

Jimmy's Kids is Proud of It's 2011 Accomplishments!

Jimmy's Kids needs help making Christmas brighter for needy children

■ 'If it's not incredibly damaged we'll find it a new home.'

By Catherine Kavanaugh
Daily Tribune Staff Writer

CLAWSON — Forget naughty and nice. The names on the list of Jimmy's Kids are needy children who number in the thousands.

Jim Tuman, 70, of Royal Oak and his band of volunteers are gearing up to bring Christmas to 26,000 youngsters in metro Detroit, but they need some help.

It doesn't have to cost anyone a cent, said Tuman, who has teamed up with all 10 locations of Play It Again Sports, including the one at 1203 W. 14 Mile Road, Claw-



Journal Register Newspapers file photo
Jim Tuman has once again teamed up with Play It Again Sports to help brighten Christmas for children in need.

son, to collect gently used or new toys, coats and anything people will part with that a child might want.

"We're not in good shape right now," Tuman said. "The need has gone off the chart and resources are going in the opposite direction."

To spur donations, Play It Again Sports is offering a 10 percent discount off regu-

larly priced new and gently used merchandise to shoppers who donate to Jimmy's Kids through Christmas Eve on Saturday.

On Christmas morning, Tuman will carry on his 22-year tradition of delivering the donated items to indigent, forgotten and emotionally or physically

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Daily Tribune
Friday, December 16, 2011

KIDS: You can help bring a little happiness

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challenged children.

Tuman started the program after organizing a Christmas party for 17 Detroit school children who, for various reasons, had been neglected or overlooked.

"I fell in love with them," he said. "The next year churches, sports teams and others got involved. It grew from there. The students at Roeper School help a lot. They share the things they no longer play with."

Tuman and his volunteers take the donations to 75 shelters, foster programs, nonprofit agencies and schools in addition to making surprise visits to households of struggling families.

"Last year a young man and his aunt made a delivery

to a man — a double amputee from diabetes — raising five children," Tuman said.

"When they left, the young man told his aunt he had to go back. He had just gotten a new leather coat for Christmas and he gave it to the dad. There are so many stories of hope and generosity."

Tuman is urging everyone to go through their children's closets and toy boxes for play things that are gathering dust.

"We'll move anything," he said. "If it's not incredibly damaged we'll find it a new home."

The Michigan locations for Play It Again Sports are in Ann Arbor, Canton, Chesterfield, Clawson, Livonia, Novi, Port Huron, St. Clair Shores, Southgate and Washington Township.

Oakland Press
Saturday, December 24, 2011

Jim Tuman speaks with Richard Jax of Lenox Township, prior to taking off to deliver toys during the annual Jimmy's Kids toy distribution in Southwest Detroit.

Photo courtesy of Steve Peritz



Christian, Jewish, Muslim organizations band together for charitable cause

ROYAL OAK — Setting aside ideological differences in the spirit of giving and the holiday season, people of traditionally conflicting religious backgrounds are banding together to provide the indigent of Metro Detroit with a Christmas.

The Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit in Bloomfield Hills and the United Council of Islamic Societies are joining sev-

eral area churches to assist Jim Tuman and his Royal Oak-based Jimmy's Kids Christmas Morning program.

Jimmy's Kids Christmas Morning volunteers will be the Neighborhood City Hall in Detroit.

Tuman — an internationally known and regarded sociologist, educator and media personality — offers

support systems for children and teens suffering through external stresses.

Each year, Tuman and Jimmy's Kids provides toys and other gifts to tens of thousands of Metro Detroit's "forgotten" children — those who may be in-need or emotionally or physically challenged.

As an extension of the program for the previous seven years, Tuman has

organized the Christmas Morning Program in which he and his volunteers bring gifts and food unannounced to nearly 400 southwest Detroit families on the morning of Dec. 25.

Tuman and his program serve a portion of Detroit with a high concentration of Catholics. Nonetheless, he has always credited the success of the program to the Jewish, Muslim and Christian volunteers, which number in the hundreds.

Thus far, over 20 Metro Detroit churches will provide volunteers and the leaders from the Islamic associations will request mosques, as will Jewish Federation leaders from synagogues.

Visit www.jimturman.com or www.jimmyskids.com.



Jimmy's Kids

With your help we made a difference!

For a tiny program we serve at the highest place. Thank you for all the people that came together to make a difference!

MAKING SOMEONE ELSE'S DAY

Jewish, Muslim volunteers join forces to help out on Christmas

By Zlati Meyer
Free Press Staff Writer

Ari Goldberg filled cup after cup with lemonade from a giant jug cooler in the soup kitchen at St. Leo Catholic Church's on Detroit's west side on Christmas morning.

The 13-year-old West Bloomfield resident was one of about two dozen volunteers from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit who helped prepare and serve a festive holiday meal to less-fortunate people.

It was part of the organization's annual Mitzvah Day program, the largest single day of volunteering by the region's Jewish community, which enables Christians to spend the holiday at home with their loved ones, according to the Federation. This year, for the third time, an estimated 1,000 Jewish volunteers joined forces with their Muslim neighbors.

"Mitzvah" means "good deed" or "commandment" in Hebrew.

"We come here every Christmas. It's a tradition," said Ari, who arrived at the church with his mother and 7-year-old brother at 8:30 a.m. "It's important to help people in need."

