

April/May 2017

The Christ Child Society  
Naples, Florida

## Red Wagon Gala raises more than \$253,000

**O**n Saturday evening, April 1, the Red Wagons rolled through the Grey Oaks Country Club Ballroom bringing opportunities for new lives to children in need. The Radio Flyer Red Wagon has been a hallmark theme for the Christ Child Society Gala over the years. Held every two years, the Gala provides the funds to support the mission of the Christ Child Society, established to help the 16,000 at-risk children living at or below the poverty level in Collier County. *Cherish the Children* was the theme of this year's Gala. Volunteers and donors came from a wide range of Naples communities all bonded together with a common goal of helping these children achieve a better life. The theme continued through this year's gala, and in the process raised the funds necessary to support the programs sponsored by the Christ Child

Society: The Children's Advocacy Center, Fun Time Academy, Golden Gate Elementary School, Grace Place and Habitat for Humanity and the children they serve.

Radio Flyer wagons filled with layettes, a signature piece of the Christ Child mission, greeted an enthusiastic crowd of supporters and guests as they entered. Strolling vendors encouraged attendees to purchase flashing colored beaded necklaces, quickly filling the room with blinking lights. The necklaces permitted their wearers to participate in an exciting elimination game of *Heads or Tails*. The last person standing was the winner of a chauffeur-driven ride to a lovely dinner at Bleu Provence. Strolling volunteers also sold chances for gift baskets which were beautifully decorated by Donna Eskra and

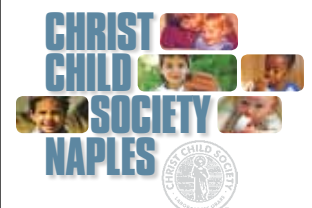
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### Volunteer Hours

Please remember to submit your hours spent volunteering for Christ Child Society either to Shirley Booth at shirleysbooth@aol.com or on our website at christchildnaples.org. These statistics are very important for reporting to the national organization and demonstrating our impact on the community.



Red Wagon Gala guests review raffle baskets and live auction bid items.



### Website

[www.christchildnaples.org](http://www.christchildnaples.org)

### Email

[info@christchildnaples.org](mailto:info@christchildnaples.org)

## Red Wagon Gala Contributors

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### Childhood Matters

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The Christ Child Society of Naples gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the Sponsors, Patrons & Committee Members who made this year's Gala such a success.

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#### Red Wagon Gala Committee

Jane Austermilller  
Cathy Boltz  
Donna Eskra  
Jan Farrell  
Pauline Franklin  
Mary Henrikson  
Maureen Kincaid  
Lynn Koffel  
Becky Kristof  
Stephanie Lohri  
Colleen Mayes  
Martha Moore  
Mary Polizzotto  
Nancy Quinter  
Patty Schimpf  
Mary Angela Smith  
Marilyn Tenzer.

#### Red Wagon Gala Volunteers

Quin & Doris Barret  
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Bill Huesman  
Franny Kain  
Colleen Kaminski  
Mary Mc Intosh  
Mary & Robert Polizzotto  
Ellen Spencer  
Maureen Sperin  
Kathryn Wagner

# Red Wagon Gala



## Early Literacy Learning Model



Mary Polizzotto with ELLM materials in storage.

## Refurbishing Materials ELLM

Christ Child Society Naples has been associated with the Early Literacy Learning Model (ELLM) program since ELLM came to Collier County. Part of the grant given to initiate the ELLM program in Collier County depended on the program having a volunteer program. The ladies of CCSN stepped up and agreed to form a volunteer corps.

In the spring of 2004, 25 ladies agreed to participate in the volunteer program. Each week the ladies were given a bag of materials to use with the children and a guiding script. The volunteers worked with the children to help develop their vocabulary and pre reading skills. The program moved into 50 classes for the 2004-2005 school year.

During each school year since then, the ladies of CCSN have continued to volunteer along with those they recruited, including several husbands and neighbors. Each week we need to distribute about 50 bags of materials to accommodate our volunteers. Of course, that means the same bags need to be cleaned and refurbished so that they are ready for the next school year. If a volunteer

were to participate in all 18 weeks of the ELLM program they would receive 18 bags of materials.

Luckily, we have a committee under the leadership of Terry Schrantz that sees to the task of getting the bags ready for these volunteers. The committee and others they recruit meet a few times each year to go through the used bags and make sure they have all the proper supplies. They also check to make sure that the supplies in each bag are in good shape. They clean them up and then put them back in the storage space that is generously donated to us by NCH. Every six weeks (November to April) the committee members and recruits prepare the bags for distribution. They sort the needed bags into boxes for the in-school volunteers to pick up.

Terry would love to have more committee members and more recruits who can do some random work for her. You can sign up to help by ticking the box: ELLM Materials on your next membership application. You can also contact Terry via email. Her information is in the CCSN directory.

– Mary Polizzotto, Literacy Vice President

## Calendar of Events

### Board Meetings:

Northern Trust Bank  
Liggett Room (formerly  
Keewaydin Room) 3 pm

November 2, 2017  
(Marquesa Social Room)

January 4, 2018

March 1, 2018

April 5, 2018

### General Meetings:

Northern Trust Bank  
Fourth Floor  
Larson Room 3-5 pm

November 14, 2017  
(Naples Women's Club)

January 9, 2018

March 6, 2018

April 10, 2018

### Save the Date:

December 5, 2017  
Christmas Party

January 23, 2018

New Member Tea

February 13, 2018

Founders Luncheon





PO Box 770179  
Naples, FL 34107-0179

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## 2017 Red Wagon Gala

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Lynn Koffel. Each basket was filled with themed prizes. One included a spa outing, another held Irish crystal, one overflowed with Italian delights. There was also a photography package, a night on the town and an April Fool's Day mystery basket.

The beneficiaries of the necklaces, chances and all other proceeds from the Gala are the underprivileged children of Collier County. Funds raised at the Red Wagon Gala support the work of 200 plus members. Volunteers knit or crochet blankets that are included in the layettes distributed to new low-income mothers along with clothing, diapers, pacifiers and parenting books. So far, over 10,000 layettes and 30,000 copies of *Bringing Baby Home* in English, Spanish and Creole have been distributed. Christ Child volunteers also promote literacy by working with children in more than 40 Head Start classrooms in Collier County and by providing books and classroom supplies for children who otherwise would not have them. In addition to providing safe beds for infants in need, Christ Child Society members also provide beds and bedding for the children of Habitat for Humanity homes. The Grace Place Children's Chorus, directed by Rebecca

Richardson, performed *Somewhere over the Rainbow* for the guests and captured the essence of the mission of the Christ Child Society. This was a reminder to the attendees of the importance of the Gala for raising funds to provide the children of Collier County with an opportunity for a future life that might not otherwise be possible.

Co-chairs Vivienne Adams and Kathy Clark and their committee (page 3) orchestrated a beautiful evening of fun and fund raising. In addition to the gift baskets, there was a live auction including a superb wine collection, a Paul Arsenault original painting, a seven night stay in a fabulous home on the Irish coast and one for the California coast, a chef's dinner for eight at a beautiful Bay Colony Shores home, and a golf experience package at six renowned Naples courses.

Bigham Jewelers, a major Gala sponsor, donated a catered luncheon and a jewelry shopping spree for six for the live auction, as well as a raffle prize that included a Cable Classics bracelet, a Waverly bracelet, a cushion link bracelet and Cable earrings, all from David Yurman. *Fund the Need* brought in additional donations. Thanks to the many volunteers and guests, the 2017 Red Wagon Gala was the most successful ever, raising a best-ever total of \$253,000!