

Medina County Common Pleas Court

PROBATE AND JUVENILE DIVISIONS

93 PUBLIC SQUARE, ROOM 104, MEDINA, OHIO 44256

Kevin W. Dunn
Judge

MEDIA RELEASE

December 4, 2013

Court and Community Members Team Up to Create Build-A-Bear Stuffed Animals for Special Needs Children

Through a collaborative effort with the Court, the Medina Sunrise Rotary, volunteers and the Strongsville-Southpark Build-A-Bear store, 160 bears are dressed, packaged and ready to be delivered before the holiday.



MEDINA – Judge Kevin Dunn hosted his first Build-A-Bear assembly night December 3, 2013, teaming up with the Medina Sunrise Rotary, the Court’s Juvenile Community Service program, volunteers and members of the Build-A-Bear team.

In total, 160 stuffed teddy bears, dogs and rabbits were created in just over one hour for preschoolers attending the Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities Achievement Center, children placed in the Medina County foster system and children served by the Help Me Grow program.

“This is a great program,” said Will Koran, a Sunrise Rotarian Chair and Superintendent of the Medina County Schools’ Educational Service Center. “Children are the focus of our rotary so it was a perfect fit; not only to help the young children and provide them with bears, but to show community service workers they can help others who may be less fortunate.”

The Build-A-Bear program, which started in 2007, has steadily increased the number of bears provided each year. Through donations from the Medina Sunrise Rotary, the Walmart Foundation, the Strongsville-Southpark Build-A-Bear and the Juvenile Court donation fund, 40 more bears will be delivered to children this year than in 2012.

The bears arrived pre-stuffed with packed outfits thanks to members of the Strongsville Build-A-Bear store. Volunteers chose two bears at a time and inserted hearts before six “HelpBears” stitched them up to be dressed. The bears, dressed in a sports, career or holiday-themed outfit, will be delivered to the

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Contact: Kristyn Soltis, 330.764.8751

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children Monday, December 16 at Montville Township Town Hall and Thursday, December 19 at the Achievement Center.

“It’s great to have this community collaboration,” said Dr. Jane Manes, Director of Early Intervention Services at the Achievement Center. “We feel privileged to have this here. The looks on the children’s faces when they receive their bear is just wonderful.”

Judge Dunn added that he is happy to see different groups in the community give their time and energy to help make a contribution.

“I saw a lot of positivity during the build,” Judge Dunn said. “I saw some of the community service kids’ faces light up. I bet they would agree this is better than doing yard work or cleaning.”