

KEEP IT
INDIE CATUR
For the Holidays

Decatur
Terrific
Thursdays

Get Your Shop On!
December 6 • 13 • 20
 Look for Santa as you make your way around Decatur!



You-Know-Who Checks out the trends at Squash Blossom 113 E. Court Square

VisitDecaturGeorgia.com
 Advertising funded by the Decatur Craft Beer Festival.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Amy's party still going strong after 18 years

BY H.M. CAULEY

It's the season of Christmas trees, carols and manger scenes, though it's not one Amy Zeide identifies with. But the religious school director at Congregation B'nai Torah in Sandy Springs appreciates that there are many who won't experience the joy of the season without some help.

So, as she's done since 1995, she's throwing a festive holiday party this weekend for about 750 guests.

Amy's Holiday Party, as the annual gala is called, works with more than 30 foster care centers, homeless shelters and social service agencies to make the holidays memorable for some of the neediest families in the metro area. The event at the De-foor Centre on Atlanta's west side features dancing, games, arts and crafts, food and photos with Santa. The highlight of the party is each family's visit to a toy room stocked with more than 2,000 items, from which they can select two.

"I started this when I was 12, and I'm 30 years old, so this has been part of my life for more than half my lifetime," said Zeide, who lives in Dunwoody. "It even kept going while I was in college, even though it bounced around to different places for a few years."

Zeide was inspired to start the holiday event when she saw a story about a



SARA SPEERT

From left, Ashley Katzenstein, Jaclyn Turner, Lauren Siegel, Lauren A. Siegel, Ariel Siegel, Tara Kornblum, Amy Zeide and Hope Goldberg get into the holiday spirit.

local shelter that was robbed of the toys it had collected.

"It was so heartbreaking that I took my own money and helped replace some of them," she recalled. "The next year for my Bat Mitzvah, I used the \$400 I received as gifts to throw my own holiday party for 25 kids. That's when I realized there was nothing happening on a community level like this that had young people supporting it."

Two years ago, Zeide launched the nonprofit, Creating Community Connections, to support the holiday event and to provide additional services to social agencies around the metro area.

"Our goal is to partner with agencies to do things for their clients or whomever they serve," she said. "For instance, we planted a community garden at the Nicholas House shelter, hosted a teen dance with agencies that cater to teens, and held a fall festival with the Atlanta Police Department's Police Athletic League that had more than 200 kids attend a Halloween celebration."

The nonprofit also works to get teens

from around Atlanta in touch with volunteer opportunities.

"Part of that is having a leadership training program for 25 teens every year," she said. "Many of them recruit for us from their high schools, youth groups and service clubs all over the city."

Lining up volunteers is the easiest part of running a nonprofit, Zeide said. "The most difficult part is that the entire agency, supported just by donations and sponsorships, is run by myself and two contract employees," she said. "But without the volunteers, we wouldn't be able to give out lots of toys each year."

This year, one of the youngest volunteers will be Zeide's 4-year-old, Jeremy.

"He has really started to take an interest, and this will be his first party," she

said. "We've talked about what it means to give back to people who don't have as much as we do, and he's ready to make sure others have toys they can love as much as he loves his."

Information about Amy's Holiday Party and other programs are online at www.cccprojects.org.

Do you know an organization or individual making a difference in our community? Email editor@reporternewspapers.net

fragile

china • crystal • gifts

\$25 OFF!



Fragile is ready for the holidays!

Make us your special gift destination!

\$25 Off Your Purchase of \$100 or more!

One-time use only. Valid in-store only. Cannot be combined with any other offer, promotion or coupon. Not valid on previous purchases. Cannot be used with store credits. Cannot be used to purchase gift cards. One coupon per customer. Please print and bring in-store. Excludes all Riedel and Jane Darling by Me products.

Offer Good thru Saturday, December 15

We will be open on Sundays thru Christmas. Sunday hours: 1-5pm
 6010-C Sandy Springs Circle • Mon-Sat 10am-6pm • 404-257-1323

www.fragilegifts.com

'Tis the Season for Sterling Silver Ornaments



Goatham Snowflake 43rd Edition #79816 \$109

Noah's Ark 4th Edition #79824 \$109

Towle Cross 20th Edition #79821 \$109

404.261.4009 / 800.270.4009
 3164 Peachtree Rd, NE • Atlanta, GA 30305
sterlingsilver@beverlybremer.com • www.beverlybremer.com

Beverly Bremer
SILVER SHOP
 2012 Sterling Silver Ornament Collection