

Many have high hopes for this year's Warm the Children program

Last year, 860 Jackson-area kids received clothing for winter season

By Keith Roberts

kroberts@citpat.com — 768-4922

Warm the Children's simplicity and efficiency set it apart from other holiday fundraising campaigns.

Warm the Children has raised roughly \$820,000, and every dollar has gone to buy winter clothes for children in the Jackson area.

"All the money stays local and helps local kids," said Sandy Petykiewicz, editor and publisher of the Jackson Citizen Patriot. "I think that's why it's so successful."

The program started in 1988 by a newspaper publisher in Connecticut and soon was adopted by newspapers in other cities.

In Jackson, the Community Action Agency selects the recipients, and the Jackson Junior Welfare League connects them with volunteer shoppers. The Citizen Patriot collects the donations and promotes the campaign. Meijer donates \$10,000 every year and opens its doors to the shoppers.

"It's a good example of collaboration," Petykiewicz said.

More than 10,000 children in the Jackson area have been served by the program, Petykiewicz said.

Last year, 860 children each received \$80 worth of clothes, including coats, hats, mittens, sweaters, pajamas and other



CITIZEN PATRIOT FILE PHOTO • ERIK HOLLADAY

Julio Morales and his mother, Teresita Rocha, shop for clothes at Meijer in Jackson. They participated in the Warm the Children program, which helps clothe children for the winter season.

items to keep them warm during the winter.

Kelly Inosencio, co-chairwoman for the Jackson Junior Welfare League's Warm the Children campaign, said most shoppers enjoy interacting with the children and get a feeling of accomplishment for giving some of their time.

"We're so thankful for the shoppers that have stepped up and helped," Inosencio said. "Every time someone does this, we're making a small difference in the life of a child."

Local businesses get involved in the campaign by holding fundraisers.

Melling Tool Co. has participated in Warm the Children for

several years. Last year, its 200 employees donated \$2,000.

Dave Corrado, the company's director of human resources, said employees bought raffle tickets and made donations so they could wear jeans or team jerseys to work.

"People know it's for the kids and we try to make it fun," Corrado said.

Sandhill Crane Vineyards participated in the campaign for the first time last year with a promotion called "Warm the Children/Chill the Wine."

Heather Price, the winery's executive director, said about 20 knitters and crocheters made wine bottle hats and scarves to sell in the vineyard's

Warm the Children

The Warm the Children campaign starts in November and lasts until Christmas. For more information or to be a volunteer shopper, visit the Jackson Junior Welfare League's website, www.jjwl.org, or call 768-4839.

tasting room. They raised \$340 for Warm the Children.

"It was something fun and interesting and took off," Price said. "I expect it to do even better this year." ■

Not all kids are wishing for video games for the holidays



Many children are wishing for things much more basic. They need a warm winter coat, boots to keep their feet warm and dry, mittens to warm cold hands.

Please help by contributing to the Jackson Citizen Patriot's Warm the Children Fund.

**No administrative fees!
Every cent received is used
to buy winter clothing!**

The Jackson Citizen Patriot and the Jackson Junior Welfare League are working together to make all arrangements with Meijer stores and assign volunteer shoppers to take the children and their families shopping for their new winter clothes. The Community Action Agency is identifying the needy children for us.

If you want to become a volunteer shopper, call 768-4839 or sign-up at www.jjwl.org. You may make a donation by writing a check, payable to Warm the Children, and mailing it with the coupon below. All donations are tax deductible.

Thank you for helping us WARM THE CHILDREN.

CLIP AND MAIL THIS COUPON

Enclosed is my donation to the Jackson Citizen Patriot's
WARM THE CHILDREN FUND

- I do want my name published on the donor list.
 I do not want my name published on the donor list.

Name: _____

Address: _____



Make checks payable to: **Warm the Children**
Mail to: The Jackson Citizen Patriot
WARM THE CHILDREN FUND
214 South Jackson Street
Jackson, MI 49201-2282
This is a tax-deductible contribution

meijer

JACKSON CITIZEN
PATRIOT



The Jackson Junior
Welfare League



Community
Action Agency

388938-01