

Young hat-makers give it all to charity

By Wendy Gordon

It's unusual in this economy to find a business with profits up 150 percent over last year.

It's even more unusual when you consider the business, home-designed and sewn-fleece hats, is run by four elementary school children; siblings Jack, Anna and Lucy Bishop (11, 10 and 7, respectively) and their next-door neighbor Quinn Andersen, 11. Most unusual of all, they donate all their profits to Friendly House.

KozyCoolKidz hats started three years ago.

"I had a pillow and wanted to make a pillowcase," said Anna, who was 6 years old at the time. "I knew what I wanted it to look like and I realized I could sew it. I kept asking for a sewing machine."

The sewing machine arrived for Christmas, just before an ice storm that kept the Bishop family confined to their Hillside home. Anna's mother, Sue Bishop, who took industrial arts in middle school, had never sewed before.

"I kept consulting the manual," she said.

But they persevered; sewing a poncho ("hard") and then a fleece hat. Brother Jack (then 8) discovered he also loved sewing.

The children wore their hats to school, attracting compliments from their friends and requests for hats of their own. A few months of fulfilling requests led the children to realize they could turn the homemade hats into a business.

They printed up a brochure, pricing hats at \$12 each. Quinn Andersen, who already knew how to sew, joined in, bringing her own sewing machine. They sold the hats at Hillside soccer games, Chapman school and Sydney's, as well as at house parties.

"Quinn's soccer team was named the Cheetahs, and we had cheetah fabric," recalled Sue Bishop. "Her entire team bought hats." Jack's team also all bought hats.

The first year, the children turned over surplus income to Sue for new hat materials. But the following year, they



Lucy Bishop (front row, L-R), Anna Bishop and Quinn Andersen of KozyCoolKidz are backed by Friendly House's Development Director Heather Jones, President Liz Schilling, and Executive Director Vaune Albanese.