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Home Page

Cover Article

Reflections

Business  
Spotlight

Been There  
Now What

Laughing  
at Life

Gourmet  
Cooking

Kids Crafts  
& Puzzles

Health  
& Fitness

Men's Issues

Places Of  
Worship

Monthly  
Meetings

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Advertise  
With Us

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By Mail

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### Harley-Davidson Dealership And Riders Give Back To The Community

By Daniel Casciato



They are one of the North Hills' best-known hometown business success stories; however operating a successful business isn't enough satisfaction. Charity work is as much a part of their lives as their successful Spirit Harley-Davidson and they relish every chance to give back to the community.

"We feel fortunate to be where we are and the township has been wonderful to us over the years," says Honey Lentz, general manager for Spirit and daughter of the founders.

"If you're in the position to help someone else, you should do it," says her father, Terry Sanford. "Everyone should try to do something for someone else. Every little bit helps. What goes around comes around. Someday, you may need help from someone."

It is from that generous attitude that Spirit Harley-Davidson developed a corporate donations program that gives back to the community that has supported their growth and prosperity. Their "Community Spirit" program focuses on the various needs of their community, including children and charitable organizations.

Recipients of their Community Spirit program include: Make-A-Wish Foundation, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Spina Bifida Association of America, Syria Shriners Motor Corps, Glenn Avenue Preschool, Pittsburgh Spirit Fastpitch Softball, Shaler School District, Soldiers & Sailors, T-shirts for the Troops (Nebraska), POW MIA and War Veterans.

"We try to stay active in the community as far as the children go," says Lentz. "We extend our sponsorship for all the little leagues, softball and youth hockey leagues in Hampton, Richland and Fox Chapel areas."

Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh is a charity which is near and dear to their hearts. Last October at the Children's Annual Gala, they donated a black 2005 VRSCA V-Rod(R) motorcycle which sold for \$100,000 in an auction.

"Their participation and support was phenomenal and it was definitely their donation that was a highlight of our live auction," says DeAnn Marshall, Executive-Vice President of Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Foundation. "It was by far the most successful live auction item we had that evening. It also added an element of fun to our evening."



Last summer, along with an organization of retired narcotics officers from Cincinnati, Spirit brought in computers for the children in Children's Cancer Unit. Additionally, they donated a "motorcycle" rocking horse – a wooden horse on rockers – to keep at the unit for the children to enjoy.



"We just do it for the children," says Sanford. "It's nice to put a smile on their faces."

This fall Spirit begins their 19th Annual Toy Drive. Each year they ask their riders to donate a new, unwrapped toy for a needy child. This cause benefits the U.S. Marines Corps' annual Toys for Tots drive. The riders who donate receive a commemorative pin.

"It's a great gathering every year," says police officer Jack Reiber, a Harley rider who has been donating to Toys for Tots since Spirit began their tradition. "We all try to support them as best we can every year."

Reiber isn't surprised at how many causes Spirit Harley-Davidson becomes involved in.

"They appreciate how much they have been blessed," he says. "They would do anything for this community. They appreciate where they are now and want to give back."

Reiber said it's not only management, but many of the Harley riders who are also giving something to charity. "Sometimes many riders are unfairly stereotyped for being rough but that's certainly not the case. Most riders are businessmen and women and have families. Charity is important to them."

Another of Lentz's favorite charities is the Animal Rescue League. In conjunction with KISS 96.1 FM, Spirit sponsors the "Pet of the Week" program every Tuesday morning at 9:00 which highlights a different pet looking for a home.

"Their support has been extremely beneficial to the animals," says Mark Berton, communications director for the Animal Rescue League. "Featuring the pet of the week has also provided a showcase for all of our animals. We appreciate everything they've done to support us."

"Every animal that has been put on the air has been adopted," says Lentz, a cat owner herself. "This is something that hits home with all of us, being that we all have pets. We love animals."

Due to the awareness of the program, Berton says that the Animal Rescue League's "Pet of the Week" page receives 3,000-4,000 more hits than any other page on the site. Spirit has also donated blankets, beds and toys for the animals.

Sometimes their charitable giving is spontaneous. After Shaler got hit with the flood last fall, Spirit donated \$5,000 in food and beverages to the workers helping the victims. It was originally intended to go to an open house/customer appreciation day they were hosting.

"We thought it was a much better cause to donate to the workers," says Lentz.

Whether it's pets, children or another worthy cause, she says they are always glad to help.

"With so many problems with our economy, we value the importance of giving something back to our community," she says. "It makes us feel good to do our part."

Sanford agrees. "Helping someone not only makes them feel great, but it leaves you with a great feeling as well."

For more information about Spirit Harley-Davidson and their charity work, visit [www.spiritharley.com](http://www.spiritharley.com).