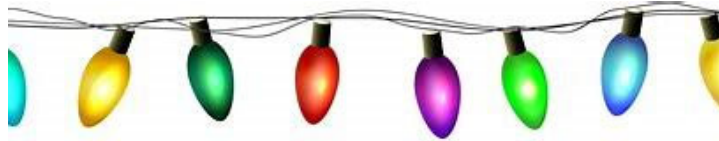


# Rally Point Newsletter

A Regional Publication of the USJCI Senate  
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## HOLIDAY PROJECTS WE HOLD DEAR TO US#



For this upcoming holiday season, we wanted to share stories from folks in Region VIII that talk of Christmas projects

past and present, as well as links to other feel good stories to start this Christmas month off right! We hope you will feel inspired and be in awe of the generosity of everyone that contributed articles and the reason for the season!

There have been many projects throughout the years that have made an impact on me during the Holiday season. One of the best I remember was when I was looking for a way to “pay it forward” several years ago. Friends of mine owned a café in town; they wanted to do a free will offering Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinner for the community and they needed help cooking and getting the menu ready. I told them I would be honored to help. The owners wanted to give the dinner donations to the county Angel tree program for the children that were not picked, and the Christmas dinner donations would go to the Marine Corp Toys for Tots

drive for the next year. When people found out what they were doing, volunteers signed up immediately to help!

On Thanksgiving Day we served 163 people and raised \$897.36. There were only three kids left on the Angel tree for the Year and the owners of the Café stated that \$150.00 would go to the Angel Tree and the rest would go to Toys for Tots. When Christmas Dinner was over, we had 362 people come through the doors; our donation jar was stuffed! It was so full that we had to get a second jar out to allow people to donate.

We had a group of senior citizens come in near the end of our day, whom we told “if there is food left, we would still serve!” After these ladies enjoyed their meal and chatted with us (they asked for the recipes which were gladly shared), they were so excited that we had done this for the community. They asked why we provided this meal and we explained that it was our way of “paying it forward.”

As we were cleaning up the

kitchen, our server came back and stated that the ladies had written a donation check for \$5000! We were all overwhelmed with the kind gesture; after we counted the two donation jars, our total for the day was over \$12,000! The owners took the generous donation to the Marine Corp Toys for Tots program. Yes, we were tired and worn out but so very grateful for the outpouring of community to support. Paying it forward may be exhausting and overwhelming at times but the feeling that you get after is indescribable.

As we proceed in this holiday season, I would ask that each and every one of you take the time to reflect and enjoy the fellowship and the friendships that we have fostered over the past years and Pay it Forward with Kindness and respect as well as graciousness and humility.

**Happy Holidays to everyone  
– have a Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year!**

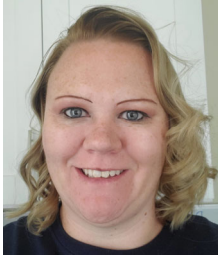
### VP Travel Schedule Join Me!

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Dec 4        | Lawrence Jaycee's Auction and Senate Xmas Party                |
| Jan 18-23    | <a href="#">Winter Boards</a><br>Melbourne, FL                 |
| Feb 24-27    | <a href="#">Mini-Nationals</a><br>Pigeon Forge, TN             |
| Apr 28-130   | Region VIII Meeting<br>Manhattan, KS                           |
| June 26      | <a href="#">US JCI 50th Anniversary Party</a> , Louisville, KY |
| June 27-July | <a href="#">JCI Year-end Convention</a><br>Louisville, KY      |



## There is Goodness in the World!

Read this compilation of [“Warm Fuzzies”](#) to brighten your day!



Shannon Klocker, #77823  
President, Colorado JCI Senate  
[shannonf86@hotmail.com](mailto:shannonf86@hotmail.com)  
(719) 691-1736

Hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving! My favorite Christmas project was the Santa's Workshop that the Denver Jaycees hosted. We would take kids from a local Denver orphanage down to Colorado Springs and go to the North Pole Amusement Park. It was great seeing the smiles on the kids faces. They got to see Santa, ride amusement rides and see a magic show. I hope everyone has a great Christmas and New Years!



Holiday spirit is now in full swing! The Lawrence Jaycees/Senators will be holding their annual Christmas Auction on Dec 4th at the Carnegie building, 200 W 9<sup>th</sup> St, in downtown Lawrence. Every year the event just seems to get bigger and better. Past Jaycees and Senators from across Kansas attend this action-packed evening. Hospitality begins at 5 pm with the auction beginning at 6 pm. You might want to bring a bigger belt. The hospitality is that good.

Will you be one of those lucky bidders to win the secret items. As Gomer Pyle would say “Surprise! Surprise! Surprise! IF surprises aren’t your cup of tea, then you will absolutely love the donated items worthy of being bid on. Of course, sometimes it’s fun just to watch who is bidding on what or against each other.

Proceeds raised by the Christmas Auction help support the tradition of donating food and additional items to 27 families. All in the spirit of helping those less fortunate during the holiday season. 40 plus years or more, the actual beginning of this project has not been determined. Saturday Dec 18th will be the day when delivery to each family is done.

