

Last year we donated a record \$16,000 to various organizations and individuals. This year over \$20,000 was raised to clothe, feed and provide cheer for the disadvantaged.

In November, we distributed 150 turkeys to local food pantries thus ensuring a traditional Thanksgiving dinner for many.

This Christmas we helped: The Cantalician Center, a foundation that offers meaningful opportunities to individuals with disabilities. There, through Sister Paul Marie, a Felician nun we learned of the Siwinski family with 5 children who recently lost their home and belongings to a fire. The family had difficulty renting another flat because three of the five children are disabled. Sister said all five children need clothes and with a few hundred dollars basic items could be purchased. One thousand dollars was given to a jubilant Sister Paul Marie who said, "I knew that God would help us and today He sent you."

We were introduced to "One Step At A Time." A group offering parents of local childhood cancer patients the opportunity to connect away from hospitals to truly appreciate their thoughts, feelings and experiences. We donated \$500 to help enrich the lives of those in this program.

We also donated \$1000 to the *Little Portion Friary*, a group of 100 plus volunteers who provide food and temporary shelter for inner city homeless.

The Independence Foundation, an organization that provides assistance to children and individuals with physical disabilities allowing them to live independent, self directed lives. They spoke of Jenna, a young girl with spinal muscular atrophy, a disease that renders her unable to walk or stand. Topping

her family's Christmas wish list was a "stander" a device that would enable Jenna to stand and sit. We partnered with the Independence Foundation to purchase the \$3000 device.



Jenna, in "stander," with her family

Per Niente donated \$500 to *Christmas Is For Kids*, an integral part of the *National Alliance on Mental Illness in Western NY*. No child, whether infirmed, sheltered, in group homes or in foster care will be omitted. We hope our donation ensures a bright holiday for youngsters who lack the luxury our grandchildren have.

Last year at *St. Lawrence Church Out Reach Center* on East Delavan Ave, two families with special needs received our aid. In 2014, through your efforts we were able to help eight diverse parent and single parent households whose children number twenty three.

1. Regina and Raymond, a West Side family of six who lost their home and belongings in a fire. They were relocated and in need of a washer and dryer.

2. Ecstasy, a single mom with six children whose rental unit was condemned and infested with bed bugs was relocated to an apartment that lacked beds for her and her children.

3. Romaine, with three children on Floss Street needed a stove.

4/5. Two immigrant families with six children living in an East Side double needed a washing machine and six beds.

6. Shontay, a single women asked for a stove.

7. Kim, a single mom who just lost her job needed a dresser and a bed.

8. Tim, a single dad, asked for a pack and play crib for his only child.

We purchased all of the above items so desperately needed in hopes that the lives of these families will be made somewhat easier.

We also purchased and delivered toys for 44 foster children at their Christmas party at Trinity Episcopal Church Annex.

Recently, through two school counselors we learned of four families that needed basic support such as clothing and food. We purchased a \$500 gift card from Target and \$1400 worth of Tops Market gift cards that will enable the counselors to provide the appropriate help needed by the families.

The Christmas Fund is used year round to assist the needy. Prior to the holiday season in addition to our Turkey drive we also helped:

- The West Side Community Service

- Clarence Kiwanis Club program for those afflicted with autism.
- Six Italian-American families with serious medical problems and financial difficulties.
- We provided \$1000 scholarships to three students at Bishop Timon-St. Jude High School and Mount St. Mary's Academy. Lest we forget - education is the generational road to success.

This year all of the aforementioned donations totaled \$19,780.



Nathan Grisanti, right, underwent heart surgery in Boston, MA.

Through your efforts we have moved forward and have touched many lives. We hope to do much more in 2015.

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