

## Community gathers for 2nd Annual Melancthon tree lighting celebration]

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The Township of Melancthon has kicked off the holiday season with their 2nd annual Tree Lighting event.

Families gathered at the Horning's Mills Community Hall on Saturday (Nov. 26) from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. for festive activities and to celebrate the lighting of the trees.

"We have a ton of young families in our community and we're trying to do more and more for our young families in Melancthon," said Ruth Plowright, chair for the Horning's Mill Community Hall. "This is the first sighting of Santa for the year, and we've had a great turnout of all the families; we're just as happy this year."

The 2nd annual Tree Lighting consisted of a number of festive themed activities for kids including crafts, cookie decorating and Christmas tree ornament making. Local kids attending the event also received a visit from Santa Claus and the Grinch, who stole their Christmas presents.

The holiday event ended with the lighting of 20 small Christmas trees outside of the community hall.

While a great holiday-themed event for the communities' young families, the Tree Lighting event also serves as a fundraiser for the Horning's Mills Community Hall.

Residents helped "light up downtown" by sponsoring a string of lights for the Christmas trees on behalf of their family. Sponsoring a string of lights cost \$20 with donations going towards future events hosted by the community hall.

Melancthon Deputy Mayor James McLean spoke about creating traditions for the community.

"It's really great to see the community coming together to celebrate Christmas and get everyone a chance to meet Santa," said McLean. "Christmas is such an important part of our community. We've got a young community, there's a lot of new and young families moving into the area, so it's really an opportunity for everyone to celebrate."

Resident Terri-Lynn O'Gorman attended the event last year and decided to take part in the tradition again with her children and extended family.

"It's a great for them [the kids] to see us come together and celebrate the holiday season and the joy of this time of year," said O'Gorman.

The Tree Lighting Christmas trees are also available for purchase.