

Adirondack Daily Enterprise

Big trucks, big smiles

Around 1,000 turn up for third annual Touch a Truck




Aaryn Dukette smiles as he steps out of a loader truck, as Bennett McLear is seen behind him looking

out the window at the Touch a Truck event held at the Saranac Lake Civic Center on Sunday.
(Enterprise photo — Chris Gaige)

SARANAC LAKE — The bells, whistles, honks and lights were on full display at the Saranac Lake Civic Center midday Sunday as the community venue hosted its third annual Touch a Truck.

The event drew around 1,000 participants — everyone from kids too young yet to walk to great-grandparents. Smiles were abundant as children were able to climb up a wide variety of heavy equipment and emergency vehicles.



Touch a Truck is a fundraiser for the civic center. Marnie Crane, a development coordinator who helped to organize the event, said that between private businesses, first responders and emergency services, law enforcement and other local government departments, there were about 45 entities represented.


Crane said that it was about a 10% and 15% increase from last year, both in terms of businesses and groups participating with a vehicle, and families attending. She was happy with the event's growth, adding that it's part of the center's effort to broaden its offerings to include something fun for community members of all ages.

“This is one of our only fundraisers of the year. The civic center is a non-profit,” she said. “This dovetails with last weekend when we had a sock hop. It’s critical for the civic center to find new ways to fundraise and this is one of them.”



Oscar Murray catches his breath after coming to a stop on the State Police’s “Seat Belt Convincer” at the Touch a Truck event held at the Saranac Lake Civic Center on Sunday. The “Seat Belt Convincer” is an educational tool that safely lets riders — who are buckled up — experience the force of suddenly coming to a complete stop, and the important role that seat belts play in reducing harm in these situations. (Enterprise photo — Chris Gaige)

Now in its third year, Crane said she’s happy to welcome new families to the event and see familiar faces of those who have come to one or all of its past iterations.



“This event draws multigenerational families,” she said. “What I love to see is the oldest generation looking at their great-grandchild, and it’s just amazing.”

Doug Cochran is the owner of Cochran’s Container Service, one of the repeat participating local businesses. With a 2-and-a-half-year-old son, Cochran said it was fun watching him and his friends make their way around all the trucks, get exposure to the large vehicles and have fun doing so.

“They love to be able to honk the horns, get in the driver’s seats,” he said. “It’s just a cool thing.”

With many kids’ curiosity at its pique, and Cochran was glad to see such a wide variety in equipment for kids to keep making the rounds and exploring for, in some cases, several hours.

Gunnar Dukette smiles while sitting on the side step of a Cochran Container Service truck at the Touch a Truck event held at the Saranac Lake Civic Center on Sunday. (Enterprise photo — Chris Gaige)

“They love it,” he said. “The kids are just into it, and there’s that sense of wonder with big trucks and big equipment.”

Crane thanked the community for showing up in droves once again and said the civic center was looking forward to ice season, which is slated to open on Sept. 28.

“The community can expect to see the return of public skating,” she said. “We’ll have obviously college games, curling, community pick-up hockey games — things like that.”

For more information on upcoming events at the civic center, visit [saranaclakeciviccenter.org](https://www.saranaclakeciviccenter.org).

Kelsey and Keller Baumann smile inside a Saranac Lake Police Department car at the Touch a Truck event held at the Saranac Lake Civic Center on Sunday. (Enterprise photo — Chris Gaige)

Sloane Roth smiles in the PistenBully snow groomer at the Touch a Truck event held at the Saranac Lake Civic Center on Sunday. (Enterprise photo — Chris Gaige)

From left, Beckett, David and Leighland Martin smile in a ZForce ultra terrain vehicle at the Touch a Truck event held at the Saranac Lake Civic Center on Sunday. (Enterprise photo — Chris Gaige)

Siblings Laura and Michael Trombley smile in the PistenBully snow groomer at the Touch a Truck event held at the Saranac Lake Civic Center on Sunday. (Enterprise photo — Chris Gaige)

Bennett McLear works the levers in an excavator at the Touch a Truck event held at the Saranac Lake Civic Center on Sunday. (Enterprise photo — Chris Gaige)

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