



Editorial: Jackson community continues to show its generosity in times of need

By Brian Wheeler on December 07, 2012

JACKSON, MI — You don't have to look far to be grateful we live in a community that's willing to give. This holiday season, let's remember that while encouraging as much generosity as we can for those who need it most. In recent weeks, there has been an outpouring of support for the Warm the Children program, which provides kids with winter clothing from Meijer. The Community Action Agency, which runs the program, reports more than 170 individuals have joined businesses in giving some \$45,000. That will be enough to provide clothes to 550 children after two more upcoming shopping dates.

Jessie Murray from the Community Action Agency said this in an email: "The really surprising things I've seen and heard are people who aren't necessarily in a position to give but still sending in small amounts because the idea of children without warm clothes really touches people. And the anonymous donors, who don't wish to be recognized but who just want to know that the money is staying local and helping local children, is amazing."

What's more amazing is that Warm the Children is hardly the only beneficiary of holiday spirit. The Toys for Tots drive continues, while the Salvation Army collects money in red kettles. The Department of Human Services has provided Christmas gifts to more families than ever through its Angel Tree Project.

The United Way of Jackson County, too, is reporting healthy giving to its annual campaign, which is not holiday-themed but runs into this holiday season. This is not surprising in that Jackson residents step up every year for these and many other causes. It has been said that our community does not have many rich benefactors, but it has a strong giving tradition at the grassroots level.

Especially through the recent recession and the slow recovery, we have marveled at the public's willingness — eagerness, really — to spare what they can for others. Individual donations of \$5 or \$10 to a worthy cause might not seem like much, but their cumulative effect is tremendous. It sustains many households in our community and nourishes our souls. Our wish this holiday season is that readers will continue to give. The next couple of weeks will be a whirlwind of decorating and gift buying, celebrating and looking inward. We encourage our readers to celebrate the blessings of the season, but also to spare what they can. Many are no doubt grateful for all that you have given already. Thank you, and let's keep helping those who are less fortunate among us.