All the more reason to be in attendance at the annual Lawrence Jaycees/Senators Christmas auction on Dec 4<sup>th</sup>. Bring your good cheer and wallet. Yes, they do take cash, checks and credit cards.

In the holiday spirit.

**Rob Wiley # 56033**

[8 Christmas Stories That Show the True Meaning of Christmas \(camillestyles.com\)](http://camillestyles.com)



Season's greetings from the Oklahoma's Great Adventurers! As I gear up for the holiday season, so many things remind me of all the Jaycee holiday projects I helped on. Two projects hold special memories. The Newkirk Jaycee Christmas Float and Christmas Angel Shopping. The Christmas float brought us together with our children to design and build it, the kids always rode on the float which made them feel special. It was great seeing parents and children working together toward a common goal. Then we would go shopping for Christmas Angels (underprivileged children). This really taught our children how to appreciate what they had, how to spend wisely (because they wanted to get everything on the Angel's list), and that warm fuzzy feeling from giving to others without expecting anything in return. This Christmas I pray each and every one of you have a Christmas adventure that will give you that warm fuzzy feeling. I pray you will have peace and joy instead of stress. I pray you will know how much you are loved by family and friends. Most important of all, I pray you remember HE is the reason for the season and all blessings we enjoy.

Merry Christmas and Happy 2022  
Cindy Empting #65595  
OK JCI Senate President



# Stories of Christmas Past

## Colorado

I think it was with Cherry Creek where we would take kids shopping at KMart. They were so excited to just shop. Such joy. Seeing the light in grateful little eyes with giggles and fun is always special.

My favorite Jaycee moment ever was going to Santa's workshop. We were taking kids that have been abused, neglected and hurt. I was partnered with an autistic boy who had no words nor expressions until one humbling moment. We were on an airplane ride. It was freezing that day and the wind as we went around was frigid. Then. For just one moment, he broke thru and started smiling and laughing. It didn't last long, but it was one of the sweetest moments of my life. Humbling. **Jolene Donahue, Littleton Jaycees**



My very first project, a little more than a year into being a Jaycee, was chairing the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Northern Lights Parade in Greeley. I had no idea what I was doing, but with the help of the Jaycee who started the project, I got the hang of it really quick. We had around 40 parade entries with lots of lights and sounds, a choir to sing at the tree lighting and hot chocolate being served by another group we partnered with. The project was daunting and I didn't get to see much of it, but it sure made a splash and seeing the joy on the kids faces as they watched the lights and Santa

come around the corner just made it so much fun! That was in the mid 90s – this event has remained the official “kick-off” to the Holiday season in Greeley, Colorado. - **Susan Allard #65399**

Operation Poinsettia is a project started by the Arvada Jaycees over 30 years ago to give medical patients at Lutheran hospital and area nursing homes residents a free poinsettia plant hopefully to brighten their Christmas holiday. It started one Christmas holiday when a Jaycee named Jim Lytle had an emergency and spent the day in the ER. Next year he brought a poinsettia plant for the ER and realized that it was a big hit with the staff. The next year, he contacted growers who generously donated their plants rather than mulch them. These plant went to the hospital initially but grew bigger and bigger encompassing Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living Communities. Some years over 4000 plants were distributed. Arvada continue to run this project every year. If you would like to take part in this continuing event, call Dale Hill at 303-466-1192.

- **Jeff Cannon #46213**



# Stories of Christmas Past

## Oklahoma

One Christmas season the Lawton (Oklahoma) Jaycees were trying to think of a different project to raise money for our Christmas basket / clothing drive. One of our members worked at the Otasco store and had received a (3 ft. x 3 ft) giant coloring book as an item to sell during the Christmas shopping season. The store wasn't interested in carrying them as they didn't think the books would sell. As he mentioned these books to our members, we all said that we'd buy the books and sell them as our fund-raiser. The books cost us \$1.00 each and we sold them for \$3.00. One of our members walked into the lobby of a local bank and held the book up over his head. Within a few minutes he had sold two cases of the book without taking a step. From there the sales soared!! We completely sold out of the 500 books in record time and had \$1,000.00 for our food baskets.

We worked with a local grocery store to purchase the food staples, turkeys, and hams for each basket. Another local store gave us a discount on the coats, jackets, gloves, and hats that we purchased for the families. Each year during the Christmas holiday we remember the excitement, praise, thanks, and tears of joy that the mothers, dads, grandparents, and kids showered on us as we delivered their holiday baskets and gifts. Our gift from them was the smiles, tears of joy and warm feelings of helping others in need.

***Sheri (#47839) & Vic (#34815) Menendez***

As a new Jaycee, I was excited to work our Christmas food basket and children's shopping spree with the Moore (OK) Jaycees. The Jaycee that picked up my student noticed that the family did not have heat, and it was cold outside. When we got to Walmart to shop, there was a discussion going on about the lack of heat, and it was quickly decided that we would buy a nice electric heater for this family, on top of the gifts for the student and family. When we dropped the student off at his home, we asked the family to open one present right away. The father was overwhelmed, and the mother couldn't quit crying. They were so excited, and relieved. I remember the realization of what an impact this group of young men and women made on so many lives, but for this one family, provided the heat they so desperately needed. I will never forget it!

