

## 58 Doing Good: 2015-16 Archives

### Puffer teacher will bike 512 miles to support cancer research

Published: May 31, 2016



Henry Puffer fourth grade teacher Mark White is riding from New York City to Niagara Falls this summer to raise money for cancer research. The Empire State Ride will raise critical funds for cutting-edge cancer research that aims to change the future of cancer treatment and one day find a cure for this devastating disease.

Mr. White is riding for his nephew Matt who did not win his fight against cancer. Matt attended Lester and Herrick schools before losing his battle to leukemia. Mark hopes that his efforts will help others currently suffering from cancer.

He will head out of Manhattan on July 31 with 512 miles to cover on the way to Niagara Falls. Learn more about Mr.

White's trip at [www.empirestateride2016.kintera.org/mark](http://www.empirestateride2016.kintera.org/mark).

### Lester holds fundraiser for humane society

Published: May 2016



The Lester Student Council recently held a fundraiser for the West Suburban Humane Society's shelter animals. These two students, David and Louie, went the extra mile by delivering the donations to the shelter.

"David & Louie were kind enough to deliver all the goods - thanks from the bottom of our hearts to all the kids and parents for donating!" said the humane society on social media.

## Well done, Hillcrest!

Published: May 16, 2016



Last year, Hillcrest School rallied the community and raised more than \$15,000 to build a well in South Sudan, a region that lacks reliable access to clean water. Thanks to their generosity, crews drilled the well and now residents of Lilithok village in Gogrial State can easily drink clean water. Thank you, Hillcrest School!

## Pierce Downer raises rare disease research awareness with donation

Published: April 7, 2016



The Pierce Downer community recently raised more than \$1,200 to support the Global Genes Project, an organization that funds rare disease research.

To celebrate reaching their fundraising goal of more than \$1,000, the students watched as Principal Mr. Justin Sisul, Assistant Principal Mrs. Chris Clavenna, Ms. Lauren Minardi and Ms. Ali Mitchell got pies thrown at their face! Thank you for your support, students!

[View more photos.](#)

### O'Neill raises \$5,100 for St. Baldricks



Published: March 18, 2016

O'Neill students raised \$5,112 for St. Baldrick's Foundation, a childhood cancer charity that funds research for cancer cures.

The students who fundraised the most money had the opportunity to throw a pie at their teachers during an all-school assembly.

[View more photos from the assembly.](#)

### Indian Trail creates birthday boxes for children in need

Published: Feb. 19, 2016



The Indian Trail Student Council raised \$200 during their December fundraisers. They used this funding to create birthday boxes for the Humanitarian Service Project in Carol Stream.

With help from Student Council sponsor and teacher Ms. Sandy Leff, the students wrapped 21 shoe boxes in festive birthday wrapping paper, and filled them with cake mix, sprinkles, frosting, decorative paper plates and utensils, streamers and balloons. The boxes will support birthday parties for

low-income children that the Humanitarian Service Project assists.

[View more photos from this project here.](#)

## Whittier collects Soup for the Super Bowl

Published: February 2016



The Whittier Student Council collected "Soup for the Super Bowl" and donated over 300 cans of soup to a local food bank! Students could donate soup in support of the team they believed would win the Super Bowl. Thanks for your help, students and families!

## O'Neill Cadettes serve others in the community

Published: Jan. 19, 2016



O'Neill seventh graders in Cadette Troop 51825 have been very busy! They recently donated and cooked a dinner for residents at the Ronald McDonald House in Wheaton. They also completed 60 Valentine door hangers for senior citizen residents at Oak Trace Senior Living in Downers Grove. Thank you, Troop Leader Mary Marsaglia, for sharing this story.

## Whittier student leads school's Toys for Tots holiday toy drive

Published: Jan. 14, 2016

In 2009, Whittier fourth grader Dominic Passero started a school Toys for Tots toy drive during the holidays. The toy drive has continued to grow through the years. After Dominic left Whittier in 2012, he passed on Whittier Toys for Tots leadership responsibilities to his first grade sister Amelia.

Now in fourth grade, Amelia continues to lead Whittier's thriving Toys for Tots collection drive. Each year, she works with Principal Michael Krugman, teachers and students to promote Toys for Tots and encourage all to donate a toy, book or game.

