

OPERATION ELVES COMMUNITY

Giving to Those in Need



Volume 16 - October 2023
Updates for this issue

2023 Final Operation Santa Gift Counts

Blankets - 293 (111% to goal)
Hat Sets - 250 (125% to goal)
Books - 218 (125% to goal)

SPOTLIGHT OPERATIONS Elf Contributor **Joy Arsenault**

This month's spotlight is on Joy Arsenault who participated in the 1st Operation Elves Volunteer Day! This 1st volunteer day was a party of two (Joy and I). And while we may have only been two, it is amazing what you can accomplish in a couple of hours with an extra pair of hands. Joy wanted to help (volunteer) and originally thought we "wrapped" all the gifts and that was a task she enjoyed and is good at. While she was disappointed that her wrapping skills would not be put to the test and she admitted to not being very crafty, we found a number of tasks that she excelled at and a few, she doesn't want to ever do again! With Joy's help, we put together 12 toiletries bags for the seniors, ironed 8 new toiletries bags so they could be assembled, and even tried cutting out one bag (that task she won't do again .. something about being afraid of sharp knives and cutting instruments)! It was extremely helpful to have an extra pair of hands for an afternoon.

So who is Joy and why does she volunteer to be an elf? I am fortunate to have met Joy through a mutual friend a couple of years ago. She is a transplant to TN (as most of us are) and originally comes from upstate NY - near where my husband grew up - Utica NY to be exact. Operation Elves is not Joy's first volunteering experience; in fact, her first job out of college was at the America Corps. Giving back is in her blood and she credits her dad for being an example of giving to others in need. Joy believes in paying it forward and sharing with others as she feels her life is blessed in many ways.

I always find it fascinating to find out something new or special about people. And no matter how much you know, there is always something you don't. Joy is no exception. What you might not know about Joy when you first met her is her fascination with learning how to make fun, fancy drinks. One of her favorite drinks to make (and to taste too) is called the Razzle Dazzle. And I have had a few of Joy's drinks and they are both delicious and sneaky in their potency Definitely need to sip them!

Thank you, Joy, for your interest in the work of Operation Elves, your giving spirit, and your willingness to volunteer your time on a Sunday to help us get ready for our upcoming delivery!

Special Thanks

A big shout-out to individuals who have contributed to this year's goal in the past two months! A special thank you to:

- Maryann S
- Beverly N
- Mindy M
- Barbara O
- Kathy B
- Lisa L
- Joy A

How Can You Get Involved

You can reach me (melissa stack) at:

- jusmel@comcast.net
- www.operationelvescommunity.org
- [venmo:@melissa-stack-3](https://venmo.com/melissa-stack-3)
- 615-631-4920

Let me know if you would like to add anyone to our newsletter distribution. Go out to our website to see more pictures and back issues of the newsletter.

The next issue will be in December 2023.



"ROAD TRIP - HEADED NORTH SOON

It is hard to believe that it soon will be October and we will be headed North to deliver all our donations to the Farmington Elks. We are going a little later this year as we will also be attending a fall wedding while we are there. We have confirmed with Aaron, from the Farmington Elks, that October 17th is the delivery date. So we will be starting to load up the trailer this weekend. Let me know if you have any last-minute donations. In our December newsletter, we will have pictures from the trip & share with you how many boxes it took to deliver all our donations.

I am thrilled and humbled by all the help this year, both in terms of donations (money or items)! And once again, we not only achieved the goals for the year but went past them. We couldn't have done that without YOU!

A HAPPY 5TH ANNIVERSARY OPERATION ELVES

It was **five** years ago when my mother and I decided to use our talents/creativity to help the community of Farmington Maine. We learned from my niece that it was an area that not only faced cold winters; it was a community that struggled financially. So we decided to help. It is now five years later, and we now have a whole group of caring individuals who are helping this community more each year. Here is what we have donated since 2018, Thanks to your generosity, we are able to continue to support this community and reach more children providing gifts that provide warmth (inside and out), provide gifts for young adults and the elderly.

	Cumm. Donations		Cumm. Donations
Children (1 to 18)			
Blankets	924	Journals, cosmetic bags, facial kits	137
Hat Sets	811	Winter jackets	29
Books	578	Backpacks & stuffed animals	65
Tents, sleeping bags, lanterns	32	Ear buds	15
Seniors		Babies	
Blankets	90	Blanket sets	20
Socks	50	Sleep sacks	8
Toiletries bags	62		

Joy Arsenault



"Don't ask what the world needs, ask what makes you come alive. Because what the world needs is more people who come alive".

Volunteering makes Joy come alive!