***Karen MacCannell #49497***, Former Moore Jaycee



### Christmas Weekend

The year that Jane Loafman was Oklahoma State President I was her driver for a weekend Christmas extravaganza. On Friday night, she drove to Stillwater from Duncan (her hometown) where we had a Christmas Bash Membership social with my chapter Cowboy Country. We got up early on Saturday and drove to Bartlesville and Jane was in the Bartlesville Christmas parade on a float. From there we drove to Tulsa where we delivered food baskets that afternoon with the Southeast Tulsa Jaycees. People came out on the streets when they saw us drive up wanting to know if we had their delivery and if people were not at home some people said they would make sure they got the food. We also wrapped gifts that afternoon for the Christmas shopping event. That evening was the Tulsa Christmas parade where the Tulsa Jaycees staged all the entries and once again Jane was in a car waving and passing out candy. Of course, after the event is the after-party where we continued to celebrate the season. We talked with lots of potential members and worked membership this weekend as we traveled through the state. We then drove back to Stillwater that night in Janes small car, we called the bread box, where she spent the night, and then she drove back to Duncan on Sunday. This was over 500 miles of driving and the thing was the following weekend would have been similar. I look back and cant imagine the impact we had during all these weekends of traveling and how many friends were made along the way. Season Greetings to all.

***Marcia Werner #62934***, Oklahoma JCI Chaplain

# Stories of Christmas Past Texas

## Children's Shopping Tour.

My favorite project at Christmas was the Richardson Jaycees Children Shopping Tour at Sun Rexall. Dave Kaplan owned the store and every year we would take a group of underprivileged kids there. Dave not only made sure every kid got presents but he would also donate money for them to pay for it. The first year I participated I was assigned a young man who was 11 years old. Instead of buying presents for himself, he was buying presents for his siblings and his mom. Even though he was looking for presents for others, he would stop in the toy aisle and look at a Tonka Toy dump truck. I asked him if he wanted it, but he said no he wanted to make sure he got presents for his family. Then he told me that his dad had driven a dump truck before he died. When we were done, we went to the counter to pay and he was a little short, but Dave said that was ok. While the kids were having lunch, I told Dave I had to go get something. I went & got that toy truck and told Dave I would pay for it. When Santa stopped by to visit with the kids that truck was under the tree and wrapped and had Danny's name on it. That little boy's eye lit up when he saw that truck and hugged me. Yes, I had tears in my eyes and so did Dave. That was the first time I had met Dave and we became lifelong friends till the day he died. Every year I would make sure to participate in that project because it showed me what Christmas was all about.



**Thomas Smith #35187**

## ["I Wanted To Help." 8-Yr-Old Bakes Up A Storm To Buy Gifts For Foster Kids.](#)



# Stories of Christmas Past

## Kansas

Every year at Credit Union of America, we do an activity partnering with the Wichita Police Department and the United Way. The project consist of building teddy bears and package them with a book and bookmark.

The Police Department gives these teddy bears to kids while they're on particularly difficult calls that involve family crisis. They're also given out during "Child in need of care" calls, where children may be temporarily displaced as a result of neglect. While the book and the bear don't solve the problem, they give these kids something to focus on during a very difficult or challenging experience.

The Teddy Bears are kept in police cars, and when an officer encounters a child who has been traumatized due to tragedy or victimization, the child is given a bear. The child is comforted by the bear in an unfortunate or unfamiliar surroundings. Teddy bears are proven to have a calming effect by providing comfort and something tangible to hold during times of crisis. They also help forge a bond between the officer and the child as well as minimize the psychological impact of a traumatic situation by diverting the child's attention from the stress of the trauma to the comfort of the teddy bear.

If you are familiar with Build-A-Bear stores, then you have the basic understanding of what is needed. CUA purchases all the necessary supplies, and the staff does the rest. The most time-consuming part of assembling the bears is simply stuffing them and making sure they are not lumpy! No volunteers sew the backs to finish the bears, however that is all that is left to complete our teddy bear project. All participants have a fun time doing this, and it is now an annual event for us.



~ *David Germann #52500*

### Top Christmas Movies as ranked by IMBd

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. It's a Wonderful Life                 | 11. Bad Santa                      |
| 2. Die Hard                              | 12. Edward Scissorhands            |
| 3. A Christmas Carol (1951)              | 13. Trading Places                 |
| 4. Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer        | 14. The Santa Clause               |
| 5. National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation | 15. Joyeux Noel                    |
| 6. Home Alone                            | 16. Gremlins                       |
| 7. A Christmas Story                     | 17. The Nightmare Before Christmas |
| 8. Miracle on 34th Steet (1947)          | 18. The Shop Around the Corner     |
| 9. Scrooge                               | 19. The Happiest Season            |
| 10. Elf                                  | 20. A Charlie Brown Christmas      |