



November 18, 2015

GIANNA SUTCLIFFE WISH DRIVE

Young Middletown Resident Coordinating a Toy Drive to Benefit Children in the Hospital

Middletown, CT, – Mayor Daniel T. Drew is proud to highlight the activities of Gianna Sutcliffe, a seven year old resident of Middletown. Gianna is organizing the Gianna Sutcliffe Wish Drive, a toy drive for Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital. She was inspired to do this after a difficult situation occurred in her own life, which motivated her to give back to others who might not be as fortunate as her and her family.

Last year, Gianna decided that she wanted to help children who are in the hospital over the holidays, and her mother helped her arrange a toy drive. This will be Gianna's second year collecting items for Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital. Gianna and her mother chose Yale, since her mother was a surgical patient there in 2014 & 2015. Gianna and her brother were also both patients of Yale Immunology Pediatric Doctors and recipients of items in The Toy Closet, one of the organizations within Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital that Gianna is collecting for. The goal of the Toy Closet Program is to provide pediatric patients with comfort, enjoyment and support while they are receiving care at Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital. Toys are given out 365 days a year. More information can be found at: <https://www.ynhh.org/about/community/auxiliary/toy-closet-program.aspx>. Gianna is also collecting toys for Child Life at Yale-New Haven Children's Hospital. Child Life helps children cope with the adjustments of being in a hospital by providing a variety of play experiences. Through play, child life specialists help facilitate the emotional and social growth of children during the crisis of illness. Items donated help children with therapies and other needs. More information can be found at: <https://www.ynhh.org/childrens-hospital/services/support-services/child-life.aspx>.

Gianna has set up collection sites at various locations, including a drop box at the Middletown Municipal Building, in the first floor lobby (245 Dekoven Drive in Middletown). Other drop locations include Green Street Arts Center in Middletown, L Salon in Hamden, the Irish American Club, and AA&A Precious Metal.

On November 28, Gianna will be in person collecting toys from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm at Walmart on Berlin Road in Cromwell. Gianna will also be hosting Lunch with Santa at The Irish American Community Center in East Haven on November 29, from 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm. The club is located at 9 Venice Place in East Haven. The Irish American Community has donated three hours of time for the event, and radio celebrity John "Cadillac" Saville will DJ the event. Other entertainment will include balloon animals, face painting, carolers, and a visit from Santa, along with raffles and crafts. All that is asked is that a new unwrapped toy or item is brought in to attend the event. Lists of the items requested by Yale can be found at the above links. Please contact 860-316-7943 with any questions.

Gianna's family is very proud of her creative and generous spirit, noting that she has a very warm heart and always seeks to help others. Mayor Drew commented, "I am always very moved when I see anyone giving back to the community, helping other who face challenging situation. Gianna's young age makes her generosity particularly impressive and inspiring."

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