

Kiwanis Club of Aurora

Meeting on Tuesdays • noon - 1p.m.
Prisco Community Center • Illinois Ave. at Lake St.
www.aurorakiwanis.org

Contact:

John Ross
(630) 879-8828 (cell)
(630) 879-2583 (home)

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For Immediate Release
For News and/or Community Editor(s)

Kiwanis Club of Aurora Launches GoFundMe Campaign for Aurora Children to Have Winter Coats

• Kiwanis provides leadership for citywide “Coats for Kids” drive

Aurora, Ill., Dec. 3, 2015 — The Kiwanis Club of Aurora is doing what is part of its mission. Helping kids! This winter it is part of a citywide effort of getting coats to children who need them. The effort is called “Coats for Kids.”

The club along with the City of Aurora, Mayor Tom Weisner, City of Aurora Aldermen, Communities in Schools, and local businesses, spearheaded this drive.

This year Coats for Kids hopes to raise \$25,000 from the community in order to help in its distribution of more than 2,000 coats to students at the elementary through high school level at school districts #129 – West Aurora, #131 – East Aurora, #204 – Indian Prairie, and #308 – Oswego. Coats were distributed October 30 to some 53 schools based on a need-assessment by the schools’ social workers.

Cash donations to this year’s effort may be made by going online to GoFundMe.com/sd5ksfz8 or AuroraKiwanis.org or by sending a check, made payable to the “Aurora Illinois Kiwanis Foundation” to Kiwanis Club of Aurora, P.O. Box 1551, Aurora, IL 60507.

Why are the coats from Coats for Kids so special?

The coats are brand new and beautifully constructed so kids receive the same quality items as their peers. The basic need of warmth is met with dignity so they can play outside and participate in school activities without worrying about standing out.

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For many students, receiving a coat from Coats for Kids is also the first time they're receiving something new of their own. An education professional observed, "When kids have a warm coat, they have a smile on their face. They sit up, they pay attention, they're more astute because they just feel good about themselves!"

The "Coats for Kids" program was started by 7th Ward Alderman Scheketa Hart-Burns and 2nd Ward Alderman Juany Garza. In 2009, Kiwanis Club of Aurora President Archie Needam joined forces with the aldermen by providing funds and club volunteer efforts.

Club President Clyde Shields feels energized by the club's involvement in this project.

"The Kiwanis Mission is to 'Serve the Children of the World,'" Shields said. The Kiwanis Club of Aurora strives to uphold that mission and is proud of our ongoing partnership in the *Coats for Kids* program. Through the efforts of this collaboration, we will be able to, once again, purchase, sort, and deliver warm winter coats to children in the Aurora area.

"It is only through this dedicated partnership and through donations from businesses and Aurora area residents that this program has been able to succeed and reach as many children as we do.

"Hopefully, this winter will not be as cold or snowy as last year's but, if it is, the children in the Aurora area will be ready for it with warm coats."

Chartered in 1916, the Kiwanis Club of Aurora was the first club in the Illinois-Eastern Iowa District and the twenty-first club chartered in the world. The Aurora club currently has approximately 105 members.

Current officers of the club for 2015-2016 are Clyde Shields, president; Bill Donnell, president-elect; Joan Kettley-Weinert, secretary; and Kim Granholm, treasurer. The immediate past president of the club is Cheryl Vonhoff.