Among other Mitzvah Day volunteer opportunities were sorting books for the annual Bookstock used book and media sale, delivering holiday meals to homebound seniors, sorting food at Gleaners Community Food Bank and serving meals to veterans at Piquette Square in Detroit, federation spokeswoman Beverly Phillips said.

In southwest Detroit, about 700 people got to play Santa Claus for 215 families.

They first gathered to get big plastic bags filled with toys and clothing to give to underprivi-



PHOTOS BY KATHLEEN GALLIGAN/DETROIT FREE PRESS
Sarah Youssef, 26, left, and Aysha Jamali, 22, both of Canton, load up on toys to deliver to families Sunday. Volunteers met at the Neighborhood City Hall at 7744 W. Vernor in Detroit to get assignments.

leged children as part of the Jimmy's Kids program, started in 1989 by Jim Tuman, a 70-year-old national speaker and youth advocate from Royal Oak.

His elves? Volunteers from the United Council of Islamic Societies, the Jewish Federation and several area churches.

George Schuttler, 24, of Lansing was participating for the second year and was assigned to surprise the Canales family.

Miguel, 10, pulled out dozens of gifts, from toy cars and books to yo-yos and stuffed animals, which he shared with Samuel, 8, and Johanna, 12.

They even shared some of their bounty (a black T-shirt and a large basket) with their mom, Iliana, 39, a factory worker, who

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watched her gleeful kids beneath a string of white holiday lights hung up in a triangle, the shape of a Christmas tree.

"I think the things are so cool," Johanna said, after trading her brothers their green light-up ball with a purple one.

Her parents, immigrants from Latin America, were more reflective.

"This year, the economy don't keep (like) years before," said Samuel Canales, 44, a construction worker. "Sometimes, it's really good. Now, it's slow."

And for Schuttler, a medical courier, it came down to those smiles — and his own.

"I'm getting a lot more joy helping other people," he said.

Sarah Youssef, a University of Michigan nursing student from Canton, was a first-time volunteer.

She was put to work delivering gifts to five families in the neighborhood. She said she was glad to be involved, too.

"It's nice to have everyone come together," the 26-year-old said. "Especially it's Christmas; it's not my holiday. It's nice to give back and do some of the work to make someone else's day."

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Volunteers deliver toys to Detroit kids

Surprise Santas share joy: 'No point in sitting at home'

BY JOSH KATZENSTEIN
The Detroit News

Detroit — Jose Guzman, 15, thought he heard a relative knocking on the door of his family's home in southwest Detroit on Sunday morning.

Instead, when his mother opened the door, Jose realized it was strangers dropping off gifts for him and his two siblings, 13-year-old Adan and 8-year-old Yaneli.

More than 100 volunteers helped deliver bags filled with presents to needy families in

southwest Detroit as part of the annual Jimmy's Kids Christmas Morning program. Jim Tuman started the program 22 years ago, and volunteers from all religious backgrounds have brightened Christmas Day for southwest Detroit families ever since.

"This is probably, in my mind, the most unique program because of the mix of people," said Tuman, a 70-year-old whose day job involves speaking to youths about suicide prevention. "There's Christians, Jews and Muslims all coming together, working side by side and shedding ideology for today just to



Robin Buckson / The Detroit News
Jim Tuman, founder of Jimmy's Kids, left, talks with volunteers Sunday before a toy delivery on the city's southwest side.

Toys

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be a part of this and part of delivering to the poor in southwest Detroit."

The Jewish Community Relations Council and the Council of Islamic Organizations of Michigan partnered with members of more than 20 Metro Detroit churches for the event, which began at 9 a.m. The group planned to deliver between seven and 10 gifts to more than 200 families Sunday.

Event organizers have been working since August to gather the list of families, using community leaders, neighborhood groups and local agencies, among other tactics, and people steadily donate to ensure the chosen families have a joyous Christmas.

Volunteers, mostly families including several children, picked up bags of toys outside the Neighborhood City Hall on West Vernor, then followed directions to the recipients' homes. After the meeting, volunteers gave the families a letter written in Spanish explaining the delivery and wishing them a merry Christmas.

"There was no point in us sitting at home doing nothing while we could be out blessing others and helping," said Kim Kerbrat, 51, of Royal Oak.

Kerbrat, John Timmerman, 61, and Jack and Patti Salter, 70 and 68 — all members of Kensington Church in Troy and the Royal Oak Optimist Club — delivered the gifts to the Guzmans' house on Palms Street off West Vernor. Among the offerings were shirts, pants, stuffed animals, a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles toy and some bath salts for Jose's mother, Maria Guzman.

Jose said he was most excited about the clothes, but hadn't yet



Photos by Robin Buckson / The Detroit News
Clockwise, from bottom left: Jazlyne Dinkins, 3; DeJarnett Dinkins, 7; Antoine Patton, 1; Christaun Dinkins; Casharae Dinkins, sitting; and Terrence Litton were all smiles after getting gifts.



Jonathan Romero, 3, shows his mother, Yvette Romero, some of the toys delivered by volunteers Sunday morning in southwest Detroit.

looked through all the presents. He called the delivery "a big surprise" that made his family's Christmas "a lot better."

"You feel really good after coming out after this," Timmer-

man said. "It sort of reminds you what Christmas is all about. Instead of it being about us, it's about the kids."

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Detroit Free Press
Monday, December 26, 2011

The Detroit News
Monday, December 26, 2011