



HO ME Comfort Experts HEATING & COOLING (574) 255-4600

Proudly Presents **Street Kids Care**.com

A Division of Street Kids Softball

SKS Home StreetKidsCare.com Stories Contact Us



Street Kids Care.com

HO ME Comfort Experts HEATING & COOLING (574) 255-4600

SEASON of Giving

www.StreetKidsCare.com

Street Kids Care Partner with Grape Road Meijer and Epic Church to Brighten the Holiday for a Mishawaka Family



Mishawaka, IN 12/21/11  
by TJ Jorgensen

With the holidays just around the corner, its easy to get caught up in the fast paced world of shopping, cooking and spending time with family. But its also easy to forget that while some people are enjoying a festive Christmas season, there are many others who are struggling.

On Sunday night, I sat with my wife on the couch and told her I wanted to see if we can figure out a way to do something more for someone this holiday season. She said we needed to figure out a plan and move quickly, as Christmas was a week away. I called a few guys from the team and told them of my idea. "What if we could all donate \$10 each," I suggested. "Even if we got 10 people to do it, thats \$100 we could donate to someone for Christmas."

I decided we would call this our first annual Street Kids Care Season of Giving. I contacted guys from the team as well as the many friends and supporters we have of SKS and before long, I had over \$150 donated by Monday night. I couldnt believe how fast people were giving! It was awesome. Then a few more guys who saw my post on Facebook decided to help. By the time Wednesday afternoon rolled around, along with the donation from my wife and I, we had \$300 that we were ready to give to a Michiana family.

To figure out who we would help this season, I contacted Jeremy LeVan of Epic Church in Mishawaka. Jeremy is a neighbor of SKS player Joe Horvath and a friend to SKS. I asked Jeremy if he knew someone that could benefit from this and he immediately thought of Manny and Sue, and the six kids they were raising in their small home in Village Green off of 12th Street.

I contacted the family, made a personal visit to their home, and told them what we wanted to do. Sue was very thankful and told me how tough times have been, with all six kids in the small trailer. I told her that it was an honor to be able to help and that my teammates felt the same. I asked her if it was alright if we shot some video in order to inspire others to do something like this, and she said "if you feel that it will motivate people to be as kind as you, please do it!"

On Wednesday afternoon, I went to Grape Road Meijer to pick up the \$300 in gift cards. While I was there, I began talking to the store director, Michael, and told him about what we were doing that evening. After a few words back and forth, Michael said to me "What did you say you had there? \$300 in gift cards? Tell you what I am going to do. Talk to my assistant and get some paperwork filled out. After you do that, come back around 6pm and I will match your donation."

My mouth dropped to the floor. When I walked into that store, I had no intention of coming out with more money, but this just shows how awesome karma is! Thanks to the amazing support of Grape Road Meijer, Street Kids Softball was now going to be donating \$600 to this family for Christmas! I sat in the car for a moment and just smiled, thanking God for some amazing people in Michiana.

My next stop was Hacienda on Grape Road where Bill Turner is a manager at. Bill is a personal trainer at Pinnacle Athletic Club, a sponsor of Street Kids Softball, and said he would like to offer some chips and salsa for the event at Epic Church. Thanks so much to Bill and Hacienda for feeding us all on Wednesday!

We arrived at Epic Church and several friends of SKS arrived. Jeremy of Epic Church was on hand as well as the family that we were supporting. We all hung out for a little bit and talked, all while enjoying some chips and salsa from Hacienda. Eventually we all gathered for a group photo and then we began the quick presentation. I told Manny and his family that we wanted to do something special for a family this year and according to Jeremy LeVan, his family had fallen into some rough times and could use the support. We presented the family with a Christmas card and inside were the \$600 in gift cards. When I told the family what Grape Road Meijer had done, Sue put her hand on her mouth and uttered "Oh my." We all gave a warm applause for the family and Manny thanked us all from the bottom of his heart.

Tonight was different than most Street Kids Care events we have done over the past six or seven years. We've taken part in Blood Drives, helped to feed the homeless, collected canned goods for local food pantries.. but tonight when I spent some time with Manny and his family, I saw a family that had went through some struggles, but I also saw pride in what they have. I saw a man that has been battling back from a bad case of pneumonia that has now left his legs in so much pain its hard to work. I saw a woman that is clearly the glue that holds that family together even through rough times. I met kids that looked happy, despite their family struggles. Before they knew what we were giving them tonight, Sue was talking to one of our wives tonight and said that she was hoping she could get the kids new shoes, as theirs was really torn and old. Afterwards, Manny said one of the first things they were doing was getting new shoes!

I am so proud of everyone tonight for helping out, especially in only three days. While it may not seem like a lot to some, that \$600 just might have saved Christmas for this family. As you are sitting down for Christmas dinner this weekend,

remember that there are others who will not have that luxury. Remember that the purpose of Street Kids Care is not to just help one person or cause, but to inspire others to make a difference as well. My sisters fiance is a radio DJ in Michigan and he mentioned the other night on the radio how the acts of people like myself and SKS have inspired him to do more. This is what the holidays are truly about. :)

I want to make sure I thank all that showed up tonight:

Chris Havens, Joe Horvath, Fred Schmucker, Joe Richard, Shane and Amy Varga, Jason and Alyssa Fowler, JR Shapiro, who also supplied the bottled water tonight, Tim Austin (and Emma), Tony and Kim Hardiman (and family), Courtney Jorgensen (and family), Lisa Varga, Rebecca Varga, who took pictures for us tonight and my son Johnny Jorgensen, who filmed everything tonight. Along with these people all making donations, I also want to thank the following people for their kind donations:

Nick Bishop, Scott Martin, Mike Bailey, Jay Jeffery, Leland Schmucker, Jeremy Hochstetler, Ben Duell, Cathie Waggoner, Teddy Panagakos, Ethan McKinney, Mike Ramza, Terry Sherrill, Mike Miller, Chad Meyers, Tony Macik and Todd Marvin. I dont think I forgot anyone, but if I did, I apologize and thank you!





*See more pictures on the [Street Kids Softball Fan Page on Facebook!](#)*



*Special thanks to Grape Road Meijer and Epic Church of Mishawaka for their support in the 2011 Street Kids Care Season of Giving!*