

# OPERATION ELVES COMMUNITY

Giving to Those in Need



## **Spotlight - Operation Elves Contributors Don & Susie McEwen**

I would like to introduce you to two people who are not only wonderful neighbors for over 34 years, but are kind and giving contributors; Don and Susie. As I created and shared the idea of Operation Elves, Don and Susie were the first non-family members to volunteer to help and have continued to be an important part of how we reach our goals each year.

While Don and Susie may be retired, their life is full of activities and many of these activities are in support of helping others. They volunteer at their church. Don has logged in over 1,000 hours as a driver for the VA. And when he is not driving for the VA, he delivers Meals on Wheels.

Susie is talented in the areas of cooking, sewing, and all things crafty. She has used her talents for Project Linus and every year you can find her creating goodies for the church Christmas fair.

Every year I can count on Don and Susie for many of our book donations. They are both avid readers who are regulars at the library. And because of their love for reading, they want to make sure children get exposed to the world of books and consider it an important gift to give.

When I asked why they donated to Operation Elves, Don said that while they may not be rich, they are doing well and therefore feel it is important to help others who are struggling. To simply "do what they can".

So many worthwhile organizations count on the generosity and caring of people like Don and Susie. I am grateful they have chosen to help Operation Elves bring Christmas joy to those in need.



Volume 19- June 2024  
Updates for this issue

## 2024 Operation Santa Gift Counts

Blankets - 243 (81% to goal)  
Hat Sets - 265 (88% to goal)  
Books - 189 (63% to goal)  
Cash Donations: \$220

## 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:

- Beverly N
- Jean S
- Barbara O
- Mindy M
- Susie M

## 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

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 the issues of the newsletter.

The next issue will be in September 2024



## 2024 GOAL UPDATE

It's hard to believe that it is June already! We have just four more months to prepare for our annual drive to Maine, where we deliver all the wonderful gifts that our elves have either made and donated or provided funds to purchase.

Our goal for 2024 is to collect 300 of each of our main items (blankets, hat sets, and books) for the children of Northern Maine. Thanks to some savvy shopping by Bev & Jim N and the help of Jean S, we are in great shape with hat sets. We may also have some new elves joining the blanket-making effort, which should help us reach our goal for blankets. The only area where we are a little behind is books. If you would like to help, you can order books on Amazon and have them shipped to me or send money so we can purchase them.

In addition to the items mentioned above, we have collected some winter jackets and anticipate getting tents on sale after the 4th of July. We are also working on making and stuffing cosmetic bags for young adults, with a goal of at least 40 bags. Currently, we have 15.

We also gather items for seniors, focusing on three main items: blankets, socks, and toiletry bags. We are on target for socks and blankets but are running a little behind on the toiletry bags. This summer, we will focus on completing the toiletry bags.

We are always grateful for any donations. If there is something you would like to contribute to this year's donation drive, please contact me, and we will figure out how to get it to our "warehouse" (also known as a couple of bedroom closets).

Thank you for your continued support!

**Don & Susie McEwen**



"We make a living by what we get,  
but we make a life by what we  
give"

Winston Churchill

# OPERATION ELVES COMMUNITY

Giving to Those in Need



## Spotlight 2024 Delivery Date

It is hard to believe that October is right around the corner. We have confirmed a date with the Farmington Elks and will deliver all our donations on **October 22**. So for the next few weeks, we are focused on boxing up the final items and loading the trailer. When we load the trailer, we will get the final count of boxes and see if we beat last year's total of 35 ( I think we will).

## Donation Update

We are focused on our final push to collect, buy or make any of the items we want to bring with this year's delivery. As you can see from the sidebar, we have met or exceeded all our primary goals (blankets, hat sets & books). And we have so many elves to thank for helping us reach our goals for 2024. With about five weeks left, we are focusing on filling cosmetic and toiletry bags for seniors. Additionally, we are running short on earbuds for young adults so if anyone wants to help in this area - you can order them on Amazon and have them shipped to me or any money we receive in the next month will go towards this item. (Of course, if there is another item you'd like to donate, feel free.)

