

Caddo Sheriff's Office employs help make season bright for those in need

Tuesday, December 22, 2009

U.S. soldiers, two children's hospitals, a nursing home, and several families in need are among those who benefited this Christmas from charitable donations made by employees of the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office.

In what's now become a Christmas tradition, each department within the Sheriff's Office chooses its own cause to support. Their generosity has extended across the parish and beyond, said Sheriff Steve Prator.

"I'd like to think we are out there touching lives every day," Prator said. "But sometimes you see someone who needs just a little extra help. Maybe they need food. Maybe they need heat.

"Our employees are blessed to have good jobs and the support of each other," the sheriff added. "It truly warms our hearts to be able to do this for others."

At 10 a.m. on Tuesday, December 22, employees of Judicial Support will donate \$1,022 to Salvation Army to help sponsor children on its Angel Tree. The money was collected by selling plate lunches at the Courthouse throughout the year.

Other acts of kindness include:

• Community Programs organized a food drive to collect more than 500 pounds of canned goods for the Northwest Louisiana Food Bank. All areas of the Sheriff's Office contributed.

• Youth Services collected money, gifts and services for a single mother and her four children. The donation included installing a new heater for the family with the assistance of Pro-Tech Heating and Air Conditioning and buying new clothes for the children.

• Purchasing Department collected games, musical instruments, and other activities for Harmony House Nursing Home.

• The Training Academy and Sheriff's Administrative staff donated needed items to Providence House, a residential development center for homeless families with children.

• The Narcotics Unit adopted a Salvation Army Angel Tree family.

• Internal Affairs, Personnel, and Special Investigations adopted a mother and her three children, ages 1, 2, and 4, through the Gingerbread House. Each child was given a riding toy as well as toys from their Christmas list and a Christmas outfit.

• Records, Identification, Crime Scene Investigations, and Evidence delivered gifts to Shriners' Hospital.

• The Patrol Bureau's north sector adopted a homeless mother and her three children, ages 6, 7, and 9. Deputies presented the mother with a \$600 gift card to purchase Christmas gifts and other items for her children and family.

• The Communications Division sponsored a U.S. Army Ranger (and Northwood HS grad) stationed in Afghanistan. Deputies mailed five boxes filled with items such as books, snacks, games, and movies to the soldier and others in his tent. They also included a miniature Christmas tree with ornaments. The Communications Division also sponsored two local shelters.

• Sheriff's Safety Town (Caddo deputies, Shreveport firefighters, and State Police troopers) purchased eleven bicycles and donated them to families in need through the Salvation Army.

•Caddo Correctional Center's "C" Team will be visiting patients at Sutton's Children's Hospital on December 22 at 10:30 a.m. Deputies will go door to door to deliver goodie bags filled with CPSO items (pencils, badges, color books, etc.). Deputies also helped stock Santa's Workshop at Sutton's Children's Hospital with toys from the children's Christmas wish list.

•Classification and Booking at CCC will visit Booker T. Washington Nursing Home on December 22, at 12:30 p.m. to deliver gift bags of blankets, towels, combs, and slippers.

•The Work Release Division prepared and delivered gift baskets for families that are spending the Christmas holidays in area hospital Intensive Care Units in support of loved ones. The baskets included hygiene items such as toothpaste and tooth brushes, dental floss, snacks, drinks, books, and magazines.

•Technical resources donated essential items such as soap, razors, and toothpaste to the Merkle Center of Hope (Salvation Army)

Brian Wilson, a manager in the Sheriff's Technical Resources Division, said employees enjoy the opportunity to give back. "Sometimes we take things for granted such as the bare essentials in life because God has blessed us so much," he said. "When we see others in need it reminds us of how truly blessed we are."

