

# **Less Than Two Weeks Remain for Community Christmas**

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**COMMUNITY  
CHRISTMAS**



Less than two weeks remain in United Way's annual Community Christmas donation drive for the Riverbend community. As Christmas draws near, time is running out to bring in any donations to one of the 117 boxes placed in businesses and organizations throughout the community. The boxes will be available for donation drop off until Thursday, December 12, when they will be picked up for sorting and then supplied to receiving agencies.

Donations to be placed in the boxes include non-perishable food items, new clothes for all ages, new winter weather necessities like gloves, hats and scarves, blankets, baby care items, hygiene items, and new toys. Items received will go to 14 local agencies to help those in need of these items in the Riverbend during the holiday season. Many of these agencies greatly depend on the donations from United Way's Community Christmas to help those in the area have a great holiday.

All the items and monetary donations for Community Christmas stay right here in the area to help more than 6,000 people in need. Dawna Gilbreath, Community Christmas coordinator, said, "We are seeing a lot of full boxes already throughout the community, which is incredible and shows just how generous the Riverbend area is. But, there is still a call for additional donations as the need in our community is so great, especially around the holidays."

Those who wish to donate can drop off items at any location that has a Community Christmas box or at the United Way office during regular business hours, located at 707 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 270, East Alton, IL. For a complete list of box locations, visit: <http://www.stl.unitedway.org/event/community-christmas-2013/>. Another option for donation drop off is at the annual Freer Auto Body "Cookies and Cocoa" event Dec. 5 from 5-7 p.m. at their location in Godfrey, IL.

Community Christmas is also accepting cash donations. Monetary donations should be sent to the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way of Greater St. Louis at their new office location: 707 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 270, East Alton, IL 62024 and marked as Attn: Community Christmas. Monetary donations will go towards buying items on the donation list that were not received in large quantities or for certain age groups.

Community Christmas brought in more than 50 volunteers, 100 boxes, and received roughly 20,000 items donated in 2012. Volunteer opportunities are still available for Thursday, December 12, and Friday, December 13, and include picking up donation-filled boxes once Community Christmas comes to a close, dropping them off at the sorting location, and then sorting and loading the thousands of items donated for pick-up by the agencies.

For those interested in donating items, volunteering or for more information, call United Way's Southwest Illinois Division at 618-258-9800. Those who would like to help out can also sign up on United Way's volunteer website at [www.stlvolunteer.org/holidayvolunteeringguide](http://www.stlvolunteer.org/holidayvolunteeringguide) and type "Community Christmas" into the search tab.

#### About United Way of Greater St. Louis

*United Way supports more than 170 health and human service agencies located throughout a 16-county area in Missouri and Illinois. One in three people in our community receive services that strengthen families, help the elderly, keep children healthy and safe, and build stronger neighborhoods. For more information, contact 314-421-0700 or visit [www.stl.unitedway.org](http://www.stl.unitedway.org)*