

BRENDA SALLEE KAYSER NEITZKE '70

Nominated by: Patricia Tank Henkel '70

"Walk A Mile in My Shoes" is exactly the service Brenda Sallee Kayser Neitzke and her husband, Dutch, provide. By now over 1,000 homeless and/or impoverished men, women and children were given free footwear collected, repaired, and delivered to various charitable locations in all kinds of weather. Starting out with a small trailer remodeled to sort men's from women's by size and style, they have expanded to a 20' enclosed trailer. Besides their Sunday commitments and one Saturday a month, they get calls from various charities looking for shoes & clothes anywhere from babies and children to the homeless for which they fill the orders and deliver. Many going out of business or end of season shoe sales contact them with donations as well as shoes donated from the general public. Once they got brand new baseball cleats which they donated to area high schools. The Toledo Blade even did an article in April 2022 about the Swanton Couple.

Brenda volunteers with Juvenile Diabetes having donated the proceeds of a fundraiser as well as the entire family participating in diabetes walks for many years, all in memory of her late husband John Kayser ('67) who underwent a kidney transplant. She also shares important information with other families facing transplants and what to expect.

A member of Christ UMC she is known for sharing her world-famous baked beans for potlucks and funeral wakes.

She's a member of the 1970 class committee (no one says "No" to Brenda when she is collecting 50/50)

Brenda worked for Dr. Collaco for 20 plus years and was a Flight Attendant for Continental Express Jet Airlines for 10 plus years.

Brenda learned by example from her mother, Helen Bourdo Sallee ('41), to help the less fortunate. BTW Brenda's great grandfather Jeremiah Clay donated the property that CHS sits on today. She and her mother joked that that legacy didn't give them special privileges for higher grades!

Brenda has 3 children Johnny Kayser, Stacie (Kayser) Sime, Paul Kayser
She has 3 stepchildren, Nicole, Ryan & Kara.

As super-grandma she attends almost every event of her 14 grandchildren. She is always the first to volunteer with whatever job needs extra hands.