The annual Wolfson Children’s Hospital Christmas in July Toy and Donation Drive, sponsored by Jersey Mike’s Subs, was celebrated when franchise owners Drew Maher and Austin Whetsel, along with staff and employees, dropped off two trucks full of toys at the hospital rotunda July 23. They also presented a check for the Child Life endowment at Wolfson Children’s Hospital in the amount of $61,694, the results of a Community Affairs Project 25th anniversary and the 14 stores’ Month of Giving campaign in March.

Children are part of the healing process for young patients at Wolfson Children’s Hospital and are needed throughout the year. The toy supply typically dwindles during the summer, so the summer toy and donation drive provides an opportunity for members of the community to give new, unwrapped toys, art supplies, and financial donations to purchase developmentally appropriate toys for kids with special needs.

During the July 25 drop-off event, community members and businesses delivering toys to Wolfson Children’s Hospital were greeted by Wolfson Children’s Hospital President CC Brooks, along with Lisa Andrews, President of the Northeast Florida Association of Realtors (NEFAR), who also delivered two trucks full of toys to Wolfson Children’s Hospital.

Philanthropists step up, match grant for Cathedral Arts Project anniversary

Thanks to the generosity of Delores Barr Weaver, Helen Lane, Joannie and Russell Newton Jr., and Monica and Bob Jacoby, the Cathedral Arts Project’s 25th anniversary year will finish with the 2017-2018 school year goals met.

Weaver, of Riverside, issued a matching gift challenge to provide $25,000 if an additional $75,000 could be secured. The Newtons, also of Riverside, Helen Lane and the Jacobys of Ponte Vedra Beach, made sure the challenge was met. Because of their generous support, more than 1,000 local students participated in CAP programs, receiving over 2,000 hours of instruction in dance, music, theatre and the visual arts.

It was wonderfully gratifying to have four of our most long-standing donors come together with additional gifts in honor of our 25th anniversary. Glad and generous hearts of people like Monica and Bob Jacoby, Helen Lane, Joannie and Russell Newton and Delores Barr Weaver have made it possible for CAP to transform the lives of so many children these past 25 years. They all understand that there is something about the arts that reaches children in ways nothing else can,” said Rev. Kimberly L. Hyatt, president and CEO.

“Weaver, who has supported CAP’s work for over two decades, was its inaugural recipient of the Guardian of the Arts Award in 2006.

Realtors pack meals, raise funds to fight hunger

The Northeast Florida Association of Realtors’ second annual NEFAR Fights Hunger event May 23, with 250 NEFAR members packing 75,000 meals for hungry children and families in Northeast Florida. Prior to the event, which is conducted in partnership with local charity organization Hunger Fight, NEFAR members raised the money to buy the food to be packed into the meals.

Hunger Fight distributes the packaged meals and also works with local social agencies throughout Northeast Florida that serve children and families who are food insecure.

In its first partnership with Hunger Fight last year, NEFAR raised the money for and 200 members packed 50,000 meals. This year, NEFAR upped the ante by setting goals for 250 members to participate in the meal packing event and for $18,750 (the cost of 75,000 meals) to be raised. NEFAR member donations exceeded the goal, with $20,706 being raised. The excess funds raised have already been allocated as seed money for a 2019 NEFAR Fights Hunger event.

The community service project was conducted through the efforts of NEFAR’s Community Affairs Task Force, led in 2018 by NEFAR member Lisa Andrews.