MONROE COUNTY PARTNERS WITH PIRATE TOY FUND FOR TOY GIVEAWAY

Monroe County Executive Cheryl Dinolfo and Gary Smith, Founder and Executive Director of the Pirate Toy Fund today hosted a toy giveaway for children in need at the Blue Cross Arena. Over 3,000 children were invited to attend and receive a toy that was generously donated by Monroe County residents.

“I’m proud to join the Pirate Toy Fund this holiday season so that children in our community can experience the joy of receiving a gift,” said Dinolfo. “Every day, I am so impressed by the spirit of County residents and their collective will to help each other. Once again, our community has demonstrated the strength of its generosity and the dedication of its charitable organizations. I want to thank Gary for his partnership in this toy fund and for his many years of bringing smiles to the faces of our young people.”

Gary Smith, affectionately known in Monroe County as “Gary the Happy Pirate,” collects thousands of toys every year for the Pirate Toy Fund. Donated toys come primarily from generous County residents, and are then distributed to children in need.

“This is a special event near and dear to me that I've been wanting to do for almost 10 years. With the help of the County and our sponsors, we've made it a reality. Hopefully this will become an annual holiday tradition bringing smiles to children for years to come,” said Gary the Happy Pirate, Founder and Executive Director of the Pirate Toy Fund.

The Pirate Toy Fund was founded in 1995 by local children’s entertainer “Gary the Happy Pirate.” It collects donated toys and distributes them to children suffering from illness, tragedy or children with special needs. Since its inception, the Pirate Toy Fund has distributed nearly 250,000 toys and continues to pursue new avenues to expand its mission.

The Monroe County Department of Human Services (DHS) helped organize the toy giveaway, sending invitations to 3,000 children who otherwise may not receive gifts this holiday season. This is the first year this toy giveaway has taken place.

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