

Happy Joe's Hosts 39th Annual Quad City Special Needs Children's Party at iWireless Center

Written by Johanna Smith

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Bettendorf, IA – For the 39th consecutive year, Happy Joe's team members will host special needs children from around the Quad Cities at the 2011 Quad City Special Needs Children's Party to be held December 6th and 7th at the iWireless Center. Parties will be hosted at 9:30am and 11:30am on each day respectively. Both Santa and Happy Joe Whitty will be on hand to spread holiday cheer and delight to special needs children. All Quad City area Happy Joe's stores will be participating including Bettendorf, Davenport, East Moline, Eldridge, Moline and Rock Island. Since the first special needs party in 1972, Happy Joe's has hosted nearly 155,000 special needs children at parties throughout the 59 store chain.

"The holiday season is a great opportunity to reflect on the past year and continue the tradition our father started 39 years ago," says Kristel Whitty-Ersan, Director of Marketing. "However, without the support of local partners like Pepsi, Quad City's Optimist Clubs and the iWireless Center, this two day event would not be possible. It is also thanks to numerous volunteers including Burke Corp., Connie McGowan, city and state police volunteers, and other volunteers too numerous to mention, that we are able to continue this event, making it bigger and better each year."

Before opening his first Happy Joe's Pizza & Ice Cream Parlor in the Village of East Davenport, founder Joe Whitty was nearly fired from another pizza chain for sponsoring a party for a group of special needs children without first checking with his boss. In 1972, on the eve his first restaurant's opening night, he invited a local priest to bless his business and promised that if he could make enough money to feed his family, he would give something back to the community. After just a few weeks in business, people were waiting out the door. True to his word, Joe shut down the restaurant one day a year to have a party for those less fortunate, and required his franchisees to do the same.

All media are welcome to join our team members at the iWireless Center on December 6th and

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7th at 9:30am and 11:30am each day. The Milan Happy Joe's will host an additional party at the Horace Mann Early Learning Center in Rock Island, IL on December 13th at noon.

For more information, contact Johanna Smith at [760-458-1218](tel:760-458-1218) or at [Johanna M Smith@hotmail.com](mailto:Johanna.M.Smith@hotmail.com)

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