

## *Special gifts for special people . . .*

Perhaps no Auxiliary program or project better captures the spirit and generosity of our Auxiliary members than Holiday Special Gifts. Each year, our generous Chapters and members “adopt” families at the Clinic for whom they purchase gifts. Oftentimes, we hear that the gifts we purchase for the children are the only ones they receive on Christmas Day. It is very gratifying for our members to know that this patient outreach is so greatly appreciated by those most in need of our help.

Lynette Paulsen, Chairman of Holiday Special Gifts, tells us that our members adopted 321 children with 12 Chapters participating in the program. We extend a huge thank you to all of them for their incredible generosity. We also wish to acknowledge Elise Klein who used money donated by a member of her Chapter to purchase and wrap gifts for 22 children!

Perhaps there’s no better way to convey the impact of this program on patients’ lives than to share one of their stories with you . . .

One of IWS’ Mother/Infant Therapy Group moms, Lorena, had her third child last February. Just one week after the baby’s birth, her husband, George, was in a horrible car accident and nearly died. He was comatose for some time after the accident. During his long recuperation, Lorena juggled visits to the hospital with caring for her two children and her newborn son. She prayed that George’s condition would improve, and her prayers were answered. But it took a long time for him to recover fully. Eventually, he was notified that he had lost his job.

During the time her husband was recuperating, Lorena did what she could to make ends meet. She cleaned houses as much as her schedule would allow, but the bills kept coming. When George was able to return to full-time employment, he was unable to find a job. So Lorena continued to shoulder the burden as best she could, but it was difficult to balance all the challenges she faced – caring for three young children, managing a household and earning a living. The situation worsened -- several months ago, Lorena became ill, and she required surgery. Obviously, she couldn’t work any longer, and there was absolutely no money to pay their mounting bills. The family lost their home. They have since moved in with relatives, but it’s not an ideal situation. Lorena says they are barely making it these days.

Lorena was thrilled to learn that her family had been selected to participate in the Auxiliary’s Holiday Special Gifts Program. She describes the presents her family received as a “life saver” and adds that they were the only ones her children were given this year. The family is so grateful to the Auxiliary members for opening their hearts to them in their time of need. They will never forget this “holiday miracle” that put toys under the tree for her three children.

We send a huge thank you to Lynette Paulsen for her leadership of this program. We also extend thanks to all our members who made Holiday Special Gifts such a success.



*A Holiday Special Gifts family enjoyed unwrapping their gifts.*