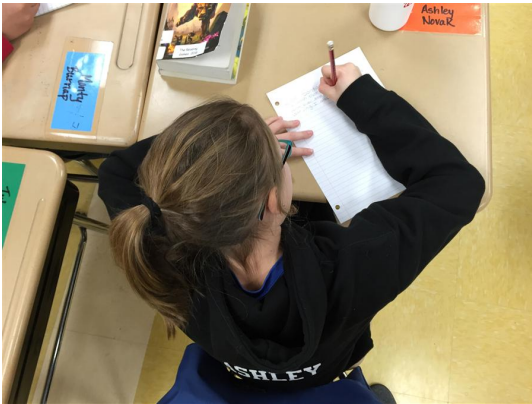
While the final numbers have not been published yet, the Passeros believe that Whittier's 2015 Toys for Tots collection has exceeded the 101 toys and books collected the previous year.

Dominic and Amelia's motivation to organize a Toys for Tots Drive comes from their parents, Matt and Sharon's, wonderful example. The family, called 'Team Passero' by the Toys for Tots organization, has volunteered their time assisting local Toys for Tots efforts since 2001.

[Learn more about the Passeros and Toys for Tots here.](#)

## **El Sierra, Lester students write letters for Make-A-Wish holiday program**

Published: Jan. 7, 2016



Instead of asking Santa for gifts themselves, Lester sixth graders and El Sierra fifth graders wrote letters to Santa requesting wishes for someone else in need.

“The letters were then delivered to the Macy's mailbox on Friday, 12/11, which was National Believe Day. For that day only, Macy's doubled their donation to Make-A-Wish for every letter,” said Marina Kasicki, Lester sixth grade teacher.

[View more photos here.](#)

## **Bloom's Angels makes the holidays merrier for Herrick students**

Published: Jan. 7, 2016



Bloom's Angels once again demonstrated their generosity this holiday season, helping 50 middle school students in need. The group comprises Herrick staff who raise money to help Herrick families who are experiencing financial difficulties.

The group assembled 50 holiday gift bags, filled with winter wear, a gift card and candy. After school on Thursday, Dec. 17, they placed the bags in the students' lockers. When they arrived at school the next day, they had a wonderful surprise!

Bloom's Angels, in partnership with Ashley Furniture, also provided four Herrick families in need with new beds, comforters and pillows.

[Learn more about Bloom's Angels holiday service here.](#)

## Pierce Downer kids show they care - one shoebox at a time

Published: Jan. 7, 2016



Written by Liz Foreman; Photo by Amy Goray Photography

Pierce Downer students and their families showed their holiday spirit by taking part in a unique service project: an Operation Christmas Child Packing Party. Together they donated materials and postage and assembled gift-filled shoeboxes that will soon arrive in Tanzania, an East African country more than 8,000 miles from Downers Grove. The boxes will be distributed to young children, ages five to nine.

[Read the whole story and view more photos here.](#)

## DG Roadrunners donate 500 gifts to help District 58 families in need

Published: Dec. 17, 2015



The Downers Grove Roadrunners Soccer Club donated more than **500 gifts for more than 130 students in need** this holiday season!

Many community members – including some who are not Roadrunners members – offered to purchase gifts to help our low-income families have a more joyous holiday. The Roadrunners also provided a few families with gift cards for gas, groceries and

other essentials.

Thank you very much for your generosity! [Learn more about this effort and view more photos here.](#)



**Downers Grove Junior Woman's Club delivers \$2,500 in gifts and necessities to District 58 families in need**

Published: Dec. 17, 2015

Each holiday season, the Downers Grove Junior

Woman's Club seeks District 58 families to sponsor for the holidays. They work carefully with schools to identify families most in need -- some may be homeless or on the brink of losing their home; others may have recently lost their primary source of income.

This year, the club sponsored families at Whittier, Hillcrest and Pierce Downer schools. Together they raised \$2,500 to spend on the families. Club members strategically purchased gifts on sale, so while they spent \$2,500 on gifts, the retail value of all the gifts was about double that figure!

Not only did they purchase gifts, they also bought essentials -- bus and train passes, grocery and gas gift cards, etc. These little "extras" will certainly make a difference in these families' lives!

At their annual holiday dinner, the club gathered and wrapped the presents, with help from Pierce Downer Principal Justin Sisul and Hillcrest Principal Michelle Rzepka.

Thank you very much for your incredible generosity, DGJWC. We sincerely appreciate everything!

### **Kingsley helps Downers Grove shelter this holiday season**

Published: Dec. 17, 2015



Kingsley third and fourth graders recently donated toys, books, gloves and blankets to Family Shelter Service, a shelter located in south Downers Grove. In addition, Kingsley staff donated \$351 to help the shelter, which is facing budget cuts this holiday season. Thank you for this good deed, Kingsley community!

Learn more about Family Shelter Service at <http://www.familyshelterservice.org/>. While their headquarters are located in Wheaton, their shelter is in Downers Grove.

