

Community tributes continue to pour in for Humboldt Broncos



By Brock Weir

Donning jerseys, placing hockey sticks, and rising together in song ? these are just three of the many ways the local community is paying tribute to Saskatchewan's Humboldt Broncos.

The Humboldt hockey family, which lost its 16th member Wednesday night when 25-year-old Dayna Brons, the team's athletic therapist, succumbed to the injuries she sustained in the April 6 bus crash, which also claimed the lives of Darcy Haugan, Mark Cross, Logan Schatz, Jaxson Joseph, Adam Herold, Stephen Wack, Connor Lukan, Evan Thomas, Parker Tobin, Logan Boulet, Tyler Bieber, Brody Hinz, Logan Hunter, Jacob Leicht, and Glen Doerksen.

As Brons's name was added to the tragic list of victims Wednesday evening, the Pickering College choir gathered at Pfaff Automotive for the launch of the 9th annual Portraits of Giving exhibition, pooling their voices for a moving rendition of Bridge Over Troubled Water, which was dedicated to the Humboldt community.

The following day, representatives at the Region of York, including Mayor Geoff Dawe, embraced ?National Jersey Day? as it took on extra meaning this year.

Billed as a ?small measure of solidarity for the grieving families, friends and loved ones affected by the tragedy,? members of the public were invited by the Region to come out and wear their jerseys while, at the same time, participating in a moment of silence for 29 seconds to reflect the 29 individuals who were on the bus.

Similar gestures were carried out throughout the community within schools and local business, including Omar's Shoes, and, elsewhere scores of homes and businesses across Aurora, such as Marketing Garage, left their sticks outside to remember the victims.

Earlier, on the Sunday following the crash, the Aurora Tigers, alongside the Wellington Dukes, hosted an on-ice tribute to the Humboldt community, gathering in a circle with local dignitaries for a moment of silence and a performance of Amazing Grace led by the St. Andrew's Pipes and Drums.

A further moment of silence opened last week's Council meeting as members reflected on the week that was.

?It was a very moving ceremony with all the players at centre ice in a circle and a moment of silence and the bag pipes playing Amazing Grace,? said Councillor Tom Mrakas, who attended the ceremony alongside Mayor Geoff Dawe and Newmarket-Aurora MP Kyle Peterson. ?The Junior A Tigers did the Town proud.?

A wager Councillor Mrakas had with a fellow Councillor for Wellington was also changed to reflect a tragedy.

Following the Tigers' post-season elimination to the Dukes on Sunday night, Councillor Mrakas was due to wear a Wellington Jersey at a future Council meeting. The two politicians, however, decided a donation in the Dukes' name to the ongoing fundraising campaign for victims and families impacted by the crash would be a more fitting gesture.