

Birthday wishes turn to charity for minor Tiger



By Jake Courtepatte

While most birthdays are all about getting, for Bella Di Palma, this year's theme is certainly giving.

Di Palma, who plays for the Novice AA Aurora Tigers, is collecting stuffed animals from the public prior to her March birthday, when she plans to distribute the goods to those who need them, just as Bella did last year.

"Last year, Bella was unexpectedly admitted into the hospital for a few days and she was very sad without her stuffed animal," said Bella's mother Christina. "The nurse noticed and came back in with a brand new pink stuffed elephant. It made Bella feel safe and happy. She still has the stuffy in her room on a shelf."

With one drop-off in the books, the Aurora hockey community has responded in droves, with Bella collecting a total of 52 stuffed toys at the Aurora Community Centre.

"She continues to get them dropped off at the house, and at hockey practice," said Christina, who added that Bella will be doing another drop-off sometime next month.

Everything collected will be distributed on Bella's birthday in early March, with Bella and her friends visiting local hospitals, shelters, and children's organizations.

With dreams of playing in the NHL, for now, Bella and her Tigers teammates are preparing for the first round of the York-Simcoe playoffs.

"Short term, Bella will continue to play with the Aurora Tigers and wants to win a championship!?"

For more information on how to make a donation, contact Christina at chrissyblanchard@gmail.com.