

November, 2007 edition

T.H.A.N.K.S. Inc.

Tailgaters Helping Aid Needy Kids' Spirits

President: Tim Russeau Vice President: Brian Trombley Treasurer: Steve Bolster Secretary: Heidi Bolster
Trustee: Harold Russeau Trustee: Jon Madden Trustee: Melanie Davis

Winterfest Planning Underway.

The dates for this year's Winterfest will be Friday, February 15th – Sunday, February 17th. As in the past years, we have a variety of different events planned. While events are subject to change, here are just a few of the activities that will be included in this year's event:

- ✓ Softball Tournament
- ✓ Friday Night Steak Dinner
- ✓ Saturday Night Spaghetti Dinner
- ✓ Sunday Morning Breakfast
- ✓ Live Music & entertainment
- ✓ Refreshments
- ✓ Raffles
- ✓ 50/50
- ✓ Gambling
- ✓ Carnival style games for the kids
- ✓ Texas Hold'em tournament
- ✓ Team Fundraising Competition
- ✓ Finger printing and ID for children
- ✓ Euchre Tournament

Look for future mailings that will include dates and times for each of the events listed above. If there is an event you would like to see us have that isn't listed please contact our office. We're always looking for new ideas.

Volunteers needed.

People constantly approach us wanting to know how they can help. Although we have a great group of individuals who constantly volunteer at our events, the need for volunteers is never greater than it is during our winterfest. This event requires a small army of volunteers each and every year. From the set up of the facilities, to the teardown, this event requires a massive

Amount of help. If you are able to help in any way, please give us a call. We are already in the planning stages for the event. Help is needed setting up, advertising, collecting raffle items, making signs, dealing cards, working the kitchen, running errands, and the list goes on and on.... If you have a "special" skill that could benefit our organization or are just looking for an excuse to get out of that "Honey-Do-List" at home, please consider volunteering!

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. However, as the event draws closer, more meetings are scheduled. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please see one of the T.H.A.N.K.S. staff, or contact our office. We would love to have you!!

If you don't have time to attend meetings, but just want to help out on weekends when you're available, please consider donating some time to help us work on the pavilion where our event takes place. Several times a year, a group of people gets together and put up and takes down the panels that help to contain the heat during our Winterfest. They also do annual updates to the pavilion to make sure that things are kept in top shape for our events. If this sounds like something that may interest you, please let us know, and we'll be sure to contact you when we're working on our pavilion.

Stuffed Animal Drive.

We wanted to take the opportunity to thank all of you who have so generously donated your stuffed animals to our organization

throughout the past couple of years. Your response this past year has been absolutely amazing!!! We are amazed at what a success our stuffed animal drive has become. The crowd at the Christmas in Ida parade can't get enough! If you would still like to donate your animals, don't worry; we'll continue to accept donations throughout the year. Thanks again to everyone who donated!!!

Donations Needed.

Since T.H.A.N.K.S. Inc. is a non-profit organization we depend on the generosity of both personal and corporate donations to keep our organization afloat. Without your help we wouldn't be able to put on all the events that make it possible for us to help so many families.

Our organization is completely funded by the public. All of the money we raise each and every year comes from your generous donations and from the money we raise at our fundraisers.

In the past several years since T.H.A.N.K.S. was created, our name has become more recognizable throughout the community. There are a number of families, all very deserving, that are requesting our help. Quite honestly, we have been a little overwhelmed with the response. We want to be able to help all families in one way or another. Your donations make it possible for us to provide support to these families.

Please keep in mind that this is the season of giving. Please consider giving a donation. Keep in mind that since T.H.A.N.K.S. is a 501(c)(3) organization, your donation is tax deductible.

Christmas Drive

T.H.A.N.K.S. will be sponsoring a drive to help our families with the holidays. If you would be interested in helping us out with this please let us know. We will be putting together a wish list from each of our families and they should be available in the near future. If you're unable to go out and shop

from one of our wish lists, please consider sending a monetary donation, or even a gift card. Please help us make this holiday season a little more joyous for our families. For more information please contact our office.

