

Pelham's Festival of Trees

A Transformation into 'Sherburne' Forest



Display of decorated trees

by Rhiannon Snide

Pelham Community Spirit wasted no time in getting ready for the upcoming holiday as its Christmas celebrations began on the Friday before Thanksgiving. Clayton Morin, a Pelham Parks and Recreation employee and an intern for the town office's finance team, worked tirelessly earlier in the week to clear out Sherburne Hall in preparation for the seventh annual Festival of Trees. The festival welcomed a combined total of

45 trees and wreaths this year, transforming Sherburne Hall into a lustrous forest.

While visits from Santa have become a tradition for the festival, adding to this year's celebration were visits from the conductor of The Polar Express, as well as a working miniature train. According to Brenda Eaves, the president of Pelham Community Spirit, the train brought a lot of attraction to the festival. "The train is completely new; it's actually drawn a ton of people here," said Eaves.

Inspired by the new attraction was a "Polar Express" themed night, where kids were

welcomed to wear their pajamas to the festival and enjoy a free showing of the popular movie. Other entertainment provided throughout the festival were performances by the Pelham and Windham Middle School bands, O'Halloran Step Dancers,

Handbell Choir, Quadratic Barbershop Quartet, New England Flute Orchestra, and the singer/guitarist Carl Ayotte.

Between Nov. 27 and Dec. 5, families were welcomed to come partake in the festival's raffle for a \$5 entrance fee. All proceeds benefitted Pelham Community Spirit. Each entry received five raffle tickets, which they could then place into the box corresponding with particular trees for a chance to win one. Winners of the trees were called on Dec. 5.

Pelham Community Spirit is a 12-member organization with the motive "to foster a sense of community within Pelham through fundraisers, special events and community activities." The Festival of Trees is the largest fundraiser held by Pelham Community Spirit every year. Money generated through this fundraiser, and all others held by the organization go towards community events such as the Pelham Farmers Market, free summer concerts, grants, and scholarships.



Makayla and Rebecca McLinn share their Christmas wishes with Santa.



Joey Debney learns about the Polar Express train from the conductor himself.

Staff photos by Rhiannon Snide