Submitted by Dave Greer, Wire Belt

What was the challenge or opportunity?

The opportunity I would like to talk about is Christmas.

We recognized that not everyone in NH is as lucky as we are. There are many children in NH who are living in very poor circumstances, and unless someone does something special, Christmas will be "just another day".

What was your approach or solution?

We took it upon ourselves to give a **little** happiness to as many children as we can on Christmas morning. We contacted the NH Department of Health and Human Services – Family Division in Manchester (Amy Byers) and asked if there was anything we could do. They were very thankful – and supplied us with first names of children, their very short stories, and what they would like for Christmas. It was suggested that spending $50-75 per child, wrapping, and delivering these gifts to DHS to distribute on Christmas would be a great help to them.

Wire Belt Company – a fourth generation family owned business, decided to challenge our employees and offered a company match, for each child an employee sponsored, Wire Belt would sponsor one. In addition, Wire Belt collects money year round from employees for various events and the money is put towards the fund to be matched. We have held pizza lunches, cookouts, a Chilifest, pie desserts, and coffee cake breaks to raise funds.

We are sponsoring 146 children this year. This is quite remarkable, as we have only 93 employees. The attached picture is just a small part of the staging of presents already purchased this year.

We have been doing this now for 17 years. Elaine Lamarche (our Events coordinator and Receptionist) has undertaken this project from the beginning.

What is the impact?

I believe the major impact of this program is 146 smiles on the faces of these Children on Christmas morning, and the underlying message that someone cares about them. The other

major impact is on the 93 employees here knowing that they have helped "make a difference" in these children's lives.