

# You can always 'Expect a Miracle'

## Lake Zurich organization and e-Bay reach out to single-parent families

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According to the 2002 Illinois census, 38.8 percent of single-mother families lived below the poverty level.

Lake Zurich's Carolyn Gable along with a board of directors is looking to bridge the gap to help struggling single mothers and their children succeed in everyday life.

Gable was a waitress with seven children. She now owns a \$30 million transportation company based in Lake Zurich.

"I credit good people, a great customer base and a belief in myself that God can put it all together," Gable said.

New Age Transportation began in 1989 when her company earned its first million dollars.

According to Gable, the biggest jump in the business came in 1999 when the revenue doubled from \$4 million to \$8 million in one year.

"Once she got to a new level of success with her transportation company, she remembered where she came from," said Executive Director Kathy Gregg on why Gable decided to create the "Expect a Miracle" organization. "She felt she needed to give back to the community."

What started out as a yearly traditional garage sale turned into a worldwide fund-raising effort, courtesy of online auction giant ebay.com.

"She was all for it. We had a garage sale at her house and previewed (the items)," Gregg said.

For the first five years, the organization held garage sales to fund activities for youth in poverty. Then Gregg and Gable's board of directors presented Gable with an idea of an e-Bay store. This September, the first week the sale went virtual, the online e-Bay fundraiser raised \$1,000.

The "Expect a Miracle" Foundation aims to reach



COURTESY PHOTO

**Carolyn Gable, founder of Expect A Miracle.**

out to single mothers who cannot afford to send their children to extra-curricular activities such as ballet lessons, choir workshops and athletic programs.

Since the foundation began in 2001, they have sponsored \$200 for each child in the program to participate in athletics.

"When we told a mother of eight kids they could play football, she literally broke down in tears at the Lake Zurich Park District," Gregg said. "Her kids spent all of their lives on the sidelines watching their friends play football."

The organization has touched the lives of 1,000 other single-parent families across the United States.

The "Expect a Miracle" organization donated 52 percent of its proceeds to the inner city of Chicago last year.

In addition, the foundation also has funded a \$25,000 summer camp for inner-city children every year since its inception.

"We are reaching quite a cross-section of people," said Gregg, who is still collecting demographic data on diversity.

Gable said the roadblock of the organization is more money is going out than coming in.

Despite the majority of the recipients being single

### SINGLE PARENT FACTS

- 475,444 single-parent families in Illinois
- 79 percent are headed by mothers
- 21 percent are headed by fathers
- Median income of single parents:
- Mothers: \$22,200
- Fathers: \$32,231
- Illinois children below poverty level:
- 38.8 percent of single-mother families
- 19 percent of single-father families

mothers, single or widowed fathers also have been helped by the organization.

A 15-year-old Stevenson High School student and aspiring musical theatre major in college was able to receive funding to attend a trip to New York with her choir class.

"Going to New York will definitely be the best experience because of all the opportunities to perform there," said the recipient in the letter to the organization. "I really enjoy singing and I am looking forward to singing in many places in New York."

A mother of a 12-year-old taekwon do student wrote a letter of thanks to the organization for funding her son's advancement through a program at a fitness club.

"He will be in the program for three years and is so happy and excited that he can now take belt promotion tests," the mother wrote. "It has been difficult financially for us to afford extra-curricular activities for (him)."

The single mother also indicated in the letter that her son aspires to be a scientist or doctor when he attends college.

In order to apply for a grant from the organization, or for information on making a donation, call (847) 545-1157 or go to [www.expectamiraclefoundation.com](http://www.expectamiraclefoundation.com).