

FOOD BRINGS HOPE

Local groups donate holiday gifts to Food Brings Hope children

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Photo provided by Food Brings Hope

Students from Campbell Middle School show the gifts they received through the Food Brings Hope program.

Food Brings Hope played Santa Claus during December, distributing truckloads of gifts and toys donated to students in need by Daytona area charities, individuals, companies and their employees.

The Margarita Society, 100 Deputies 100 Kids, ICI Homes, Embry Riddle, the Volusia County Building Industry Association, Kidds R First, Realty Pros Assured, Southern Title, Beta Sigma Phi sorority and several caring individuals including Charlene and Vic Irland, Nancy Munier, Doug Ross and Sherri Rummel gathered and donated holiday gifts to FBH for students the agency serves.

FBH, a local charity dedicated to breaking the hunger and poverty cycle among Volusia County school children, delivered gifts to children at the following schools: Pierson, Starke, T.T. Small and Westside elementary schools; New Smyrna Beach and Campbell middle schools, New Smyrna Beach and Spruce Creek high schools and Taylor Middle High School.

“The holiday season can be a time of excess for most of us,” said Forough B. Hosseini, FBH founder and chair. “For the families we serve who may suffer from poverty, hunger and homelessness, their need can seem even more pronounced at this time of the year. It’s hard to think about Christmas presents for their children when their main worry is how to feed them. We thank the many organizations who adopted Food Brings Hope and the 500 students we serve this holiday season.”

The community minded organizations and individuals mobilized their resources to the benefit of those who may have otherwise struggled this Christmas. The Margarita Society and 100 Deputies / 100 Kids provided literally truckloads of gifts, toys and bicycles for our elementary school students and their siblings. ICI Homes and Embry Riddle selected Campbell Middle School students as beneficiaries of the hundreds of gifts brought to work by employees. The Volusia County Building Association collected gifts at their annual holiday party. They were delivered to New Smyrna Beach Middle School along with clothing donated by Kidds R First, a local agency that provides assistance to children in the form of clothing, school supplies and other tangible items.

Bill and Tammy Navarra and agents of Realty Pros Assured collected gifts for the FBHons students at Westside Elementary and Campbell Middle School at their holiday party. Charlene and Vic Irland donated funds to FBH which was used for gift cards for the high school students FBH serves at New Smyrna Beach and Spruce Creek high schools. Through donations received in 2013, FBH purchased and delivered bicycles to students at Taylor Middle High School in Pierson. Southern Title, Beta Sigma Phi sorority, Nancy Munier, Sherri Rummel and Doug Ross donated gifts and holiday decor for specific households served by FBH.

At several schools, dedicated teachers and staff gathered to wrap the gifts and coordinated with parents so the gifts could be a Christmas morning surprise.

“The parents/guardians were able to come in and get the toys to their car without being seen by the children,” said Pricilla Sparks, parent liaison and director of the family center at Westside Elementary. “They had something to put under the tree for Christmas morning. What a surprise for the children.” Sparks continued, “The parents of the brother and sister we gave bikes to were jumping up and down with excitement. It was such a moving experience.”

Samantha Hughes, teacher at New Smyrna Beach Middle, said, “It was wonderful to be able to distribute gifts for our students. One parent told me, ‘We had nothing under the tree for our kids. We didn’t know what we were going to do. We just prayed.’ We thank Food Brings Hope for everything they did to make Christmas merrier for these families.”