


# Aroland students exceed fundraising goal for homeless youth - Chronicle Journal: News

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YOUR STORIES SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

**BY MELINDA RODY AND NATASHA DAVEY**

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BEGINNING in December 2016, the Grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 students at Johnny Therriault School located in Aroland First Nation first learned about the “Push for Change” Fundraising Campaign from OPP Constable Eric Corbin and NAPS Officer Trent Abernot. The “Push for Change” Awareness Campaign is a 517 day trek across Canada by Joe Roberts, a former homeless youth, to raise awareness and funds to end youth homelessness. Upon learning about this, the students at Johnny Therriault School were particularly interested and eager to fundraise for this national cause.

The students were challenged by the classroom teachers (Ms. Natasha Davey, Ms. Melinda Rody and Mr. Steve St. Jean) and Principal, Mr. Bill Beaucage to raise \$10 each by volunteering their time and service in any way they choose such as helping a family member, community member or a group fundraiser. Throughout the month of December and January students brought in change that they had earned by shoveling driveways, carrying in wood for elders, hosting community and school fundraising events such as a movie night and a cafe day, created a prize raffle, sold joker boards, held a family game night and organized a hat day.

With the support of the community, all of the fundraising efforts were successful! The students exceeded the challenge set by the staff and raised more than expected.

The students were very proud of their success in fundraising for the “Push for Change” campaign. The students at Johnny Therriault School were able to raise and donate \$1200. As a way of thanking the students for their efforts, Greenstone OPP Community Safety Officer (CSO) Eric Corbin invited the Johnny Therriault School students to participate in a curling bonspiel in Geraldton along with other students from the district that participated in their own fundraising events. The curling bonspiel was a success! The 32 participating Johnny Therriault school students were able to learn the sport of curling alongside Constable Corbin, other OPP Officers and with the help of Geraldton Curling Club volunteers.

On Monday, March 6th the students and staff from this school may have the opportunity to meet Joe Roberts. He is a former homeless youth, an advocate, author and the Executive Director of “The Push for Change.” Roberts has indicated that he may be able to change his route and come into Geraldton in order to meet the students from Johnny Therriault School along with students from neighbouring schools to thank them for their outstanding efforts in raising funds and awareness for this cause.

More information and opportunities to donate to this cause can be done through the “Push for Change” website [www.pushforchange.com](http://www.pushforchange.com).