Milwaukee Sathya Sai Center Service Projects

100 Treat Bags – 100 Smiles

SSE Project - This was an initiative taken up as part of SAI100 birthday celebrations, where we made 100 treat bags, each containing energy bars, juice, chocolates and a handwritten 'MESSAGE'. These treat bags were given to guests at homeless shelter post dinner. They enjoy it at their leisure. What makes this special is the had written 'MESSAGE'. The message conveys that they are not forgotten, the community (us) are thinking about them, praying for them, wishing them all the luck and success. This brings real joy for the guests as they feel they are not alone, they are still part of the community.

Baby Blankets

SSE Project – Our SSE kids meet once every month to make fleece blankets, which are donated for kids at hospitals. These blankets provide warmth and comfort for the little ones, bring in Swamy's blessings as they are made chanting Sai Gayathri. Our SSE kids have made more than 50 blankets and donated so far.

Beanies

Yearly project where we hand make beanies chanting Sai Gayathri. The initiative runs from September thru November. We make as many beanies as possible (in 2023 we made 100+ in 2024 we made 30 beanies). We wrap up by Swamy's birthday, offer it and pray during celebration event, then distribute to the needy. Some of these we hand distribute to the homeless and other we give it to guest houses, rescue missions and shelters that take care of the needy. These beanies help our brothers and sisters to stay warm during the cold winters of Wisconsin.

Blood Drive

Conducted blood drive as an offering for Swamy's Aradhana day. We spread the need for blood donation in our Sai circles, community, encourage our family, friends and colleagues to donate blood. We sign them up, follow through, facilitate blood donation on the chosen date. This year it was on 4/26. Did we know before that 26 people would sign up and 4 wouldn't qualify to donate? We definitely didn't. But he who made all this happen knew from the beginning, he blessed us all making the date and numbers match!

Center Cleanups

Our center runs in a local Church, sharing space with other groups. Here is where we have our Bhajans, our kids meet for SSE, run our service activities. We volunteer to upkeep this place. We take up cleaning activities once every quarter, do a thorough job in making this place conducive for our members and other groups who call this their spiritual home.

Donuts Drive

We had a special event on a cold Wisconsin morning, where we visited less fortunate individuals living on the streets, in tents, distributed donuts for their breakfast. Guests woke up to the surprise, were very happy to have breakfast served at their door step.

Essential Elements

This is an event we run every quarter. We work with local shelter for women, children, under privileged families, understand their 'urgent need' items. We run a drive, collect these items and deliver. We have had drives for personal hygiene items (shampoo, body wash etc), under garments (men, women), kids items (socks, diapers, wipes, strollers), foot wares, jackets, dry foods (pasta, cereal etc). Response has always been amazing, delivering multiple boxes of 'urgent need' items, supporting needy members of our community.

Highway Cleanup

A mile stretch of a major highway in Brookfield is adopted by Milwaukee Sathya Sai Center. A sign at the major intersection bears Swamy's name. Our center members keep this one stretch mile stretch clean by running clean up activity thrice in a year. We do update city on when we had this activity, who all involved, how many bags of trash we collected. We coordinate with them to pick up collected trash afterwards. We diligently do this service so that the stretch that bears Swamy's name is clean, and the sign board stays up, blessing and giving feeling of warmth to all the onlookers in the street.

Live Kitchen

Our center cooked nutritious 3 course vegetarian dinner for around 70 guests at Milwaukee Guest house. This place provides shelter, housing, education and services to Milwaukee's homeless who seek to transform their life with dignity and purpose. Dinner included spring rolls, cheese sticks, pasta, rice with bean curry, salad and ice cream sandwich. Our members lovingly served the dinner to guests. Guests were delighted, enjoyed the dinner. Many came up and asked about Swamy and his works. We thanked Swamy for giving us this wonderful opportunity. We are thinking of doing it every quarter.

Rose Garden

As part of SAI100 tree plantation initiative, we took up this project to start a small rose garden at our center, maintain it through the seasons, offer the flowers at his lotus feet. We started with 11 rose bushes, replenished with a bunch more this year. Garden is coming up really beautiful, jumbo colorful roses attract everyone. They please all devotees, Church goes, and passersby. Garden has been a joy for everyone. Our SSE kids maintain the garden, de-weed every week, water the bushes in summer.

Sandwich

This is our regular, bi-weekly project (twice a month, 2nd and 4th week). We make 40 lunch bags reciting Sai Gayathri. Each lunch bag contains a pair of sandwiches, juice, fruit, cookie, napkin. These are donated to Milwaukee Rescue Mission (MRM). This organization cares for those who are poor in body, mind and spirit, gives them shelter and support, helps them transform their life. Our lunch bags are given to the guests next day, who carry them to work, have it during their break. We have been doing this for quite some time, MRM now knows our organization, our volunteers, some of SSE kids as well. Recently we started using stickers to seal lunch bags, with SSE kids writing Swamy's quote in them. This serves to spread Swamy's message along with feeding the needy.

Tree Plantation

We took up this initiative as part of SAI 100 Tree plantation. We worked with 'Hunger Task Force', planted 219 native trees as part of reforestation effort. This helps build natural forests, prevent soil erosion, retain water/humidity, provide food, shade and shelter to all forms of life. Moreover, these help sustain

bees which are crucial players in food ecosystem. What an initiative Swamy made us part of, where in which he took care of everyone not only humans but also animals, insects, bees and birds. Swamy loves everyone!

Water Angels

This is a small project we ran a few times in association with Street Angels organization. This is an organization that aims to bridge the gap between homelessness and housing through support, advocacy and community collaboration. For their community outreach, we supported by providing cases of bottled water, which they used while providing essential meals support for the needy. Our center signed up, our members donated bottled water cases, we promptly delivered them to Street Angels. We supported their community outreach thru a small way we could.