys were collected to be distributed to children in the care of hospitals in Australia, the United States and Canada.

As Canadian fans, Oliver has coordinated the drive locally to spread some happiness to children in hospitals here at home. "This is the second year that there have been collection homes – five of us – and with all my crew we have brought in 338 monkeys" she explained. The monkeys have been equally divided to Norfolk General as well as Woodstock General and the Children's Hospital in London.

"We really appreciate the work of the fan club. The monkeys really cheer up the children in the ED and we also find that in certain circumstance, we utilize them for our senior population living with dementia" remarked Kim Mullins Director of NGH ED.

The Monkeys will complement the existing Share Bear program and be given to children who visit the NGH ED.

About the Share Bear Program: All stuffed toys must be newly purchased or made from all new materials. Toys should be between 8 and 16 inches tall. Tags are to be left on purchased toys so that volunteers know that it is new and there is no risk of cross contamination. Donations can be dropped off at the Main Information Desk. Any questions can be directed to the Director of Volunteers at 519 426 0750 ext. 2100

Gerry Hamill
Communication Specialist
519-426-0130 ext. 2454
ghamill@ngh.on.ca

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