

Donors help buy bicycles for New Horizons children

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FOR LUMINARIES
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A check from Santa and a matching grant from the Walmart Distribution Center in Fort Pierce enabled New Horizons to buy bicycles for eight children from low-income households.

For the past two years, Kevin Lake, a resident of Tampa, has dressed up in his favorite red suit and snowy white beard to volunteer for the New Horizons Breakfast with Santa. This year, the event was presented by the St. Lucie Mets in early December at First Data



Steve Gilbert, Walmart Distribution Center asset protection operations manager, and Mica Smith, assistant to the general manager, presented a check for \$450 to New Horizons toward the purchase of bicycles. LISA RYMER/ FOR LUMINARIES



Kevin Lake

Field in Port St. Lucie.

Hundreds of area youth came to the breakfast and visited with Santa, sharing with him their deepest desires.

"I've done loads of these events over the years, and the kids usually list all the toys, games and electronics they want to get for Christmas," said Lake. "But at this breakfast, the children tell me they want a home, a family, or the return of a deceased parent."

Lake gets choked up talking about it. Back in Tampa, his emotional response

motivated friends to make donations totaling \$450 to help children in need.

A single call to Mitch Hall, general manager of Walmart Distribution Center #7038, which also sponsors the Breakfast with Santa, resulted in an additional donation of \$450.

Case managers at New Horizons, a local nonprofit mental health agency serving 11,000 children and adults annually, identified eight children who would benefit from such a generous gift.

The bikes were bought at Walmart and taken to the children's homes, and unveiled Christmas morning.