

## 'Unbelievably giving heart' Antioch girl dedicates her birthdays to helping food bank

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By: Judy Masterson

ANTIOCH - More hungry people are being fed because of AnaRose Hebein, 12, who for two consecutive years has donated her birthday money to the Northern Illinois Food Bank.

Last summer, AnaRose, a seventh-grader at St. Bede School in Ingleside, raised \$650 to stock a mobile food pantry at **Open Arms Mission** in Antioch. She was recently presented a Prudential Spirit of the Community Award in acknowledgement of her good deeds.

"I'm really hoping that I'm helping people," said AnaRose, who said she was inspired by her mother, Jacqui Hebein, who monitors area food pantries for the Northern Illinois Food Bank.

Two years ago, AnaRose accompanied her mother on a mobile food giveaway in Libertyville.

"She helped pass out food all morning," said Hebein. "She said it was so hard to see all those little kids right before Easter. She said, 'I feel like I have to do something else.'"

AnaRose, who her mother says is "a real tomboy," hit on the idea of inviting friends to a birthday party and collecting money for the food bank in lieu of gifts.

Pastor Scott Keenan of Community Church of the Holy Spirit and executive director of the mission, has called AnaRose "a shining example."

"She is thinking of others in need while other kids are focused on themselves," he said.

Last year, instead of an August birthday party, AnaRose and invited friends distributed food to needy residents of Lake Villa, Antioch and Grant townships.

Hebein said she is "amazed and shocked every day" by her daughter, who also has a tender spot for wildlife. She built an animal sanctuary in her back yard, which borders Grant Woods Forest Preserve.

"She has an unbelievably giving heart," Hebein said.

AnaRose, who likes to play basketball and "hang out in the woods," has also been honored as a top student volunteer in Illinois by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. She also treasures a letter from President George Bush and accompanying official White House seal, sent in recognition of her good deeds.