Family with special-needs adoptees needs a hand

Passion for K.I.D.S. raising funds for new heating system



Passion for K.I.D.S. is reaching out to the community and asking for help for the Hauer family (some of them pictured) in Rancho San Diego. (Courtesy photo)

By Karen Pearlman

RANCHO SAN DIEGO

A Rancho San Diego family with more than a dozen special-needs adoptees and a broken heating system at home needs some help from the community.

The founders of the nonprofit Passion 4 K.I.D.S. (Kids In Desperate Situations), Charles and Linda Van Kessler, are trying to help the Hauer family, which has been without heat for the past several weeks.

The Van Kesslers have started an online fundraising campaign at passion4kids.org/donate to help cover $15,000 in costs for a heating system overhaul for the Hauers, and said they have already raised more than $2,000.

“Passion 4 K.I.D.S. is very grateful for the generous people who have stepped up so far to help the Hauer family in their time of need,” Linda Van Kessler said on Wednesday. “We continue to be hopeful we can meet our total $15,000 need to make this Christmas miracle happen.”

Chuck and Penny Hauer, both in their 80s, are the caretakers for 18 people of different ages with varying serious underlying medical conditions. Some are blind, several are in wheelchairs and “many of their already serious conditions are being exacerbated by lack of heat,” Linda Van Kessler said.

The family is under a great deal of stress, Van Kessler said. Additionally, Chuck Hauer has recently developed pneumonia and Penny Hauer recently lost one of her adult biological children who lives out of state. Her daughter died from the effects of a pulmonary illness.

While 18 adopted sons and daughters live with them now, during the last 45 years of their 60 years of married life, the Hauers have adopted more than 40 special-needs children. Some are now living on their own and some have passed away. They also have four biological children who range in age from 40 to 56. One lives in San Diego and the others are scattered across the United States.

“We have stepped in and by faith decided to replace their entire heating system, which is what three different companies have told us it would take to get the heat back on,” Linda Van Kessler said.

She said the company doing the heating work, ASI, has donated five space heaters to the family until it can start work, which will be the week of Dec. 21, Van Kessler said. Passion 4 K.I.D.S. made a down payment of $1,000 for the heating system fix, but Van Kessler said that as a small family-run charity, it is looking for help from the community.

“We need a Christmas miracle to get this done,” Van Kessler said. “If you are feeling helpless this holiday season in how to be a blessing, please consider helping us transform this family’s life and spare them from further despair.”

Passion 4 K.I.D.S. deals with handicapped, neglected, abandoned, abused and underprivileged children, as well as children in life-threatening, emergency situations in the United States. Van Kessler calls them “the forgotten children,” who have little or no insurance, and few government programs available to help them.

Charles Van Kessler started the charity in 1984. Linda Van Kessler said 100 percent of the donations will go to the family.

“Never think any donation is too small,” Linda Van Kessler said. “We don’t want anyone to stretch themselves too thin but any amount will help, and it all adds up.

We can’t do it alone, we rely on the kindness of the community. Together we can make it happen.”

Donations can also be made by calling Passion 4 K.I.D.S. at (760) 518-2780 or by mailing a check to Passion 4 K.I.D.S., 1345 Encinitas Blvd., #736 Encinitas, CA, 92024.

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