

Each year our members pay \$35.00 to receive 4 issues of Per Niente Magazine. That money is used to off-set the cost of producing the magazine. The remaining money is put into our Christmas Fund, which this year, bolstered by generous member donations, totaled \$8,200 This generosity allowed us to support the needs of the less fortunate.

This Christmas Season the Per Niente Club sent **\$2000** to the Amos Hertzler Hospital Fund, Cattaraugus, NY. Amos is a one-year old Amish baby born with Down Syndrome and a rare condition called esophageal atresia, which means his esophagus does not connect to his stomach. He cannot eat, except by feeding tube. A port in his neck drains off secretions and saliva, which he can't swallow. He faces specialized surgery which will occur at Children's Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts, one of the few places in the country that performs the procedure. That procedure will cost at least \$250,000 and potentially more, depending on doctor's fees and family travel expenses. Amos has a long way to go. The good news is people with Down Syndrome can live fulfilling lives. We wish Amos and his family the best and hope they receive the support they need.

The lower West Side, a neighborhood once dominated by Italian immigrants, remains just that: a neighborhood of immigrants. The culture has evolved from Italian to Hispanic and African. But the needs are the same. Holy Cross Church, under the direction of Msgr. David M. Gallivan, is the center of the immigrant community. The Per Niente Club donated **\$1000** to assist the renovation of the kitchen of the Holy Cross Youth Center. The kitchen is utilized to provide meals for the youngsters of the community. In addition, we provided **two \$500** scholarships that will be given to Canisius High School freshman: Garang Aguer and senior Achol Young'ndInsane Deng. Achol works in the food program and will begin college in 2012. Both Achol and Garang are from South Sudan, Africa and are active in the Holy Cross Youth Group and the life of the parish. The Per Niente Club also purchased **\$1200** in Gift certificates from Tops Market. The certificates were distributed to families living in the lower West Side. The families are from Puerto Rico and Ethiopia. We worked with the Msgr. Gallivan in obtaining the names of those who were most needy.

Michael Wendel is 46 years old and because he suffers from incurable cancer he is unemployed. Michael lives with his wife, Tammy, and two children in Wilson NY. Michael has been fighting cancer for five years. The cancer has now spread to his back causing him excruciating pain when lying in bed. His family's wish for Christmas is to purchase a special reclining chair that would allow Michael some comfort when attempting to sleep. The family survives solely on a monthly disability check, which barely covers the necessities of life. As such, because of their limited financial resources the Wendels could not purchase the proper chair for Michael and Christmas gifts for their children. Through the auspices of Per Niente's Christmas Fund we presented a **\$1000** check to the Wendels to purchase the chair for Michael and to buy Christmas gifts for their children. We wish the Wendels the best of luck in 2012.

Haven House is a shelter or safe-house for battered women and children. A Christmas tree on the alter of St Margaret's Church was decorated with paper ornaments. Each ornament listed a Haven House child's gift request. The gifts requested were not elaborate nor expensive: a McDonald's gift card, a baseball glove, a radio, etc. Quite different from the Christmas lists submitted by our grandchildren. The Per Niente Club removed the request laden ornaments from the tree, purchased almost **\$1000** worth of gifts and brought them to a safe place from which they would be delivered.

Children attending School # 3 on the West Side, some of whom are impoverished, were treated to Christmas gifts through the efforts of Maria Cala, a bi-lingual teacher at the school. The Per Niente Christmas Fund donated **\$1000** towards the purchase of these gifts.