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Over $120,000 raised at CNOY]

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Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) participants exceeded the fundraising goal set by the Orangeville Food Bank for this year's edition of the event.

The food bank aimed to raise $100,000 in the weeks leading up to the Feb. 25 walk through town. As many as 417 walkers and 56 teams generated $120,972 for the food bank.

The venture was put on with the help of 71 volunteers that came out in below-zero temperatures.

The CNOY is a moment each year when tens of thousands of Canadians step outside the warmth and comfort of home to shine a light of welcome and compassion in their communities, according to the national event's website.

Since 2011 it has raised over $57 million across Canada in 166 communities, where 100 per cent of net proceeds stay local to support charity partners.

?We are always amazed at the community spirit and generosity of the participants for CNOY,? said Heather Hayes, the food bank's executive director. ?Our goal of $100,000 has been beaten by over 20 per cent this year.

?That is an incredible figure that really shows how much people really care about food insecurity and [the] work we do at the food bank to assist those in need.?

As evidenced by the sponsors, walkers, and volunteers, Orangeville is a community that gathers for the good of its neighbours, she said.

Hayes said the event always feels like a block party. Indeed, the hundreds of walkers and their supporters milled about inside and outside the food bank on Commerce Road. Music blasted throughout the parking lot, and participants enjoyed a light meal before lacing their shoes and bundling up against the cold.

?You connect with people you haven't seen in a while, greet old friends, and revel in [the] amazing vibe of the day,?Hayes said.

?Joining 400 people who are as passionate and committed to supporting neighbours empowers everyone that they can make a difference and be the change they want to see.?