Christmas in Ida

T.H.A.N.K.S. will once again be participating in the Christmas in Ida parade this year. This will be our 6th year entering the parade, and we are proud to say that each year we have won a prize in the float contest! We have big plans for our float this year, and we hope that you will all come out and watch this amazing scene of floats covered in Christmas lights go down downtown Ida. This year's event will be Saturday December 1st. It is always held the first weekend of December. If you have not had the opportunity to come out to the parade, we encourage you to make plans this year. There are always a lot of vendors lining the streets of Ida selling arts & crafts, and plenty of good food. The Ida Civic Club does a great job each year with this event. Come on out and enjoy the fun, there is always a nice fireworks show and what child doesn't want to see "SANTA"!!!! As previously mentioned we will be accepting stuffed animal and candy donations to hand out during our parade.

Candy Donations

Each year T.H.A.N.K.S. enters its float not only in the Christmas in Ida parade, but also the Dundee parade and Newport parade. Between the three parades, we go through over 100 pounds of candy!! Because of this, we are asking for your help. Anybody donating a minimum of \$25 in candy or money, will be listed as a sponsor on this year's float. This is a great way to get your work or business involved. Please contact our office if you're interested in donating.

Dinner/Dance Update.

This year's Prime Rib and Chicken Dinner/Dance was quite a success. We had a record number of people in attendance,

and all had a good time. The doors opened at 5:00 allowing people access to a full salad bar, complete with homemade chicken noodle soup. Dinner was served from 6:00 – 8:00, and people filled up on prime rib, chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, green bean casserole, and rolls. Of course there was just enough room left for some of the WONDERFUL desserts that were donated by a number of our volunteers. Thank you to Tony Vasquez from TV's DJ and Karaoke for doing a great job (again) for us. We also want to thank members of the Monroe County Chapter of the Gold Wing for coming out with a large group and supporting us. In total we were able to raise approximately \$2000.00 at this year's event. Thanks to Harold Russeau and all the other volunteers who work so hard to make this event a success.

Believe

Believe in your heart that something wonderful is about to happen.

Love your life.

Believe in your powers, and your potential,
And in your own goodness.

Wake every morning with the awe of just
being alive.

Discover in each day the magnificent,
awesome beauty of the world.

Explore and embrace life in yourself,
and in everyone you see each day.

Reach within to find your own special being.

Amaze yourself and arouse those around
you to the potential of each new day.

Don't be afraid to admit that you are less
than perfect; this is the essence of your

humanity.

Let those who love you help.

Trust enough to be able to take.

Look with hope to the horizon of each new
day, for today is all we truly have.

Live this day like it were your last.

Let a little sun out as well as in.

Create your own rainbows.

Be open to all possibilities.

Always believe in Miracles.

Special Thanks & Well Wishes.

-Well wishes go out to the *Eberhart family*. We are praying for continued good health for Ethan.

-Well wishes go out to the *Epaminonda family*. As you get ready to face an emotional and heart-breaking anniversary, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

-Well wishes go out to the *Smithers family*, as they too will soon face an emotional anniversary. We continue to keep you in our thoughts and prayers.

-Well wishes go out to the *Fricke Family, Martin Family, Bowe Family, and the Foland Family*. May all of you have a very happy holiday season full of lots of memories and laughter.

-Well wishes go out to Anna Trombley's dad Earl as he recovers from heart problems. We wish you a full recovery.

-Congratulations go out to T.H.A.N.K.S. volunteers *Del & Marge Serra*, who recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Thank you for all your support over the years.

-Congratulations go out to T.H.A.N.K.S. volunteers *Scott & Sandi Steinke* on the birth of their son, Callum Russell-Thomas.

As always there are numerous people we

need to thank. Thank you to *Ed Clock*, who once again has let T.H.A.N.K.S. use his barn to house our float while our volunteers work on getting it ready for the parade. Thank you to the *F.O.P.* for the use of their hall for our Dinner/Dance. And to the many, many volunteers who continue to keep T.H.A.N.K.S. going.

My View.

What is courage? The dictionary defines it as "*the quality of mind or spirit that enables a person to face difficulty, danger, pain, etc., without fear; bravery.*" I think this is a pretty accurate definition, but this is what courage is to me...

Courage is Melanie finding out she was pregnant days after her husband died of cancer, and giving birth to Jamie on what would have been her husband's birthday. Courage is finding out right before Jamie's second birthday that not only did she lose a husband to cancer, but now her youngest would be fighting for her life after being diagnosed with brain cancer. Courage is fighting that battle with Jamie, losing her, and still being active with T.H.A.N.K.S. and helping other families who have children battling this horrible disease.

Courage is Eileen being told that there was nothing more that could be done to save her son Ethan's life, but refusing to give up. Courage is Eileen seeking out alternative treatments even though a lot of people don't agree with them. Courage is 8 years later, still having her son, and teaching other people about the benefits of healthy eating.

