

# OPERATION ELVES COMMUNITY

Giving to Those in Need



Volume 9 - August 2022

Updates for this issue

## 2022 Operation Santa gift goals

Blankets - 240 (88% to goal)  
Hat Sets - 180 (108% to goal)  
Books - 160 (89% to goal)

## 2022 current gift count

Blankets - 210  
Hat Sets - 195  
Books: 142

## How Can You Get Involved

You can reach me (melissa stack) at:

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

To learn how you can help make a difference!

Let me know if you would like to add anyone to our newsletter distribution. The next issue will be in October.

## Special Thanks

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

- Kathy G
- Annmarie & Sam B
- Mindy M
- Keith & Shirley F
- Beverly N

## Spotlight Operation Elf Contributors-Anissa & Aaron Allumbaugh

Behind all great organizations and initiatives are the many, many individuals "who make it happen". And Operation Santa is no exception. It takes a village of Farmington Elk members (about 30 - 50) plus another 25+ community members to make Operation Santa a success. And while everyone's contribution is critical, this month's spotlight highlights the husband-and-wife team that spearheads all the organizing, coordinating, planning, and delivery of Christmas items for over 900 less fortunate children in the Franklin County area of Maine. I'd like to introduce you to **Aaron and Anissa Allumbaugh**.

While Operation Santa has been around for over 50 years, the Elks took it over 2 years ago. So Aaron, Anissa, and the rest of the organization have been on a steep learning curve to making sure that it goes off without a hitch and that they can make sure everyone who has a need gets served through Operation Santa. Oh, and did I mention that they added making deliveries to the area senior-living facility to their Christmas list of giving!

Aaron and Anissa are definitely most reluctant to be in the spotlight. Yet they truly give a tremendous amount of their time to helping others throughout the year as members of the Farmington Elks Club. As they describe all the activities they are involved in to help veterans, their community, and children -- I get tired thinking about it! And Aaron and Anissa would be quick to say, it's not just them but many of the Elk members who volunteer countless hours to raise money so that they can support others. In addition to Operation Santa, the Farmington Elks donate to the Maine Children's Cancer organization, help Veterans with medical supplies and other support, assist the elderly, and even create a Haunted House for less fortunate children at Halloween.

I asked them what is the hardest part of heading up Operation Santa and Aaron said "the concern that we will miss a child or forget something they requested". When I asked them what was the best part of being involved in this worthwhile endeavor they said "seeing the faces of parents and children knowing that they have made a difference -- maybe created Christmas for families what would have nothing if there wasn't for Operation Santa".

Our **Operation Elves** efforts are definitely playing an important role in making Christmas special and joyous for children and seniors! And Aaron and Anissa along with the Farmington Elk volunteers are making sure our donations get into the hands of those who need them most!





**EXTRA CREDIT PROJECTS**

I hope you have had a chance to go onto the **Operation Elves Community** website ([www.operationelvescommunity.org](http://www.operationelvescommunity.org)) and learn more about our mission and goals. One of our major focuses is to support the Operation Santa Christmas efforts by contributing: hat sets, blankets, and books for children up to age 18. And you can see from this month’s totals that we are looking good to meet and/or exceed our targets. We are extremely grateful for all the donations we have received both financially and actual donated items. With the help of a couple of “elves”, we are able to add a few extra things to our list that will help make Christmas special for those in need.

**Newborns & Children Under 12 months old**

Thanks to some elves going above and beyond, we are going to be able to give at least 10 “blanket sets” to newborn children. A blanket set consists of 1-baby blanket, 3 receiving blankets, and 3 bib/burb sets. Additionally, we have received a couple of generous monetary donations, so we will be able to buy five “sleeper sacks” for children between the ages of 6 – 12 months old.

**Young Adults**

This is a tougher group to buy for and as we all know their wish list gets much more expensive. So, we wanted to help this group with a few extra items. With the help of Mindy M putting in extra sewing hours, we will be able to donate 30 cosmetic bags for teenage girls and another 30 toilette bags for young men. And through another generous monetary donation, we will be able to donate: 5 camping tents, sleeping bags, and lanterns for young males and journals & associated supplies for teenage girls.

**Seniors**

The Farmington Elks extend beyond children during the holiday season and work to make Christmas special for those who are living in the area nursing home. And to support those efforts, we plan to donate 30 blankets that can be delivered to these individuals during the holidays

As always, I am grateful beyond words for the generosity and help that this community has shown in our efforts to help those in need. And not only are we going to be able to bring more of the basic items that will provide warmth & comfort, but we are also able to give a little bit more which we hope brings joy and smile to those who will receive these gifts this season!

**"Making Christmas special and seeing the grateful faces of those we serve"**



Aaron & Anissa Allumbaugh





# OPERATION ELVES COMMUNITY

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Volume 10 - October 2022

Updates for this issue

## 2022 Operation Santa gift goals

Blankets - 240 (106% to goal)  
Hat Sets - 180 (133% to goal)  
Books - 160 (124% to goal)

## 2022 current gift count

Blankets - 255  
Hat Sets - 240  
Books: 199

## Spotlight - Operation Elf Creator & Logistics Director Melissa (Mel) & Bill Stack

The first giving experience I remember was when I was about 11 years old. I had a doll that I loved but didn't play with anymore so it was saved in a box. Our church was asking for donations to less fortunate families....and I remember consciously deciding to give away something I liked for someone in need. Growing up I was taught, through watching my parents, to help others with my time and my gifts. As an adult, I have tried to be generous and help those in need – both people I knew and some I didn't.

