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Hundreds Turn Out for Toy Drive in Honor of 'Ski'

A trailer full of donated toys continues charitable legacy of Mark "Ski" Gajewski.

By [Ryan Bonner](#) | [Email the author](#) | December 17, 2012



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Ski would be proud.

Nearly 300 people attended a toy drive last week at Canz-a-Citi Roadhouse in Patchogue in honor of Mark "Ski" Gajewski.

[Ski's Open Heart Foundation](#) organized the event and an entire trailer was filled with toys by the end of the night.

Ski, who lived in East Patchogue and volunteered for three months at Ground Zero after 9/11, died last December from a rare form of lung cancer. The toy drive was meant to continue a tradition that Ski had of donating both his time and money to local charities during the holidays, according to his daughter Crystal Gajewski.

"My dad started something that now and forever will be a soft spot in my heart," Crystal said after the toy drive. "Just to see the children smile when they receive the toys, it's priceless."

The toy drive at Canz was the first organized by [Ski's Open Heart Foundation](#), which was created by Ski's children and wife to aid the heroes of 9/11, and Crystal expects many more in the future.

"Hopefully every year it will just get better and more and more people will come out to show their support for us, our mission and the children," she said.

The toys collected at the drive are now being delivered. If anyone is in need of holiday toys, contact 631-258-1907 or 631-987-5812 or cgajewski@skisopenheart.com.

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