



Photo provided

Siblings Matthew and Judy Adams of Rosendale, both of whom have Down syndrome, pose with a jug of some of the dimes collected in the Dimes for Downs project Judy created.

Donations to Rosendale family's Dimes for Downs project nearing 40,000

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ROSENDALE — By the weekend, Dimes for Downs creator 13-year-old Judy Adams could see donations of the small coins pass the 40,000 mark.

Judy's mother, Kim Adams, said the figure has become obtainable after the idea caught on where other fundraising efforts have fallen flat.

"I started a foundation called Gifts from the Heart for Downs, where I grant wishes of needs to people around the United States who have Down syndrome," she said. "I struggled financially to keep this going. I tried to do fundraising by going out there with the idea that if everybody could just donate one dollar we could get these wishes granted ... and nothing. I kept falling flat on my face."

The idea of focusing on dimes developed through

the routine of collecting spare coins at the end of the day.

"We already had a little jar out on my table where every time I came home I'd throw the change in the bottle and would say we're going to give this to the foundation," Adams said.

"JUDY GETS UP one morning and says 'I want to do a fundraiser,'" Adams said. "I said that's nice, what would you like to do? She says, 'Dimes for Downs. I want to go national.'"

Adams, who has adopted two children with Down syndrome, said the idea had gotten some interest through a blog she writes, but it took nearly a year before realizing the project had traction.

"We had a few people, one person who had a wish granted to meet Reba McEntire sent us 200 dimes and ... people at the hospital, Albany Medical Center, where I

worked were getting me dimes," she said.

"As she would get 7,000 dimes, 8,000 dimes I would start blogging it and putting it on Facebook how many dimes she got," Adams said. "After she reached the 10,000 dimes in 10 months we started getting dimes from all over the place. Over the next seven months it's gotten to the point where we hope to have 42,000 dimes by this weekend."

Adams said having 160 dimes coming from Australia was affirmation that the idea had wide support.

Gifts from the Heart for Downs was founded in January 2010 and has granted 44 wishes that range from providing iPads, donating Rifton Trikes, and meetings with Chicago Bears' player Brian Urlacher, country music performers Alan Jackson and Kenny Chesney, band Big Time Rush, and actress Julie Andrews.