

Churches, schools get crafty for Philippine typhoon relief



By Brock Weir

Some were windblown, some had glow-in-the-dark-fluorescent streaks, and others, as tales were told, had bird's nests ? and even some birds ? enmeshed into their elaborate hairdos for the day.

It was not a sight one would normally expect to see among the uniformed students at the Aurora Montessori School, but Friday was a special day.

In an effort to raise money for Filipino victims of the recent, devastating Typhoon Haiyan, students paid for the right to dress down and work their magic with their follicles for a 'Crazy Hair Day' to benefit relief efforts in the Philippines. Students were joined by teachers as they made their daily rounds, not the least bit self-conscious but rightfully proud of their efforts. It was an event that not only brought smiles to their faces, but also some much needed support for the Typhoon Haiyan Relief Fund.

Their efforts were not alone in Aurora this past weekend, as a number of initiatives took place to lend a hand, including special bake and craft tables set up at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church at their annual Christmas Bazaar on Saturday to benefit the Red Cross.

'Newmarket-Aurora residents are generous and compassionate towards those in crisis who need a hand,' said Newmarket-Aurora MP Lois Brown in a statement. 'With York Region having such a large Filipino community, I ask residents to consider helping their fellow resident who may have family and friends impacted by this terrible storm. By donating to the Typhoon Haiyan relief fund, the Canadian government will match every eligible dollar donated to a registered Canadian charity, effectively doubling their contribution.'

In addition to this, Ms. Brown added, Canada is contributing \$20 million in support to humanitarian organizations providing relief in the area.

Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines on November 9, killing nearly four thousand people (at press time, nearly 1,200 were still unaccounted for) and leaving four million without homes.

In addition to the support established through the Typhoon Haiyan Relief Fund, additional assistance has been provided by Canada's DART Team to travel to some of the more devastated areas, as well as a 12-person Red Cross Medical Team.

Donations can be made to multiple charity and humanitarian organizations organizing aid on the ground. These include the Canadian Red Cross, UNICEF, World Vision, and the World Food Organization.