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'It's a joyful evening': Hamiltonians turn out to see CPKC Holiday Train come to town

 By **Stephanie Ribson** December 3, 2023

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The CPKC Holiday train spans over 300 meters long, with 14 rail cars individually decorated with a different LED Christmas light display.

People flocked to Gage Park in the thousands on Wednesday (Nov. 22) when the CPKC Holiday Train rolled up the South tracks ahead of schedule at 7:30 p.m. The train ran more than 300 meters along 14 decorated rail cars with LED Christmas light displays that would dance in unison with the holiday music playing in the background.

Hamiltonians craned their necks to get a better view or a photo of the train that is travelling through Canada and the United States from Nov. 20 – Dec. 19, collecting food donations and raising money and awareness about the work that food banks do for the community.

According to Ashley Mitchell, resource development manager at Hamilton Food Share, people arrived to secure their spot to watch the train at 6 p.m.



"It's a fun event. People get to kick off the holiday season and see the train come in with the

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Santa and his elf posed for photos with their fans while waiting for the CPKC Holiday Train to roll in.

lights," Mitchell said. "It's a joyful evening."

Before the train arrived, people could get free coffee from a Tim Hortons booth at the entrance, take photos with Santa Claus and his elf helper, and watch a juggler dressed in a white jumpsuit lined with LED lights as he juggled glowing bowling pins.

Visitor Trish Rayner brought her family to see the train for the first time.

"It seemed like a nice event to bring the kids to, so I thought, 'Why not give it a try?'" Rayner said.

Professional musicians were scheduled to entertain the crowd at different spots along the train's tour. Canadian act Kiesza and Australian country music duo Seaforth played during the train's stop in Gage Park from 8 – 9 p.m.

According to Hamilton Food Share, they received almost 2000 kg of donated food items and raised \$13,863 to help support community members facing food insecurity. The CPKC Holiday Train donated \$10,000 during its stop in Hamilton.



Visitors watched as the juggler lit up the night.

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