

Toymaker

'Elves' create toys, smiles

Handcrafted toys are donated to Langley Memorial Hospital.

by Ryan Ingram

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Colin Delory doesn't look much like an elf, standing six feet tall.

But much like Santa's little helpers, Delory has been sawing and sanding away in his workshop for the past year, building toys for the annual B.C. Wooden Toy Makers Society Christmas drive.

The society is a non-profit organization of creative woodworkers – who refer to themselves as elves. They banded together with the goal of putting smiles on the faces of less-fortunate children.

The members have built gifts including

doll cribs, trains, cars, rocking horses, hand mirrors, puzzles and more.

Delory will be delivering almost 50 handcrafted wooden toys to Langley Memorial Hospital this holiday season.

The toys supplied by the woodworkers are used in kids' play areas in hospitals, and also distributed by other charities around Christmas.

The society crafted more than 700 toys in total this year. All of them were donated to various charities throughout the Lower Mainland.

The number is slightly down from previous years, but Delory is hoping a few more elves in the Langley area will step forward.

"The more members we have in this area, the more toys we can generate for the Langley charities," he said, explaining that the number of donated toys is

proportional to the number of toys created in the area.

The retired ex-electrical engineer has been with the group since it began in 2004, and when he's not making toys, he also helps run the group's website.

The longtime woodworker, who specializes in woodturning, also crafts art pieces.

Helping the group is easy, according to Delory.

"You just putter away and work at your own shop at your own speed. Some people make 10 toys a year... and some people turn out hundreds of them," he said.

Some members even meet up to work on bigger projects.

All the wood and materials used are donated from various companies.



Ryan Ingram/Langley Advance

Colin Delory, who specializes in making hand mirrors, holds one of many handcrafted toys being given to the hospital.