Four years ago, my niece was telling me about the financial hardship of many of her students and my heart knew I had to do something to help. That first year, my mother and I made about 34 blankets for her to give to her students at Christmas. The following year, I got connected with Operation Santa so we could help more children in that area. By 2021, we created a community of like-minded, caring individuals, bringing to life Operation Elves. Our primary goal is to gather blankets, books, and hats/mittens for children newborn to 17. It is amazing what **you** have helped us accomplish in two years.

While I am grateful for all the donations and talented individuals – none of this would be possible without the help & support of my husband, Bill Stack. My focus is on complying all the donations and stuffing them into boxes. It is Bill who figures out how we are going to get everything into a vehicle or trailer so we can deliver it to Farmington Maine. He is the driver and the muscle. Yesterday, he packed 60 boxes into the trailer. A year's worth of work comminates into the last two weeks in September and the first week of October. It is here that Bill's talents are tested.

But his true support comes by agreeing to a percentage of the money I make through my consulting business to go directly to funding Operation Elves. And with that support, we have helped clients and a community.

It is satisfying to see a year's worth of work come together and to have a community of elves helping others. It continually reminds me how much I have to be grateful for in my own life.

It is my sincerest wish that we will continue to expand our reach through Operation Elves and bring joy and hope to those who may need the support through the kindness of a group of strangers. Know that your contribution is making a difference in the lives of children and creating joy during the holiday season.

## 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:

- Kathy G - Regina T
- Kathy B - Karen K
- Mindy M - Jenny W
- Lisa L - Linda E
- Beverly N - Joy A
- Alan H - Barbara O
- Don & Suzie M - Jean S

## How Can You Get Involved

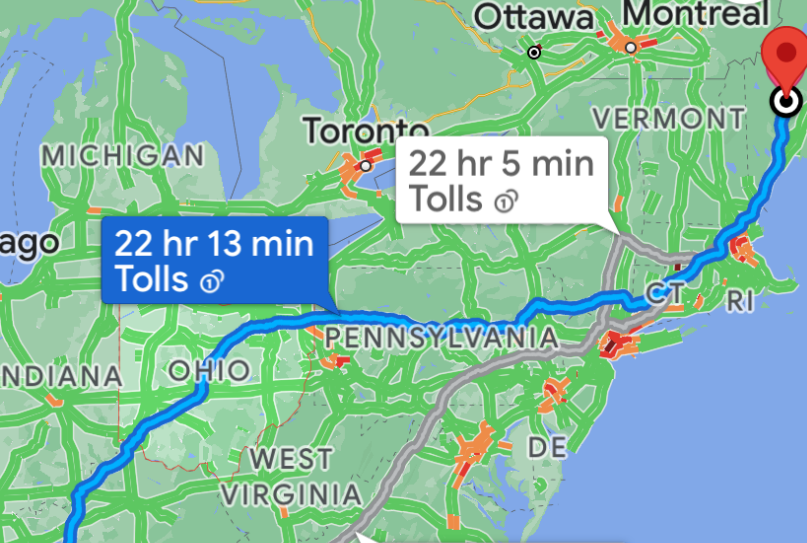
You can reach me (melissa stack) at:

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





## HITTING THE ROAD

On the 1st of October, we will "hit the road". We have so many donations this year that we have to use a bigger trailer!

To go from Nashville TN to Farmington ME is approximately a 22-hour and 31-minute adventure. However, it will take us a little longer.

### 1st Stop - Illion NY

We have one stop in NY to pick up some more donations. Thanks to the hard work of Linda E, we will be picking up 4 boxes that will be filled with hat sets, books, and some cosmetic supplies for teenage girls.

### 2nd Stop - Farmington ME

Here we will drop off a majority of our trailer load. We will be meeting Aaron and Anissa from the Farmington Elks to hand over all the donations we have collected.

### 3rd Stop - Wilton ME

Here we will actually stop at two locations. The first will be to the WMCA (Western Maine Community Action) organization where we will deliver diapers (thanks to a donation from Caroline S) to help new mothers in need.

Our second stop will be to the 2nd graders at Blue Hill Academy school. Here we will say "hi" to three 2nd grade classes who are a delight. So much energy and so excited to have visitors. We will check in on how they are doing with their "Diggity Dog Bookclub".

Once we have delivered all of our goodies..... we will start to make our journey back to Tennessee. But not before visiting with our family and friends up North, collecting some New England apples to bring home, and one stop at the Christmas Tree Shoppe.

In our next issue, we will be sure to share pictures from our adventure and share the final donation list. In the meantime, we will be getting started on next year's donations .... I will be working on blankets as we drive up North!

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted" Aesop



Bill & Mel Stack

