Santa arrives early with presents for at-risk kids

WEST HAVEN – (Dec. 17, 2013) - It turns out that Santa’s Workshop could be found earlier this week at Duffy’s Tavern, while Santa’s sleigh was a donated box truck that arrived, you guessed it, during Tuesday’s brief snowstorm.

And what about the Elves?

They were none other than Oyster River Energy owner Ed Granfield and his family, including wife Anne, daughters Megan and Liz, and son Dan.

Together, along with more than 150 friends in the friendly, warm atmosphere of Duffy’s plus a whole lot of holiday cheer resulted in hundreds of toys being delivered to the West Haven Community House’s headquarters on Elm Street and its Head Start pre-school program in plenty of time for Christmas next week.

“Wow,” was about all Head Start Director Abel Padro could say as the family members along with Community House staff began emptying the truck and loading the various toys, games and more into a meeting room for distribution to West Haven families.

Granfield said the Christmas gifts were due to the generosity of those who attended the holiday party that Oyster River Energy sponsored Monday night, Dec. 16, at Duffy’s.

“It’s always great to support those who need it during the holidays,” he said, “and this year we wanted to make sure all the gifts were distributed to children and families here in West Haven.” Oyster River Energy is located on Frontage Road.

Community House Executive Director Patty Stevens was among those helping to arrange the gifts for distribution to Head Start families.

“It is because of the generosity of individuals and companies like Oyster River Energy that the Community House is not only going to be able to brighten Christmas for some less fortunate families, but also so we can continue to offer the community such services as Head Start, our before and after school programs in the West Haven schools, and our day and residential services for adults with disabilities,” she said.

“We cannot thank Ed and Anne and the entire community enough for their continued support of the Community House and our programs,” Stevens added.