

Local Democrats partner with Tri-City Shrine Club in holiday basket drive for Granite City families

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GRANITE CITY - State Senate Candidate Rachelle Aud Crowe, Madison County Sherriff John Lakin, Madison County Clerk Debra Ming-Mendoza, Candidate for Circuit Judge Marc Parker joined the Tri-City Shrine Club in preparing holiday food baskets for Granite City area families in need. The Shriners distributed the baskets Wednesday, December 20, in preparation of the upcoming holiday week.

“The holidays are one of the most important times to give back, especially when it comes to supporting people’s most basic needs like food for a warm meal,” said John Vasques, Tri-City Shrine Club fundraising committee chairman. “No family should go hungry over the holidays. We’re thankful for the help of the local public officials and candidates, businesses, and Prather who’ve all stepped up to help us support these families and bring awareness this issue.”

The Tri-City Shrine Club comprises members from Granite City, Madison and Venice, and is part of Shriners International, a fraternal organization of men who are dedicated to brotherhood, compassion, and service.

Shriner Club members John Vasques, John Micks, Donny Bellman, and others organized the event. The basket recipients were coordinated by the Prather Elementary School PTA. The baskets contained non-perishables like canned goods, and a gift card to buy other groceries. Crowe, Lakin, Ming-Mendoza, and Parker, as well as local businesses Lowe’s, Stoppkotte’s Super Skate, and Save-A-Lot bought or donated the contents.

“The holidays can be especially difficult for families who are financially struggling. Food insecurity is a real problem, said Crowe. “We need to support these families. This community coming together to help is what makes Granite City great – and it’s what the holidays are all about.”

The Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are oftentimes the busiest time of year for charitable organizations like food pantries. According to the Illinois Hunger Coalition, over 11% of Illinois households experience food insecurity - unreliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.

Crowe is running for the 56th Senate District and currently serves as a Madison County Assistant State’s Attorney. Crowe and her husband are raising their two young children in Glen Carbon and are members of the St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Edwardsville. The 56th Illinois Senate District comprises all or parts of Alton, Bethalto, Caseyville, Collinsville, East Alton, Edwardsville, Elsau, Fairview Heights, Glen Carbon, Godfrey, Granite City, Madison, Maryville, O’Fallon, Pontoon Beach, Roxana, Shiloh, South Roxana, Swansea, and Wood River.