

OPERATION PROJECT HOPE
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!



September, 1943, my deceased twin sister, Sheila, and I, began our first learning experience. We were enrolled in Kindergarten. I'll never forget the thrill of meeting the teacher, Miss Kimmelman, and being given our very own cubbies, and seats to sit on at a long table. She read a storybook to us and then said we were going to have a treat. Containers of milk and 2 cookies were put in front of each student. I can still see them; Pink Marshmallows topped with tiny pieces of coconut on top of a round Vanilla Cookie! She told us not to eat yet. When all was distributed she said that every day we would have a snack and say a special blessing. We learned:

Thank you for the world so sweet,
Thank you for the food we eat,
Thank you for the birds that sing,
Thank you God for everything!

Miss Kimmelman explained that we were in the midst of World War 2 and that we were very fortunate to live in America, have a family, and have toys to play with. We were told that there were children all over the world that were not so lucky. Their world was not happy and they didn't have enough food to eat.

I always remembered that so vividly. As we all taught together in Brentwood we felt the needs of our students, I am so proud that as we all retired and joined ROBS we continued to cherish our memories of our teaching years and the families we loved and guided. This is what "PROJECT HOPE" IS ALL ABOUT." Even though our members live all over the United States, they remember to come together and send in monetary donations so that ROBS can adopt families from Brentwood and service them for the holidays. These families were going to have a Merry Christmas despite the Pandemic and the hard times the USA is facing.

This year was quite a challenge. Our wonderful Executive Board gave the “Go Ahead” and I began shopping online. We had four families totaling 20 people. When I started to make lists I realized that the “20th” name was actually “Lola, a 7 year old Jack Russell who belongs to one of the families. This was the first pet we ever serviced and I loved this family for caring about their furry friend. ROBS members also love our furry friends. Lola received a new fuzzy pink bed and lots of treats and toys.



Small burlap bags containing \$75.00 Target Gift Cards for each family

My special Elf, Lois Morella, was a tremendous help. She was able to go to certain stores we considered safe and purchase things that were on the family wish lists. My Library room at home was turned into Santa’s Workshop. While all this preparation was going on for Christmas, Phyllis Goodwin, our Thanksgiving Specialist, started to organize the things that

would be given to each family for Thanksgiving so that they could have a safe Feast at home. She recruited two ROBS members, Toni LaColla-Henke and Patty Booy to help her. I am eternally grateful for the fantastic job the three of them did.



Bags filled with gifts for each family

With my wonderful helpers, we were able to make four families very happy, and to show them we all still care. We gave them a little feeling of “normalcy.” The Agency, “Suburban Housing ”sent three people to pick up all the bags of presents, and they were going to deliver



Giant bags holding each family’s gifts waiting to be picked up for delivered

them. Beth Smith, the Liaison from Suburban Housing thanks all the members of ROBS for continuing to service their families, despite this Pandemic.

This year has taught us all a lot. ROBS perseveres and NEVER gives up! God willing next year may be a little more normal, but no matter what, we will all continue to be the Best Retirement Organization! And I look forward to being your "Project Hope" Chair Lady once again.

Thank you all and I wish a very Happy and Healthy 2021 for all our members and their families!

Letty Sustrin