



One week left to help people through Community Christmas

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Less than one week remains in the annual Community Christmas donation drive, sponsored by United Way and The Telegraph, that helps more than 6,000 people in the Riverbend community. Donations can be placed in one of the more than 100 boxes located at businesses and organizations throughout the community until Thursday, December 11, when boxes will be collected.

Items needed include:

- * Toys for children of all ages
- * New clothes/undergarments/socks
- * New coats for all ages
- * Diapers/formula/baby essentials
- * Blankets
- * Winter hats/scarves/gloves/mittens
- * Personal care items/hygiene essentials
- * Non-perishable food items
- * Household items such as cleaning supplies/paper towels/toilet paper

Donations received will go to 15 local agencies to help those in need in the Riverbend during the holiday season. Many of these agencies greatly depend on Community Christmas to help those in the area have a great holiday.

Dawna Gilbreath, Community Christmas coordinator, said, "This year we have had calls just about every day from people wanting to host a box, donate or volunteer, which is so encouraging. However, we are still asking for the community to join us this last week in donating to make the holiday bright for kids and families in our area, as the need in our community is so great."

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 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. All the items and monetary donations for Community Christmas stay right here in the area to help local people in need.

Volunteer opportunities are also still available for Thursday, December 11, and Friday, December 12, and include picking up donation-filled boxes, dropping them off at the sorting location, and then sorting and loading the thousands of items for pick-up by the agencies.

For more information, call United Way's Southwest Illinois Division at 618-258-9800 or visit HelpingPeople.org.

About United Way of Greater St. Louis

United Way of Greater St. Louis mobilizes the community with one goal in mind - helping people live their best possible lives. Located throughout 16 counties in Missouri and Illinois, United Way helps one in three people in the region build a foundation for a good quality of life through basic needs, education, financial stability, health and strong communities. For more information, contact 314-421-0700 or visit www.HelpingPeople.org