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Donors amaze theft victim

\$2,000 in support goes to restaurant server whose gifts were stolen

By Paul Grondahl



Cindy Schultz / Times Union Cydney Palmatier, 20, says most of the extra cash that donors gave her after her Christmas gifts were stolen will be given to a charity.

Guilderland

Nearly \$2,000 in donations has poured in from dozens of people for the Ruby Tuesday server whose wrapped Christmas presents she bought for family members after working extra shifts were stolen from her car in the Crossgates Mall parking lot last week.

What began as an upsetting episode turned into a happy ending that revived the holiday spirit and underscored the kindness of strangers for **Cydney Palmatier**, 20, a junior education major at The College of Saint Rose.

“I’m at a loss for words,” she said Sunday of \$1,968 raised by 40 people on a GoFundMe website campaign. The donations ranged from \$5 to \$300.

Palmatier lost an estimated \$200 worth of gifts for her family, as well as a new purse, headphones and other personal items. The fundraising goal was \$400. Palmatier intends to donate most of the extra cash to Help Yourself Academy, a program at Saint Rose that fosters aspirations to earn a college degree in economically disadvantaged students at nearby Pine Hills Hill Elementary School. Coworkers at Ruby Tuesday also raised about \$150 for Palmatier.

“It just blows my mind,” she said. “I never expected the community to react this way. I’m completely grateful. I just can’t keep all that money.” Palmatier, a 2014 Guilderland High School graduate, intends to pay it forward.

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