

Arts & Entertainment

For singer McNeil, these boots are made for giving



Singer Louise Pitre, *Breakfast Television* host Dina Pugliese, designer Ron White, Mississauga's own Suzie McNeil, radio host Billie Holiday and Olympic gold medalist Adam van Koeurden toss in their shoes for White's 13th annual shoe drive for the homeless.

Suzie McNeil is donating the pink leather boots she wore during the halftime show of the Grey Cup game in Montreal in November to the cause of the homeless.

The Mississauga singer was at the launch of the 13th annual Shoe Drive for the Homeless Thursday in Toronto.

The event was sponsored by Ron White, who owns a shoe store in the Manulife Centre.

McNeil was one of several celebrities who donated autographed shoes as inspiration to others to donate their still-useable footwear to the cause.

The Mississauga rocker, who shot to fame when she finished fourth in the race to become the lead singer of the rock group INXS when they staged their *INXS: Rockstar* reality TV show, said it was hard to decide which of her shoes to donate.

"The boots I chose were the boots I wore at the 2008 Grey Cup," said McNeil, who

headlined the half-time entertainment.

"It was a little hard to part with them," she told *The Toronto Sun*.

Oakville's Adam van Koeurden, who won an Olympic gold medal in kayaking in the 2004 Olympics and a silver medal last year in China, donated the shoes he wore as a flagbearer in the Beijing games.

Other celebrity donors this year include actors Jeremy Irons and Paul Gross, and Broadway sensation Louise Pitre, who has performed at the Living Arts Centre.

White started the shoe drive after stumbling across a homeless man several years ago on a Toronto street.

The man's toes were sticking out of his boots.

White operates six stores in the GTA including one at Sherway Gardens and one at 162 Lakeshore Rd. E. in downtown Oakville, where Mississaugans can drop off their shoe donations.