

# Jaycees out in force to help feed the needy

## Naperville food basket program kicks off

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Max Behna, a 14-year-old Naperville North freshman, was handing out little shopping lists to customers as they entered the Jewel Food Store at Ogden Avenue and Washington Street.

Behna and his five fellow volunteers, all members of the high school Key Club, were working Saturday on the Naperville Jaycees annual Food Baskets program.

"It's helping out people, especially the needy," Behna said, explaining why he was willing to trade a chance to sleep late on a cold morning for a two-hour stint as a food drive collector.

"Before they enter the store, we ask them to donate, for example, a can of soup. When they leave, they donate," said Behna.

By 9:45 a.m., the donation box was beginning to fill up with canned stews and soups and boxes of potato flakes, oatmeal and turkey stuffing. A box for cash donations also was beginning to fill up.

A woman rushed out of the store, headed for her car. She paused and handed Behna a large box of Chocolate Lucky Charms cereal.

"We're trying to get a variety of different foods," he said, thanking her.

Every year, the Naperville Jaycees collect food and distribute it to needy families during the holidays, said Cinnamon Bergeron, the Jaycees member coordinating the event.

Bergeron said food basket recipients are referred to the Jaycees through both Naperville and Lisle township offices.

Food was collected at four Naperville Jewel stores Saturday, she said. More food will be collected at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church today and at schools throughout the city.

The food will be sorted and packed at donated warehouse space on Ogden Avenue, Bergeron said. It will be delivered to more than 400 Naperville families Nov. 19, just in time for Thanksgiving Day. Bergeron said hundreds of volunteers, including Key Club members and Girl Scouts, are helping.

Nearly every customer who exited the Jewel at Aurora Road and Ogden Avenue stopped to donate food to Jaycee John Jones, who was manning the table outside the store with his two 6-year-old daughters, Emma and Lexi.

A shopper dropped off two bags of food for the food drive.

"Girls, we've got more to sort," Jones told his daughters.

"I try to show them to help other people," said Jones. "Living in Naperville, you don't realize there are poor people living in the area."