### **El Sierra fifth graders embark on a volunteer field trip**

Published: Dec. 17, 2015



El Sierra fifth graders recently went on a field trip to Feed My Starving Children, where they packed an impressive 31,536 meals -- enough to feed 86 starving children for one year! Thank you for your service!

## 10 Herrick students win bicycles from Bloom's Angels' bike raffle

Published: Dec. 17, 2015



Congrats to these 10 Herrick middle schoolers! They each won a bicycle and helmet in the Bloom's Angels bicycle raffle yesterday. Community members donated the bikes to Bloom's Angels, a Herrick outreach organization led by PE Teacher Ms. Gail Pistello. The students are holding up "thank you" notes to the individuals who donated each bike. [View more photos.](#)

## Kingsley cub scout hold toy drive, with help from local Marine

Published: Dec. 16, 2015

Photo courtesy of Amy Kovacevic



Kingsley's Boy Scout Pack 227 hosted a special holiday party last week – it included a Toys for Tots Toy Drive and a visit by a local sergeant in the Marines! The sergeant performed a uniform inspection prior to this photo to ensure all scouts were in tiptop shape. During the event, many of the scouts received badges and were honored for their work so far this school year.



## Henry Puffer/Indian Trail cub scouts collect nearly \$1,000 worth of toys

Published: Dec. 16, 2015

Contributed by: Jami Caldwell



The Pack 54 second grade cub scout den collected almost \$1,000 worth of toys to donate to Toy Express Children's charity, and volunteered their time helping at the distribution site. Pack 54 comprises students from Henry Puffer and Indian Trail schools. Great job boys!

## Hillcrest Brownies volunteer at Immanuel Residence

Published: Dec. 15, 2015

Contributed by: Jennifer Haselhorst



Hillcrest Brownie Troop 50972 spent a lovely December afternoon with several residents at the Immanuel Residence here in Downers Grove.

The girls put on a performance that included Christmas carols, a poetry reading and a piano performance. The girls and residents then worked together to create 50 Christmas cards for veterans at the Hines VA Hospital here in Illinois. It was a lovely afternoon of giving and holiday spirit for everyone involved.



## Lester raises dough with pie-throwing contest

Published: Dec. 1, 2015

The Lester Student Council raised an incredible \$1,400 during their "Pie in the Face" fundraiser the week of Nov. 16-20. All proceeds will go toward gifts cards to accompany Thanksgiving baskets for local

families in need.

Students could purchase raffle tickets this week to be entered into a drawing to throw a pie at Mr. Frank Krezel, Highland's head custodian.

One student from each class was selected for the challenge, which took place during lunch on Friday, Nov. 20.

Mr. Krezel was a great sport! After the contest finished, Mr. Krezel's face was covered in whipped cream. He smiled, took out a razor and started to shave his face. "Good thing I forgot to shave today," he exclaimed.

## Henry Puffer is stuck on giving

Published: Dec. 1, 2015



Henry Puffer students could make a donation in exchange for the opportunity to stick Mrs. Diane Peterson, school secretary, to the wall!

Students taped her to the wall during lunch on Friday, Nov. 20. They really did a good job! Total amounts donated TBD; thanks for your generosity!

[View more photos here.](#)

## Lester girls scouts volunteer their time over Thanksgiving break

Published: Dec. 1, 2015



Lester fourth grade girl scouts spent their Thanksgiving break giving back to the community. Troop 51928 visited Junior Fellowship at First Congregational Church on Sunday, Nov. 22 and made "Santa Boxes" for children in need through PADS and Hope's Front Door.

"They even stuffed 25 gingerbread plush toys as a special addition to

each box," said Troop Leader Kelly Dahle.

The troop continued the good deeds later in the week. On Wednesday, Nov. 25, they helped pack 127 boxes of meals at the Giving Thanks for Thanksgiving Feed My Starving Children mobile pack at Hobson Road Community Church. Great job, girls!

### **Thank you, Knights of Columbus and PTAs for coat donations!**

Published: Nov. 19, 2015

District 58 sincerely thanks the Knights of Columbus Bishop James E. Fitzgerald Council 14649 as well as the Lester, Pierce Downer and Whittier PTAs for their generous coat and winter wear donations.

The Knights of Columbus donated 46 new winter coats, and the PTAs donated a variety of winter coats and winter wear (hats, gloves, snowsuits, etc.) Thanks to their generosity, families struggling to make ends meet can ensure their children are dressed warmly for the approaching winter weather.

