

Shop with A Cop

In October, Officer Dan Weegar requested the Newark Police Dept. initiate a “No Shave November” in which each participating Newark Police Department and Animal Control member agreed to donate \$100 to assist a local family that had been seriously impacted by crime. During this time, Newark Wal-Mart manager Pearl Miller and HR leader, Trudi MacBride reached out and began to collaborate with Sgt. Nicholas Dapolito to start a community wide event, “Shop with a Cop”. Pearl had participated in the event while a manager in Gates, NY. With assistance from Mark Miller, Director of Grant Services & Special Programs, for the Newark School District, a WalMart Giving Grant of \$3000.00 was obtained to support the program. The school district, in conjunction with Mike Crespo of the Youth Advocacy Program of Wayne County, identified families that could use assistance at this time of year. As this worthy endeavor gathered steam, “No Shave November” for the Newark Police Department was extended through December with another \$100 donation and Newark Police Members volunteering their time to participate in “Shop with a Cop”. The Newark Police Department was able to raise through the “No Shave” program \$2800.00

On Saturday, December 14, 2019 Christmas came early for 16 Newark families and 43 children at the Newark Wal-Mart. These families were able to spend the morning with Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, Buddy the Elf and his Elf helper shopping with members of the Newark Police Department and the Youth Advocacy Program of Wayne County. The children had the opportunity to create their own stockings, enjoy doughnuts, juice and pizza as they participated in this community outreach program “Shop with a Cop”. The program allowed each child to have a \$125 in Wal-Mart gift cards and a police officer to shop with. While “Shop with a Cop” was in progress many shoppers made immediate donations to the program, raising an additional \$220.

Officer Dan Weegar said that “Newark Officers were honored to be able to give back to the children of the community. Our agency was able to donate \$2800, combining that with the WalMart Giving Grant and event donations to total \$6000 to assist 43 children in Newark to buy items that they need and want. The morning was spent getting to know the children in the community, building bonds and relationships that should extend well into their adulthood. The Newark Police Department feels very strongly about community policing, knowing the children and adults in our area and want to be seen as an agency that can be used in many different ways than just law enforcement.”

Sgt. Nick Dapolito said “While walking through the store, seeing their smiling faces and watching the excitement of the children as they were going up and down the aisles, picking out their favorite toys, games or electronics and seeing them dancing around the store holding what they picked out was really rewarding and fulfilling feeling. My fellow officers expressed the amount of fun and enjoyment they had while shopping with the children was immense. I was proud to participate in this program and I believe it brought officers closer with not only the children but their families as well in the community we proudly serve. All the members said they were looking forward to continuing this events in years to come.”