



# How Do You Decide About Holiday Donations?

by Jean Colvin,  
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Everyone's asking for donations this time of year. I got my first request October 31 from an animal shelter in my home town. This month I got one from my university and two from a birding organization that I support.

I give to my home town animal shelter in memory of my mother and Kate. Kate was her fat, spoiled, much-beloved calico that lived with her for twelve years and then took over my house for two more after my mom passed away. I miss them both especially at this time of the year.

I've got four feeders and bird bath outside my office window. I love watching the House Sparrows, Juncos, Cardinals, Mourning Doves and Blue Jays that come every day. I think the birding organization will be getting a check from me too. My university, on the other hand, seems pretty flush. I think they will get a pass this year.

But I am adding another donation to my list and I'm hoping you will too: the Wisconsin Youth Company Scholarship Fund. Even though they don't live in Wisconsin I'm making the donation for the young kids in my family--Liam, 5, Finn, 3, and the twins, Jack and Alyssa, 6.

Families use our scholarship fund to help them pay tuition for our AFTER SCHOOL programs or for our summer camp. They may be experiencing a one-time financial emergency. They may be in school. They may not qualify for child care tuition assistance from the city or the county. Like us they are working families trying to make ends meet.

Our programs can offer so much to children: they are places where a shy child can grow to be a leader; where the spirit of teamwork can flourish whether in a soccer game or during clean-up time, where kids learn to solve problems by talking instead of shoving, where children learn to trust because an adult is there for support and guidance. This is what I want for the young ones in my family. It's what I want for all kids.

If you can help, please send a check to the Wisconsin Youth Company Scholarship Fund, 1201 McKenna Blvd., Madison, WI 53719. We're a 501(c)3 non-profit organization so your donation is tax deductible.

I've made my choices for this year: kids, cats and birds. That sounds about right.