

Birmingham

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Brother Rice hockey team takes gift giving to a whole new level for special kids

BIRMINGHAM — The guys on the Birmingham Brother Rice hockey team traded in their familiar stick tape for Scotch tape when they wrapped a number of Christmas gifts the guys and their families purchased while working with The Bottomless Toy Chest organization.

“I’ve seen much better wrapping jobs,” coach Lou Schmidt Jr. said with a laugh, “but the guys had fun. This was something they really enjoyed being a part of.”

The Bottomless Toy Chest is a nonprofit organization that focuses on lifting the spirits of children and families dealing with childhood cancer. Schmidt learned of the effort before the hockey season started and suggested adopting a family at the team’s first meeting.

“It was amazing how the guys and their families rallied around the idea,” Schmidt said. “We bought all the gifts for the family we adopted, wrapped them up, and then had some guys help unload and set up for the Christmas luncheon where the families are presented with everything.”

Schmidt said support for the project was easy, especially when it was learned the family they adopted included a small child battling leukemia, a mother battling lymphoma and a father who recently returned from a tour of duty in Iraq.

Mickey Guisewite, the founder and executive director of The Bottomless Toy Chest, said she’s been amazed by the support from Brother Rice and all who have adopted different families.

“This community certainly knows how to come together and be part of something very special,” she said. “For families struggling right now, something like this means the world.”

If interested in making a monetary or toy donation to The Bottomless Toy Chest, visit <https://bottomlesstoychest.org/>.



Photo by Donna Agusti

Brother Rice seniors Eric Dibble, far left, and Mackenzie MacEachern, far right, help carry gifts to The Bottomless Toy Chest luncheon Dec. 10 at the Bloomfield Open Hunt Club. Mickey Guisewite, the founder and executive director of The Bottomless Toy Chest, walks with the hockey players.