

Photos Hotdogs serves up holiday generosity with gift card deal that gives back



Jim Photopoulos said Photos Hotdogs in Palatine is aiming to donate \$10,000 to people with special needs. Steve Zalusky/szalusky@dailyherald.com



Steve Zalusky

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A Palatine restaurant is getting into the holiday spirit with a gift card promotion to benefit organizations serving people with special needs.

If you buy a \$200 gift card at Photos Hotdogs, 301 N. Northwest Highway, you get an additional \$100 on the gift card. Profits from the sales are donated entirely to area special needs organizations.

This is the second straight year Photos is conducting the promotion. Last year's campaign raised \$5,000 for groups like Clearbrook and Lambs Farm.

This year, the goal is even higher – owner Jim Photopoulos hopes to raise \$10,000. But the benefiting organizations remain the same, smaller local entities rather than large corporate ones.

The promotion runs through Jan. 10.

“So if you're a regular customer, you're literally losing money if you don't buy it, because you're getting \$100 free,” Photopoulos said, who added that on Black Friday, when you purchase the \$200 gift card, you get a free Photos T-shirt too.

Photopoulos opened the Palatine location in 2004, but his first restaurant in Mount Prospect opened in 1989. The Palatine restaurant is known for its burgers, hot dogs and such specialty items as the chicken teriyaki rice bowl.

But it is also known for immense collection of vintage cameras and movie projectors, as well as the photo gallery on its walls, including pictures of everyone from Barack Obama to Sammy Sosa.

The holiday promotion is personal for Photopoulos. Over the years, he has seen special needs children from places like Clearbrook visit the restaurant.

“The world and the universe have been good to me for 36 years. I want to give back,” he said.

Katie Veatch, Clearbrook director of corporate relations, said last year, one of the residents dressed up in a hot dog costume to receive a \$700 check. The money went to the organization’s operating funds – Veatch said 90% of every dollar donated goes straight into programming.

“Jim really understands our mission in serving individuals with disabilities.” she said.
“We're really grateful for his generosity.”