



TRADITIONS & MEMORIES

ANNE FOSTER

*Coordinator of Therapies,
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“They’re my family here, my kids,” said **Anne Foster**, referring to the developmentally disabled students served in three facilities NJEDDA manages in Clifton. They include the grade school/headquarters on Main Ave. with about 120 kids, the high school on Union and Main Ave. with another 100 or so and the Adult Training and Medical Day Care Program on Route 46 at Hazel St. which services another 40 adults, all grads of the Center and other specialized schools.

Founded here in Clifton in 1947 at the height of the post-WWII baby boom, NJEDDA (the former CP Center) has done much to help special needs students and their families. While financial support comes from sending school districts, considerable aid is provided by members of five Passaic County Elks Lodges which place a special emphasis on cerebral palsy and the developmentally disabled. The lodges pinpoint their activities towards charitable support of the CP Center.

While the Elks members focus on the fundraising, it is Foster and her colleagues who concern themselves with *fun raising* activities:

“One of my favorite things involves the Thanksgiving celebration we have for both the elementary school,” Foster said. “We have a turkey dinner for staff and students. At our high school we also hold a football game, generating two teams, that’s an annual event. Some of the girls are cheerleaders and we also have a pep squad.

“We also are fortunate that Holiday Express, a nonprofit group that entertains, a musical group, visits each year. The kids just love them. The group gets the kids involved, and it brings gifts for the kids, too.



“It’s a very happy time,” Foster said.

“For the holidays, we also have a sing-along with a woman volunteer who plays guitar. We have a holiday boutique that our occupational therapist runs. We have enough items ‘for sale’ so that all the kids can shop and buy something for their families. Kids try to think of something their family members might like, to think of others,” Foster said.

“As well, UPS generously buys gifts for the students every year, so we give UPS a list of the students, with teachers making recommendations on what gifts might be nice for them. UPS comes with Santa, and they distribute a gift per student. And the student gets a picture with Santa, too,” Foster said.

For readers looking to support a local charity, NJEDDA certainly meets that bill. To find out more, talk about ways to support the programs here, call Executive Director William Weiss at 973-772-2600 or write him at WWeiss@njedda.org.