

FRIENDS INDEED TO THOSE IN NEED

Hundreds help "Stuff the Bus" with gifts for underprivileged children as part of COLTS campaign to benefit Toys for Tots effort.



MICHAEL J. MULLEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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The late David H. Wozniak never forgot the long-ago Christmas Eve when volunteers from the Globe Store showed up at his family's Moosic home with a boxful of toys.

"He was very poor when he was small, and the Globe Store did this thing for underprivileged children," his widow, Sharon Wozniak, recalled. "He always said it was the best Christmas he ever had a child."

On Tuesday, the Old Forge woman honored her husband's memory as she joined hundreds of other people in contributing a toy to the County of Lackawanna Transit System's "Stuff the Bus" drive for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation.

"It's a great thing," Mrs. Wozniak, whose husband died in July at age 56, said after placing a toy helicopter into a collection bin on Courthouse Square. "Every time we see a (Toys for Tots) location, we drop off a toy."

Throughout the day, a steady stream of donors stopped by the COLTS trolley bus along Spruce Street, where they were greeted by a pair of Marines and Santa Claus.

When the drive concluded at 6 p.m., the bus was about two-thirds full, COLTS spokeswoman Gretchen Wintermantel said.

The haul included an estimated 550 to 600 toys of various sorts that filled 13 large cardboard bins and spilled over onto the seats. Among the larger toys were a 20-inch girl's bicycle and a toddler-size hobby horse.

"We were very pleased with the outpouring of support," Ms. Wintermantel said. "People really understand that every child should have a gift on Christmas morning."

Jean Scartelli of Scranton, a mother of two boys, 9



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ABOVE: Santa arranges toys collected during the County of Lackawanna Transit System's "Stuff the Bus" drive to benefit the Marine Corps Toys for Tots campaign on Tuesday in downtown Scranton. **TOP:** Jena Osier makes a donation as Lance Cpl. Jayson Braun looks on. Casey Stevens is at right.

and 15, dropped by with a Yahtzee game.

"I have children, and helping less-fortunate children at Christmas is just a good idea," Ms. Scartelli said.

Cpl. Charles Bowman and Lance Cpl. Jayson Braun,

both assigned to the Wing Support Squadron 472 in Wyoming, were among the Marines who spent part of their day at the toy drive. Both said they were grateful for the public's generosity.

"We've gotten a lot of

toys," Cpl. Bowman said, adding it was his first experience with a Toys for Tots collection. "This is really cool to do something like this, helping out."

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