



THE GIFT THAT LASTS FOREVER

Coat drives.

Mitten drives.

Hat and scarf drives.

Food drives.

Toys for Tots.

All of these are supported by the Quad-City Times in one way or another. And one way or another, these much-needed items find their way into the right hands.



A while ago, a Quad Cities family fell on hard times, the result of layoffs in the '70s and the recession in the '80s. So many families were affected. One family had to be split in two in order to find food and shelter. There would be no gifts that Christmas. Not even a tree.

The middle daughter, referred to here as Maud, left for school one November day with her meager lunch and a permission slip to take a field trip ... to the Festival of Trees. The class was promised a tour of the trees and wreaths and a visit with Santa. They entered this winter wonderland with intense excitement.

Maud stood in line patiently, waiting her turn to visit with Santa. Her little heart was pounding as she climbed onto his lap and gingerly touched his beard.

“Ho, ho, ho! Have you been a good girl, little one?” chuckled Santa.

“Yes, Santa, I have,” Maud said confidently, for she really thought she’d been as good as could be.

“Then Mrs. Claus and I want you to have this gift.”

“Thank you, Santa! And be sure to thank Mrs. Claus too,” Maud called as she blew him a kiss.

As soon as she got to her little apartment, she showed her mom and twin brothers the shiny package with the big red bow. They all waited until Christmas morning as they helped Maud open the present. Inside was an enduring gift of love they all could cherish: a winter snow globe that, when shaken, scattered bits of blue and silver flakes around a tiny dancing girl.

It became their only decoration that year — and their symbol of hope.

Forty years later, that same snow globe still sits on Maud’s bedside table, a reminder that joy, when shared, lasts.

That gift — given freely and remembered for a lifetime — became the spirit behind a much larger one: the endowment that now safeguards Festival of Trees and the organizations it supports. What began as one child’s treasured snow globe has grown into a community treasure that will last forever — The Cultural Trust.