

# Coats For Kids 2016/ Pythians Provide for Those In Need

December 3, 2016

*by Sir Lloyd Merson, PDSC*

It's Saturday morning, December 3, 2016, and over 1,000 coats are waiting for us. The Knights of Pythias *Coats For Kids/Those In Need* Committee collected more than 10 large bags of coats on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this annual Pythian communal effort. The committee, begun the Winter of 1996, represents one of many altruistic endeavors of the Knights of Pythias. From its inception 20 years ago through today the Knights and the committee donated tens of thousands of coats to those in need.



*[Caption: Al Aboulafia, (Legislator), (Legislator), Sir Mike Sukenick, Sir Ron Klare, Gert Siegel, Chair Joan Geagan, Co-Chair Jack Geagen, (unidentified), Debra Kohn, (unidentified), Grand Chancellor Sheldon Blitz, (unidentified), Michael diBlasio, (unidentified), Anne Gropper, Grand Secretary Marc Bochner, Alan Rader, PGC Steve Kohn, Scott Geffon, Sir Lloyd Merson, Lee Cushman, County Legislator Rose Walker, young boy, young girl, Barry Wiener, (unidentified), Herb Gold, young boy held by (unidentified). Photo courtesy New York Grand Lodge Knights of Pythias.]*

The offerings of coats from countless numbers of generous people year after year is astonishing. Most of the coats come from our friends in the area of the Plainedge and Bethpage. Coats are collected at various schools and businesses and brought to a central place, The John West School in Bethpage, NY.

The coordinators for the collection, Joan and Jack Geagen, separate sizes and genders and bag each coat.

Every year Joan, Jack and their volunteers have the coats assembled and ready to go.

All these coats and those donated by the Knights of Pythias and Pythian Sisters get delivered by members of the Knights of Pythias and Pythian Sisters to those in need.

Past Deputy Supreme Chancellor Sir Lloyd Merson and Past Chief Deputy Grand Chancellor Sir Ronald Klare lead this committee. Nassau County public officials also joined the Pythians volunteers to express their support.

The Pythians donate coats to organizations on Long Island, in all five boroughs, Westchester County and as far as Monroe, New York. Recipients of these coats and other items of clothing collected by Pythians include shelters for the homeless, churches, schools, and veteran groups.

“Helping our fellow citizens to get through the winter a bit warmer is a blessing,” stated Merson. “The Knights of Pythias, Joan and Jack Geagen, volunteers and those who donated their coats truly believe in the motto of the Pythian Order: *Friendship, Charity and Benevolence.*”



The [Order of Knights of Pythias](#) is an international, non-sectarian fraternal order, established in 1864 in Washington, DC, by Justus H. Rathbone and was the first fraternal order to be chartered by an Act of Congress. The distinguishing [principles](#) of this fraternal organization are "FRIENDSHIP, CHARITY and BENEVOLENCE". Domains of the Order exist in most states and provinces, and subordinate lodges are located in many cities and towns across the United States and Canada.

The New York [Grand Lodge](#) supports [charities](#), including the [Pythian Humanitarian Fund](#), Juvenile [Diabetes Research Association](#), [Pythian Camp](#), [Dr. Morris Smoller Social Service Fund](#) (which supports health and elder care institutions) and the Special Olympics.

For information on becoming a member of the New York State Order of the Knights of Pythias please contact Grand Secretary Marc Bochner: [GSNYKOP@gmail.com](mailto:GSNYKOP@gmail.com).

Michael will be able to assist you with information about the Order and joining the Knights of Pythias or Click [here](#) to Request Information. You may find a lodge near you by visiting the [lodge listing page](#), or by contacting Grand Lodge at:

Grand Lodge Knights of Pythias State of New York, 71 South Central Ave. Suite PH1, Valley Stream, NY 11580; Telephone: (866) PYTHIAS (866) 798-4427, (516) 739-5000, Fax: (516) 739-2800.

You may download and print an application to join the Knights of Pythias, in a PDF format, by clicking [here](#).