It is truly amazing and humbling to have so many kind souls who help us fill a trailer full of Christmas gifts for those in need. Please know that you are making a difference in the lives of so many and helping to make Christmas special for those who need it most.

THANK  
**YOU**

## VOLUME 20 – SEPTEMBER 2024 UPDATES FOR THIS ISSUE

### 2024 OPERATION SANTA GIFT COUNTS

Blankets - 332 (107% to goal)  
Hat Sets - 325 (108% to goal)  
Books - 302 (100% to goal)  
Cash Donations: \$367

### 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:

- Beverly N
- Jean S
- Barbara O
- Mindy M
- Susie M
- Jennfier I
- Jerry J
- Lesley F

### HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED

You can reach me (Melissa Stack) at:

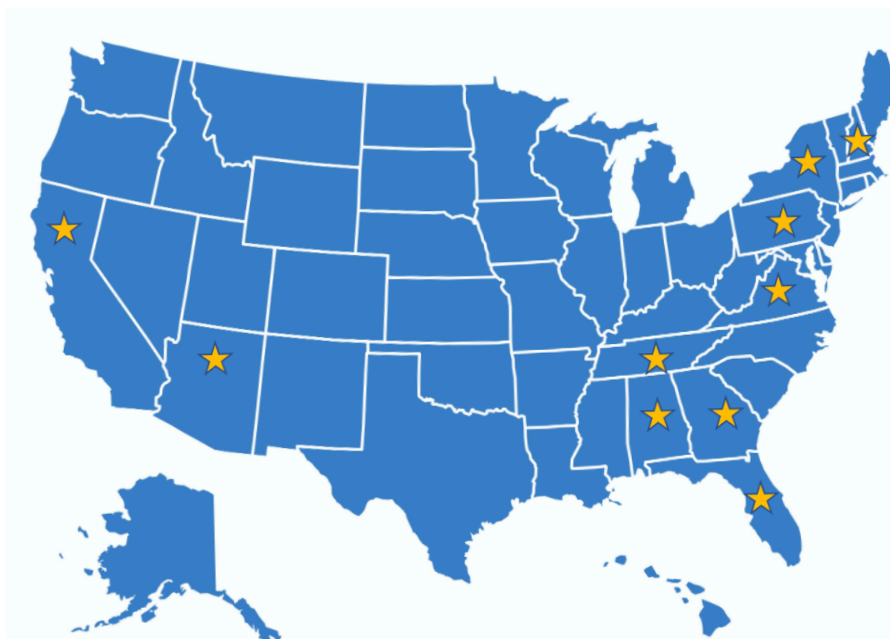
- [jusmel@comcast.net](mailto:jusmel@comcast.net)
- [www.operationelvescommunity.org](http://www.operationelvescommunity.org)
- [venmo:@melissa-stack-3](https://venmo.com/melissa-stack-3)
- 615-631-4920

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 the issues of the newsletter.

The next issue will be in December 2024



## FUN OPERATION ELF FACTS



In 2024, I am excited to welcome our two newest elves, Lesley and Jennifer. Welcome to the group. And (all elves) thank you for continuing to spread the word, especially to your crafty friend as we are continuously looking for new elves to join our little group.

As you might have already guessed, many of our main contributors come from TN. But as the map above shows, since we started in 2019, we have had contributing elves from 10 states. It is such a statement to see folks from all over the US, come together to help this community in Maine. (It is still my hope that we will find an organization in TN to help this year; extending our reach and help more children in need.)

Since 2019, we have had over 49 individuals contribute to Operations Elves. And over 24 of these individuals have contributed in multiple years; some even contributing annually. Most of the contributions come in the form of donated items but we have used any of the monetary donations to buy items such as tents, sleeping bags, earbuds, and art supplies.

As many of you know, I started a training and development consulting business in 2019. One of my goals for the company was to use some of the revenue to help others. This year, the business was able to donate over \$5,000 to supply materials and items that will be delivered to the Elks. As Beaconhill (my company) continues into 2025, helping Operation Elves will continue to be a priority.