

# Triad's hockey team shows true meaning of Christmas to those in need

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer  
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**TROY** – No doubt about it, the holiday season is a time for giving – and for giving back.

**Triad's hockey team** is a shining example of the giving back part of the season.

The Knights, who are coached by **Granite City native Pat Culiberk**, took advantage of the season to sponsor a Troy-area family who needed a hand for the holidays.

“I'm constantly giving them incentives to work together,” Culiberk said, “and this opportunity of sponsoring a family was perfect.”

The Knights went to a Troy-area program called Help for the Holidays to see what they could do. **Knight captain Tyler Fechte** made contact with the program's director to find a family who needed help, and the director put them in contact with a family who had young children that needed assistance.

The family provided the Knights with a wish list of items they were in need of, and three Knight families chipped in for the family. “We asked for a few more families with children,” Culiberk said. “and we wound up with hundreds of dollars of gift cards and more than 100 wrapped gifts.” In addition, everyday necessities were also provided, including diapers and other baby necessities as well as household goods.

“It was a great effort and hopefully the club will make this a yearly tradition,” Culiberk said. “Having a good team leader like Tyler and our other captains, Harrisson Mohesky, Kyle Kowalski and Blake Takmajian, helped make it all come together very nicely.”

The effort also taught Knight players something even more valuable than passing, skating and shooting – it taught them how valuable it is to give back to the community.

“Just teaching skating, shooting and passing isn't enough,” Culiberk said. “There's so much more emphasis needed on working the life skills necessary to be respected in the world, rather than just ending up on the winning side of a scoreboard.

“It's pretty special to help out someone in our own community and hopefully the kids will be excited for Christmas and the families will know there are good people with good intentions all around them. The best gift we can give is an effort to share our Christmas spirit!”