**Is your child's school, PTA, scouts troop, etc., holding a holiday-themed charitable event this November or December?** Send information to [mhewitt@dg58.org](mailto:mhewitt@dg58.org) for possible inclusion on the District's "[58 Doing Good](#)" Web page.

**Want to help District 58 families in need this holiday season?** District 58 will again partner with the Downers Grove Roadrunners Soccer Club this holiday season for an "Adopt a Student" program. Anyone is welcome to "adopt" a District 58 student or family, and purchase holiday gifts for that student. More information will be posted on the [Downers Grove Roadrunners Soccer Club](#) website soon. Thank you!

### **Downers Grove police donate two bikes to Bloom's Angels**

Published: Nov. 19, 2015



The Downers Grove police donated two gently-used bicycles to Bloom's Angels, an organization that supports Herrick families in need. These bicycles will be given as Christmas gifts to two Herrick students who do not own their own bike. Thank you, Downers Grove police!

## District 58 schools donate more than 1,100 pounds of candy to U.S. military

Published: Nov. 6, 2015:

Herrick, O'Neill, Pierce Downer, Henry Puffer and Whittier collected leftover Halloween candy to donate to U.S. troops overseas. Together, the schools collected and shipped more than 1,100 pounds of candy! Thanks for your donation!

## Whittier and Hillcrest add service to One Book One School

Published: Nov. 4, 2015



The Whittier and Hillcrest communities recently wrapped up successful One Book One School programs by hosting service events that exemplify the themes in their school's book.

Whittier School jointly read "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio, a book that could be understood and appreciated by children in grades K-6. The book's themes involved kindness, empathy and understanding. Whittier culminated reading "Wonder" together by hosting its first ever Kindness-Palooza on Nov. 2 at

Whittier. Families were invited to bring donations, make Kindness Keychains and write letters to deployed servicemen through Operation Gratitude.

"The event was well-attended, and many donations were made to Ronald McDonald House, Bernie's Book Bank, Night Ministry, World Relief and West Suburban Humane Society," said Whittier LRC Teacher Kelly Coleman.

In conjunction with the event, the Whittier Student Council also hosted a school food drive to support FISH Food Pantry.

Meanwhile, Hillcrest School jointly read "Crenshaw" by Katherine Applegate, a book that explores poverty and hunger in ways that children can understand. Hillcrest's youngest students read picture books that cover similar topics at their comprehension level. Hillcrest capped off the program with a school-wide food drive to support FISH Food Pantry.

[View a photo gallery from Whittier's Kindness-Palooza.](#)

## **Kingsley fifth grade girl scouts volunteer at food bank**

Published: Sept. 14, 2015



This summer, Kingsley fifth grade girl scouts (Troop 51739) volunteered an afternoon at the Northern Illinois Food Bank. They, along with other volunteers, helped sort apples into 5-pound bags to be distributed to the food bank's network of 800 partner feeding programs.

In all, the girl scouts and the other volunteers packed 8,555 pounds of food, which will help provide 7,129 meals to hungry neighbors in northern Illinois.

"They worked diligently at their task and had fun as well! They received many compliments on how well they worked together," said Troop Co-Leader Angie Kelly.

This is not the first time these girl scouts have volunteered at the Northern Illinois Food Bank. In fact, after they volunteered this past spring, they immediately requested to sign up to volunteer there again during the summer.

## **Henry Puffer sixth grader donates 1,000th book to help low-income families in the Caribbean**

Published: Sept. 9, 2015

During summer break, Gabriella Frank, a Henry Puffer sixth grader, delivered school supplies and books as part of her ongoing project to benefit low-income schools in the Caribbean. Gabriella donated her 1,000th book on this recent trip. She has also delivered more than 1,000 school supply items, including pens, pencils, crayons, markers, notebooks and folders.

Gabriella first started collecting books and school supplies five years ago, when she was in first grade. She has won the Kohls' Kids Who Care scholarship contest several times and has been featured in this 58 Doing Good column each year for her service contributions.



Thank you for your remarkable generosity, Gabriella!

## **Hillcrest all-inclusive playground fundraiser featured in Chicago Parent**

Published: Aug. 21, 2015

Hillcrest's Dream.Build.Play Experience fundraiser to build a new all-inclusive playground has raised \$23,000 and was featured in the summer issue of Chicago Parent magazine! [Read the story here.](#)

Hillcrest parent Peg Chaidez is leading the crowdfunding effort. Once built, the all-inclusive playground will be the first of its kind in DuPage County, providing recreation for all children, those with and without disabilities.

The Dream.Build.Play Experience still seeks donations to make the playground a reality. Please consider donating at <http://dbpexperience.com/donate/>.