Courage is Angela sitting by Tabatha's bedside day after day in the ICU, praying for a miracle, but realizing that it may not come. Courage was having the strength to let Tabatha know that if it was hard, or too much that she could stop fighting and that although she would miss her like crazy, she understood...then holding her in her arms as she took her last breath.

Courage is Amy & Gary allowing Megan to

start kindergarten with a broken foot, and missing hair...knowing kids can be cruel, and knowing that any sickness Megan gets could cause major set-backs in her treatment...but realizing how important it was to Megan to be "normal".

Courage is Nicole & Barney researching Jared's cancer and realizing that their only option was to turn down 'traditional' treatments and seek out alternative. Courage is being turned down by over 20 facilities to treat Jared, but not giving up until they found somewhere that would treat him.

Courage is Joan & Daryl not knowing what the future holds for Brandi. Her diagnosis is so rare, that they have nothing to compare her life or treatment to.

Courage is a 13-year-old girl in the ICU that was in the last stages of cancer, realizing that she wasn't going to live much longer...asking the Doctor to sit with her and write down the wishes for her funeral so that her parents wouldn't have to deal with that when the time come.

Most of all, courage is these families continuing to live life....

Written by: Heidi Bolster

Our Dedicated Volunteers:

We are so fortunate to have some GREAT volunteers. It is absolutely amazing each and every year how many people come out to help us...and we are so appreciative to all of you; but I'd like to take this time to recognize some of them that always go above and beyond what could possibly be expected of them to keep this organization going.

-Harold and Angie Russeau: They have volunteered their home (and now their barn) to hold meetings every month. They cook dinner for everyone who comes out to our meetings every month and do so much for this organization. You can bet that there

isn't a function or work detail that they aren't involved with. We could never repay them for all their sacrifices they make to this organization.

-Heidi and Steve Bolster: Where would we be without Heidi? She does so much for this organization!!! She has been the secretary of this group since the beginning. Her countless hours in the office doing this newsletter, making copies and flyers, working with all our families and finding time in there somewhere to raise 2-beautiful young children...it tires me out just talking about it!!! Steve works behind the scenes much of the time assisting Heidi or watching the kids so she can work on T.H.A.N.K.S. stuff. We owe them both a huge debt of gratitude!

-Brian and Anna Trombley: Brian has been the V.P. of this organization since the beginning. He is always helping us in any way he can. He and Anna both are always working at all of our events, they spend countless hours volunteering and promoting our group.

-Tommy Manwaring, Jon Madden, Rob Branham, and John Cosby: We are very lucky to have these guys on our side. Whenever we need something, you can bet that these guys are involved in some way. They give up countless weekends to our organization each and every year. I'd hate to guess at the number of hours they volunteer to us each year.

-Tom Trombley, Tim Goins, and Steve Trombley: Some of the best guys you'll ever meet. They have shoveled more stone and moved more snow at our Winterfest than most people could ever imagine. They give up their weekends and even take personal days from work to make sure the work gets done.

We could go on for another page or two talking about all our great volunteers. These people are the backbone of this fine organization and we owe them all a huge THANK YOU for all their sacrifices. There are many more that need and deserve some

recognition...maybe we'll save more for a future newsletter. Thank you again to everyone who helps us, we really do appreciate all your help. Your dedication to our organization makes it possible for us to help so many..."THANK YOU ALL"!!!!!!

Printer Cartridges Needed.

T.H.A.N.K.S. Inc. is collecting printer and copier cartridges. We recently enrolled in a program that will give us money for each printer and copier cartridges that we send in. This is yet another way to raise money to help much needed families. Please keep us in mind the next time you're cartridges need replacing.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

As our 2007 efforts come to an end, we'd like to thank EVERYONE who helped out this past year. It takes a lot of dedicated people who give up a lot of their personal time (much of the time on weekends) to make this organization survive. On behalf of the board of directors, we'd like to thank everyone once again for their continued support. We hope that everyone has a safe and happy holiday season. We hope to see everyone soon.



How to contact us.

There are several ways to contact us with any questions, comments, or concerns. Our office phone number is (734) 269-6071. Our E-mail address is thanks_incorp@hotmail.com. Our web page address is www.thanksinc.com. Our mailing address is 1207 W. Albain Monroe, MI 48161-9520. Please feel free to contact us at any time.