

Young Spirit

JENNA TURNER

Building a legacy by the age of twelve defines the unusual dedication of this recipient of the 2010 Spirit of Manatee "Young Spirit Award," Jenna Turner. Meals on Wheels PLUS and The Food Bank of Manatee have been for years the frequent recipients of this young student's spirited support.

It all began when at age five Jenna accompanied her mother delivering meals to homebound seniors. Seeing that the visits meant much more than simply delivering food, Jenna made hand-crafted gifts and cards at home to deliver with the meals. She continues to deliver (when she can persuade her mom to drive) along with selling raffle tickets at "Tropical Nights", Meals on Wheels biggest fundraiser.

A year ago, hearing that food donations at The Food Bank were low, Jenna started a food drive in her neighborhood, attending Home Owner meetings to plead her cause and obtain not only permission but support. Jenna and her friends collected 508 pounds of food and \$4,000 dollars in contributions from her neighborhood.

Further, she convinced her teachers at Saint Stephen's Episcopal School to expand their food drive to include The Food Bank of Manatee. She arranged for placement of the brightly colored collection barrels and oversaw the program. Jenna and her friends also collected 82 pounds of used books to benefit The Food Bank's needy families.

For her birthday in 2008, Jenna asked her guests to bring non-perishable baby food to her party in lieu of gifts. The outcome was 77 pounds of baby formula and diapers. At Jenna's request the party included a stop at The Food Bank so that the guests could see exactly where their contributions were going.

Jenna Turner has clearly shown that one person can make a difference not only in giving of herself but in inspiring others as well, all at a very young age. Her accomplishments ring proudly for this 2010 *Young Spirit Award* recipient. Congratulations!

