

OPERATION ELVES COMMUNITY

Giving to Those in Need



Operation Elves Delivery Up North October 2023

It is hard to believe that we made our trek up North over two months ago. Where has 2023 gone?!?!?!?

We loaded up the trailer (thanks Darryl) and filled it with 86 boxes (thanks Brian & Bill) and headed up North for our delivery on October 17. We arrived at 9:55 am and met with a group of great volunteers (see picture above) and proceeded to unload the trailer. With seven Elk volunteers and a dog (Brady), we proceeded to unload the trailer in 15 minutes. Once again showing, what can be accomplished by a group of caring individuals.

We got a tour of the containers and saw all the items that were already collected as the Elk's team gets ready for Operation Santa 2023. In February, we will be able to report out on how many children and elderly were served but it is safe to say that our contribution will help them to make Christmas special for those in need.

Special thank you to everyone who showed up to help us unload the trailer: Kip, Bonnie, Chapman, Anissa, Aaron, Daryl, Judy, John, and of course, Brady.

Volume 17- December 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)
Cash Donations: \$840

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
- Lisa L
- Alan H
- Jenny W

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 February 2024





2024 NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

Starting in 2024, we are going to move to Quarterly Newsletters. We will follow this schedule and give these highlights:

February - Recap 2023 Operation Santa distribution & communicate 2024 goals for Operation Elves

June - Regular update

September - Last call for donations before our annual road trip

December - Recap of the roadtrip and final donation counts



MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

It is hard to believe that 2023 is almost over!!!

It is my sincerest wish that you have a wonderful Christmas/holiday season. And I hope that 2024 brings you health, happiness and many, many blessings. As I close another year, there is so much I am grateful for and for which I feel tremendously blessed. I want to thank you for being part of the community, for your generous donations, and for the giving of your talents. As always, your contributions are making a difference and help to make the holiday season special.

Enjoy!

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Recap of 2023 Operation Santa Delivery

It's hard to believe that it is February 2024 and the 2023 distribution of gifts to children and the elderly happened almost two months ago. Last week, I had a chance to talk to Aaron Allumbaugh, who heads up the Operation Santa project, to find out how 2023 Operation Santa went. Here are some of the highlights.

Stats:

- 876 individuals in the Franklin County area received help
- 96 individuals were elderly
- All the items we delivered were used (except 2 tents)
- Elks received \$15,000 in cash donations to help buy items
- Jackets & boots were a popular ask
- Our 2023 donations had a product value of \$12,711

With a 34% increase in the elderly population in need, and a facility in Jay, Maine closing, our donations help to bring joy to those in need during the holiday. While the percentage of children only increased by about 3%, many of the same children were served in 2023 as in 2022.

I know that the Elks are always happy to see us arrive with our trailer of goodies. And while I still think they are trying to figure out why we go to Maine from TN; I am thrilled that because of many caring and generous individuals, we are continuing to make a difference in a community that needs our generosity and caring. Thank you for making 2023 a huge success and I look forward to seeing what we can do in 2024.

Volume 18- February 2024
Updates for this issue

2024 Operation Santa Gift Counts

Blankets - 143 (48% to goal)
Hat Sets - 142 (47% to goal)
Books - 86 (29% to goal)
Cash Donations: \$195

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
- Ted D
- Suzie M

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Newest &
Youngest
Elf





OUR 2024 GOALS

Those of you who are regular readers know, our first priority is to gather items in three categories: blankets, hat sets and books.

Our 2024 Goal is to reach **300** items in each of these three categories.

Everything we brought to Maine last fall was used! So we will continue to work on the following extras for the children: tents, ear buds, jackets, cosmetic bags and stuffed animals.

New for 2024 will be to gather craft items, coloring books and crayons!

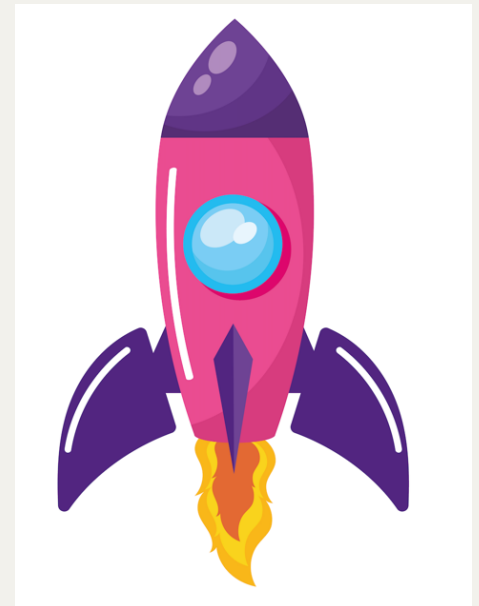
Seniors are another population that is served by the Elks. Last year, we focused on blankets, socks and toiletries. For 2024, our goal is to gather 45 blankets, 40 pairs of socks and 70 toiletiere bags.

ADOPTING A FAMILY

In speaking with Aaron, he mentioned that in addition to the regular donations they receive, sometimes an individual or group will adopt a family. What does this mean?

When the application comes in with the children's wishes and needs, the adopting group goes ahead and buys things for those children specifically and allows them to get a little more. When the adopted family comes to pick up their Christmas items, they are told that they are receiving more this year because they were "adopted".

So for 2024, we will be adopting a family. This will require some additional shopping in early November so we can get the items requested and send them up to Maine. When we get more details about the family (late October), we will be glad to share with anyone who is interested in donating or shopping for a family in need. Please let me know if you would be interested in participating in this special project and I will keep you posted.



2024