

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lynne F. Keller Fund Benefits Children through Brigade

The Boys' & Girls' Brigade Christmas Giving program recently received a \$10,000 gift from the Lynne F. Keller Fund within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region to benefit financially disadvantaged children at Christmas with presents and essentials like clothing and coats.

Families are referred to the program by various social agencies, health departments, churches, and schools. Each year individuals, families, businesses, churches, schools, civic and youth groups step forward to sponsor families; donate yarn, wrapping paper, and gifts; make financial contributions and/or deliver gifts. Throughout the year area residents knit socks, mittens, scarves, and hats from donated yarn. The program is vast and spans all different age groups and diversities from volunteers, to corporate involvement, and the families served. This year the program will serve 443 families including 1272 children.

"This wonderful gift supports an important outreach program that has operated for 60 years in the Neenah/Menasha area through the generous contributions of the community," stated Brigade executive director John Dery. "With an increase of 100 more children in the Christmas Giving Program this year, we are very grateful to Lynne Keller for meeting this important need."

The Christmas Giving Program was formed in 1949 in an effort to reduce the duplication of services from multiple agencies and churches to create a unified effort for better service to needy families. In 1970 the Neenah Noon Rotary Club became involved by contributing financial support and supplying volunteers to pack gift boxes and make gift deliveries. In 1980 Christmas Giving became an official program under the Boys' & Girls' Brigade to garner tax exempt status. The original program began with the intent to provide each child with a gift or two for under their Christmas tree but, because of the need, it was expanded to include clothing and the means for the families to have a Christmas meal.

Dedicated Christmas giving volunteers are busily packing gift boxes with donated items like toys, coats, blankets, bikes, dolls, games, clothing, sporting goods, books, food, candy, and everything financially strapped families need to make this Christmas special. All donations, monetary or gifts, for the Christmas Giving Program are tax deductible. Additional monetary gifts can be sent to the Boys' & Girls' Brigade at PO Box 665, Neenah, Wisconsin, 54957-0665. All donations, monetary or gifts, for the Christmas Giving Program are tax deductible.

The Brigade mission is: We Build Leaders. Character development and leadership programs are offered for 6th - 12th grade youth. Summer camp experiences are offered at Onaway Island in Waupaca, Wisconsin. Youth are served by hundreds of adult volunteer leaders. For more information on how to join or become a volunteer visit Brigade's website at www.bgbrigade.com or call (920) 725-3983. Find us on Facebook at Brigade Neenah.

CAPTION: A recent gift to the Boys' & Girls' Brigade Christmas Giving program from the Lynne F. Keller Fund within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region will provide gifts and clothing pictured below for disadvantaged children this Christmas.

