The Kiwanis Club of Cortland, Chemung Division – has been making deserving children smile during the holiday season for the past 45 years. Assisted by the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and the Salvation Army.

Kiwanis keeps the spirit of Christmas alive. Every year the club has put together the Christmas Party for the Children of the Salvation Army. At this year’s party forty five gifts were given out by Santa to children of varying ages of infant to 10 years old. It is a sight to experience of the children approaching Santa wide eyed, some shy and frightened, then the happy smiles when they open their gifts. One little lad was so excited with a tricycle, he completely ignored Santa, hopped on the bike and tried to pedal away on pedals he could hardly reach.

Some 60 intensive hour are involved in preparation for the party. Toys refurbish are purchased from the State Police of Southern New York. They are picked up in Hornell, NY, a round trip of 200 miles. Double the number of toys are purchased, so as to have a good selection to wrap. Each toy is carefully checked for completeness and operation. Batteries are installed in those requiring them. Each toy is then selected to be appropriate by age and gender from the list supplied by the Salvation Army. The day before the party members of the RSVP wrap the gifts. Toys not required for the party are donated to Loves and Fishes of the Grace Episcopal Church.

The night of the party starts with pizza and a soft drink followed by the arrival of Santa (Kiwanian Ron Van Dei), who greets each child with a Ho-Ho, a handshake or a hug. Once Santa arrives at the Christmas tree it’s time for presents.

Some of the gifts this year included the tricycle, scooters, Harry Potter Lego Set, art supplies, doll houses and remote control cars. All of which were enjoyed by all.

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**Distinguished in Fordham**

The Distinguished Kiwanian Awards were announced and presented recently at the annual Fordham Kiwanis installation dinner. Fulfilling the necessary criteria for distinguished are, from left: Gilda Severiano, Georgina Arendacs, Susan Brucculeri, Anne Marie Sweeney, and Barbara Fordon Sempere.

**Five Distinguished in Fordham**

**Cortland Brings Joy for 45 Yrs.**

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