

Sophie Meinhardt Memorial Scholarship 2011

By Luke Striebich

The Best Christmas Ever

It was November 2009, and all my family could think about was the approaching Christmas and Jesus' birthday. We were in high spirits and we were in a great mood all the time. As it was approaching, my two sisters and I started to think about other families that had kids just like us, but didn't have enough money to buy even one gift for each other. They needed the money for food or shelter, things that we take for granted. We felt really bad and we wanted to help, so we asked our parents if we could have less presents this year and use that money to buy presents for a family that couldn't afford nice gifts. They were all for it, so my family and my aunt, uncle, and two cousins decided to get down to business.

About a week or two before we had decided to do this, I had won \$50 from a lottery ticket my parents gave me. I asked my mom if I could use it to buy gifts and she was all for it.

There were three kids and a mom in the family that we were "assigned" to. The kids were two, six, and eight years old. We hadn't met the children before, but we knew that even though they were a little poorer than us, they were the exact same on the inside.

Now that we knew a little about the family, we could start our Christmas shopping, which we were all eager to do. Since we either had been or were their age, we knew what they would like. For the 2 year old, we decided on some adorable pink clothes and a couple baby toys that would help her learn and provide hours of fun that she might not have gotten if we didn't help her.

I enjoyed shopping for the six year old boy the most. My cousin and I were in charge of getting his gifts. We figured that he would enjoy the things that we loved when we were six like sport toys and games. My cousin and I thought that

a Nerf football was a must. What boy doesn't like a football? There were also games that we had loved and an outfit or two.

The eight year old would definitely like what all eight year old girls would enjoy, like: Barbies, board games and clothes. This is exactly what we got her.

When we finished shopping, we were so proud of what we had done that we went home and were ready to wrap the gifts right away. They were wrapped so quickly that we surprised ourselves when we finished so fast. Everyone just couldn't wait until the Sunday before Christmas when we finally got to meet the family and give them the presents we had so beautifully wrapped.

When the day finally came, which felt like months of waiting, we were on our way to their house. It was an older apartment in a poorer part of town, so we felt a little afraid. I felt really bad for the people who weren't as fortunate as us and couldn't feel the safeness and security that I felt where I lived.

When we finally arrived, we were invited into the apartment and met the family. The kids were just starting to wake up from all sleeping on the floor and at that moment, I felt so blessed for everything that I had like a bed, house, and food to eat every day. The kids looked happily at the gifts and at that moment, everything that I had done for them was way past worthwhile. I felt about the happiest that I had ever felt in my whole life.

Doing things like this that make other people happy, can make you ten times happier than getting or doing something for yourself. You can do large things like this to help other people, but what you should always do are the little, everyday things that can brighten up someone's day a whole lot.