

Hartford Elementary collects food to make holidays bright for those in need

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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HARTFORD - The **Hartford Elementary Parents Club** held a food drive to benefit **Operation Blessing** in Wood River.

This year, the club collected around 1,700 food items that made Thanksgiving and will make the Christmas season brighter for many struggling families in the local area.

Hartford Elementary Principal **Mark Begando** couldn't be more proud of his students and the Parents Club for what they had done. He said it was highly impressive the group collected so many items with an enrollment of only 202 students.

Amy Harding is a board of education member for the Wood River-Hartford Elementary District 15, and a secretary for the Hartford Elementary Parents Club. Her daughter, **Taylor**, came up with the idea to do a food drive at the school a few years back that was a complete success.

“Our goal for the food drive was 1,000 items and we collected 1,700,” Amy Harding said. “When my daughter was 8, she went to the principal of the school and said she wanted to have a food drive and that year we collected 1,200 items in four days. This year, with the Parents Club, we decided we wanted to do something like this for the community.”

Amy said she was overjoyed that the roughly 200 students collected so much in the food drive.

“We got everything in before Thanksgiving and other food items will be used during the Christmas season,” she said. “I am always very impressed with Hartford Elementary School. This is my daughter's last year there. The staff and everyone at the school are wonderful, I am proud of everything they do at the school.”