



The Salvation Army's Majors James and Lois Allison pose with Nathan Tabor (center) and his daughter, Abigail.

Special delivery comes right on time for Salvation Army

BY LAYLA GARMS
THE CHRONICLE

Christmas came a little early for the Salvation Army of Winston-Salem.

The agency, which is supporting 2,700 local families with gifts of toys and clothes this holiday season, got a much-needed donations boost last week when Nathan Tabor backed a delivery truck packed with toys into the Salvation Army's Christmas Warehouse on Peters Creek Parkway.

Tabor is the CEO of TVC Media and owner of Country Auto Sales and several apartment complexes, but is perhaps best known for his work with the Forsyth County Republican Party, which he has led during critical campaign seasons. He and his wife, Jordan, have supported a variety of different efforts both locally and internationally to ensure that children have gifts under their Christmas trees.

"Sixteen years ago, the Bible verse 'it's better to give than to receive' really just hit home that, if you're in a situation where you can help others in need, you should. It really just grew from that," said Tabor, who has unsuccessfully run for public office several times.

In the early years, Tabor collected toys for patients at Brenner Children's Hospital and an orphanage in the Ukraine. This is the second year that the Tabor family has supported the Salvation Army with in-kind donations of toys and Bibles, which Tabor estimates have a combined value of roughly \$40,000.

The Tabor family use a variety of methods to collect the donations, from organizing drives at a handful of local companies to the annual Christmas party that they host at their home, where the roughly 120 attendees are asked to bring toys for the campaign. The Tabor home is known for its impressive Christmas lights display, which Tabor says total more than 125 thousand lights this year. The family hosts a Salvation Army red kettle outside the home at several points during the season to help garner funds for the agency, and their seven-year old daughter, Abigail, sometimes sells hot chocolate to benefit the Salvation Army. Abigail, a second grader at Noble Academy in Greensboro, has been a part of the campaign all her life.

"That is one of the reasons that we really got heavily involved. We wanted to teach her that not everyone has a comfortable life," Tabor said. "As long as we have the means and she has the means, I want her to help others because you never know when you might need help."

Ellen Bliven, a spokesperson for the Salvation Army, said the agency depends upon the generosity of community members to help it keep the



Holli Goodwin and her fiancé Broderick Baptiste.



Toys await distribution at the Christmas Warehouse.

promises it makes to local families.

"We take applications, and we commit to those families that, 'yes, we're going to help you,' but then our next step is a leap of faith that the community is going to support us in our time of need," Bliven said. "People like Nathan Tabor make it happen."

Major James Allison, who took over leadership of the local agency last summer, says the Tabor family's generosity is indicative of the giving spirit he has witnessed throughout the Twin City.

"Winston-Salem is special, no doubt," declared Allison, who has served the agency for more than 35 years. "It's probably the most giving community that I've ever had the privilege to serve in ... Nathan is a huge part (of that). He's one of many partners that are doing toy drives for us."

The Salvation Army of Winston-Salem is in the midst of its most ambitious fundraising program to date, Allison said. The agency has set a goal of raising \$450,000 through the red kettle campaign this year. As of last week, it was less than halfway to its goal, but Allison said he felt confident that the community would rise to the occasion before the campaign's end on Dec. 24.

"We're so fortunate and grateful to all of our contin-

ual donors who continuously step up," he stated. "The important thing to remember is there's no such thing as a small donation because all donations add to the sum total."

New York City native Holli Goodwin said she too has been impressed with the heart of the Winston-Salem community. Goodwin relocated to the Twin City from Georgia earlier this year with her six children. The family spent just over a month in the Salvation Army Center of Hope, a shelter for families, before Goodwin was able to land a job as a floor associate at Target and move her clan into their own place. The family has maintained close ties to the Salvation Army and will be among those who will receive toys from the agency this year.

Allison said anyone who makes a donation to the agency is making a difference in the lives of families like Goodwin's.

"We can promise you a good return on your investment: smiling faces, wide, bright eyes on Christmas day," he remarked. "What more can you ask for?"

For more information about the Salvation Army or to make a contribution, visit www.salvationarmy-carolinas.org/commands/winston-salem or call 336-723-6366.

Schools

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"Here in WS/FCS (Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools), the safety and security of your children is of utmost importance to us. Each school practices its lock-down procedures twice a year," Martin wrote. "We maintain close relationships with the Winston-Salem Police Department, the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office and the Kernersville Police Department. In fact, earlier this year we began revising our safety manual with their help. We will review our safety procedures in light of what happened in Newtown to see how they can be improved."

Many local parents reported seeing law enforcement officers at their children's schools Monday, a precautionary measure taken on the first full day of school since the tragedy.

Sean Gaillard, a veteran educator and principal of Wiley Middle School, said preparing for what is known as a "critical incident" goes with the territory of entering the education field these days.

"We want teachers to be trained in the event that something should happen," said the city native. "That is a part of the job."

Though Gaillard said he tries to always prepare for the worst, as a lifelong educator and father of three, he can't help but be touched by the senseless killings in Newtown.

"I completely empathize from the standpoint of a parent. I have children who are elementary school age, and my heart just goes out to the parents of those kids," Gaillard remarked. "It's just hard. You're at a loss for words. My prayers go out to the people of that community."

Gaillard said he has worked hard to maintain a certain level of normalcy at Wiley in the days since the massacre.

"My mantra through all this has been to stay

and remain positive for our kids and respond to any need that may arise," he said. "...We're here to maintain a positive atmosphere and to protect all of our children."

Jefferson Elementary School Principal Nora Baker, who has spent nearly three decades in education, said she was deeply touched by the heartbreak in Sandy Hook.

"I am going into classrooms every day. Every week, you see those kids in the hallway and they greet you and they hug you," related Baker, the reigning Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Principal of the Year. "It's much tougher on me because I know what those parents are going through. I know what those teachers and those administrators are going through because I live it every day."

Baker said she sent an email to Jefferson parents Sunday evening, ensuring them that the school was putting safety first and is keeping all classroom doors locked this week as an added precaution.

"I think we just always have to be on alert now to anything that's out of place, anything that's different in our school to help keep our children safe," said the grandmother of one. "...I'm saddened that we are no longer able to be as trusting of a society now."

Though Baker said both parents and school staff and administrators are on heightened alert because of the recent attacks, she pointed out

that such incidents, though horrendous, are few and far between.

"Most educators, when they come into the field, they are passionate about teaching children, they're not thinking, 'I'm going to get killed in my classroom,'" she stated. "I'm hoping people won't be discouraged about going into education because of something like this because we need good educators. We need people who are passionate about teaching children."

Rodney Ellis, president of the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) said the growing number of school shootings in recent years is concerning.

"It's troublesome. It's bothersome that individuals are using our public schools as a grounds of expressing their frustrations, for lack of a better term," said Ellis, a former Winston-Salem Preparatory Academy teacher. "Schools oftentimes are considered the one safe haven for students. It's so mind boggling that those kids had to suffer from an individual's frustration."

Ellis said the Sandy Hook tragedy should be a wakeup call for all those in the education field.

"The clear message here is we have to do a better job of listening to our kids and letting them explain what the issues are," he said. "...Our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims. We just have to figure out a way to address the needs of young people who are going through challenging times."



Ellis

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