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**A Holiday
Greeting
From
Mayor Jim Fouts**

**‘Let’s Encourage the Spread
of the Christmas Spirit’**

- Mayor Jim Fouts

Dear Friend,

Every year, as your elected mayor, I send you a special holiday greeting at my own expense. The theme of my message to you does not change – encourage the spread of the Christmas spirit at this festive time of year.

Too often, we think of Christmas as the season for gift-giving when it should be the season for generosity of spirit – **when we give of ourselves to help others.**

That’s why since I became your mayor, we have initiated two Warren Salvation Army drives through the Mayor’s Office – the Angel Tree Toy Drive for Needy Children and the Holiday Food Drive for the Needy – **both drives end December 14.**

The response to these projects by Warren residents has been overwhelming – and it gives me and the Mayor’s Office staff a great deal of personal satisfaction helping those in need. **It’s the Christmas spirit of giving at its best.**



Helping those in need of help is a priority of mine. That’s the reason we sponsor two Warren citizen volunteer recognition events that encourage Warren citizens to help others throughout the year.

The first one we initiated 10 years ago is the **Warren Outstanding Volunteer Recognition Program** held annually in April, National Volunteer Month. More than 1000 Warren volunteers have received a special mayoral appreciation certificate at a special ceremony. These volunteers are nominated by schools, churches, community groups and individuals.

Here are some highlights from some of the individual nominations for outstanding volunteer:

- *“Currently volunteers her time each week in our shelter with child care. She is dependable, compassionate, and great with the kids”*
- *“Faithfully executing tasks of many kinds. Serves in Food Pantry Outreach, Prayer Station, Choir, Nursery, Children’s Ministry and Women’s ministries”*
- *“She is there every Saturday taking care of the animals at the shelter”*

- *"She cares about our students and our school. She is kind, supportive, and helpful."*
- *"Volunteered often at homeless shelters, food packing for the needy or helping to arrange clothing and care packages to refugees overseas"*
- *"A woman of integrity and character. She symbolizes true faithfulness and commitment to the church, and she enhances class beyond measure"*

A second event we initiated last year is the **Caregiver Recognition Ceremony** that honors Warren residents who have given their time and energies for the care of a loved one.

Here are a few examples of the individual nominations for caregiver recognition:

- *"She has put her life on hold and is there every day to help with meals, cleaning, errands, personal hygiene, and everything they need."*
- *"After working full-time caring for Dad and the house, she visits Bessie every day to make sure her needs are being met all the while saying it is her pleasure to be able to do it"*
- *"All I need to do is let her know I have somewhere to go or something to get and she's right there. Truly a life-saver and a dear friend and neighbor."*
- *"She is my caregiver, best friend and mother"*
- *"She has made unbelievable sacrifices"*
- *"I am taking care of my disabled sister for the past six years, and I will do so forever."*
- *"He sets up her supplies in their home to encourage her to continue her gift of painting."*

Both of these ceremonies are great examples of the Christmas spirit year-around. **I call these individuals the "unsung heroes of Warren" because of their unselfishness.** You can nominate a volunteer or caregiver by calling the Mayor's Office at (586) 574-4520.

While I was growing up, my parents always impressed on me and my sister the importance of helping those in need – something we carried into adulthood. Of course, gift-giving was also part of our family's Christmas. I remember saving my money all year so I could buy gifts for my parents and sister at the local dime store.

I also remember Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, attending church services on Christmas, holiday family get-togethers, expressions of love, decorating the Christmas tree, Christmas greetings and the strong sense of family togetherness. I hope your Christmas memories are as happy as mine were, and I wish you and yours a wonderful, memory-filled and blessed Christmas.

And please spread the joy of Christmas to those in need in whatever way you can.

God bless you and yours and have a healthy and happy 2019.



James B. Sork

