

Berwyn Firefighters Distribute Operation Warm Winter Coats to Children

Berwyn, IL – On Friday November 14th, the Berwyn Firefighters Association, IAFF Local 506, will provide brand–new winter coats to children who attend the first grade at Prairie Oak grammar school, made possible by their partnership with national non–profit, Operation Warm. “When we’re not responding to 911 emergencies, we find other ways to serve those who need us in the communities we call home,” stated Derek Mijares, the Berwyn Firefighters, Local 506 coordinator for the program. “Here in Berwyn, temperatures can reach freezing and below throughout the winter. We don’t want families to have to choose between paying the heating bill and buying a coat for their child.”

A total of over one hundred (112) new coats, in a variety of styles and colors, have been specially ordered for the children selected. The Berwyn Firefighters raised all necessary funds, hosting a softball tournament and by selling bratwurst at Berwyn’s Annual Oktoberfest, in order to provide these children with the gift of warmth just in time for the holidays. Firefighters will hand deliver the special gifts, personally fitting each child with a new coat and helping them to write their name in the interior tag which reads, “Made Especially for You.” Beyond warmth, Berwyn Firefighters hope that this will boost self–esteem, keep children in school, and create memories that will last much longer than the life of a coat.

“Programs such as Operation Warm help strengthen the bond, we as firefighters have with the community and the overall well–being of children. We have residents who are in need. We understand this need and we are committed to giving back to the Berwyn community and if this makes a few children and their families happy, then we have succeeded as an organization. A new coat allows families to stretch limited financial resources to other basic necessities, such as food and shelter,” stated Felix Greco, President of the Berwyn Firefighters Association, IAFF Local 506. The Berwyn Firefighters hope to make this an annual program that will provide for more children each year.

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