

Clarence Bee Article – December 2017

Geoffrey Hicks, Clarence Superintendent of Schools

A Season of Giving

The holiday season provides a perfect time to pause and count our blessings. It is also a time to let our community know about the wonderful seasonal charitable pursuits of the students and staff in the District. I will take this space to compliment and recognize those individuals who would never do so themselves.

At CHS, the Interact Club performed 50 random acts of kindness throughout the community with \$50 donations from the Clarence Rotary Club. The club also created 120 holiday cards for Brothers of Mercy patients. The Student Council sponsored this year's Red Cross Blood Drive and will hold the annual Sleepout for the Homeless in early February. The Sleepout is hoping to pass \$500,000 in total donations over the years it has been in existence. SADD students raised \$500 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in the Light the Night Walk. The National Art Honor Society raised \$1,200 for the Clarence Food Pantry with their annual art auction, and the Art Partners held a painting workshop for community members at the Clarence Senior Center. The Future Teachers Club donated over 600 winter coats, hats and mittens for the Wear and Share program at the Epiphany UCC.

The middle school faculty and staff held their 12 Days of Giving campaign, collecting food, gifts, and frozen turkeys for needy Clarence families. Teachers work in coordination with Upstate Milk, Kreher's Egg Farm, and the Clarence Youth Bureau to fund the food drive. Boxes with food and donated gifts are delivered to needy Clarence families the week before Christmas.

At Clarence Center, the fifth grade worked at St. Luke's to package 2,500 Thanksgiving donation bags for needy families. Students also designed gift cards for Honor Flight members and local veterans. The faculty participated in monthly dress down days to benefit Breast Cancer Research and the Clarence Food Pantry.

The faculty, staff and students at Harris Hill held their annual Holiday Giving Tree, donating gifts for needy Harris Hill families. Harris Hill held the inaugural Veterans Day Recognition Ceremony, and students created cards for the Holiday Mail for Veterans program. The faculty held dress down days to benefit UNYTS, SEPTSA, the City Mission and Shriners Hospital.

At Ledgeview, fourth graders collected school supplies and winter clothing for the Buffalo City Mission and Cornerstone Manor and also created 125 grocery bags for Thanksgiving meals. Mrs. Szymanski's class donated gifts and holiday cards for community members and put together "blessing bags" for the Jericho Road Community Health Center in Buffalo.

Fifth grade students at Sheridan Hill participated in the Linus Project, creating fleece blankets for Children's Hospital and local homeless shelters. Sheridan Hill faculty also donated gifts for local families through their annual Holiday Giving Tree and Secret Santa programs. The PTO held a food drive for the Clarence Food Pantry.