



Community Christmas Program Now Collecting Items For Riverbend Community

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EAST ALTON — United Way's annual Community Christmas kicked off this month with more than 60 boxes at participating businesses, churches, schools, and organizations throughout the Riverbend area. The program collects money and items through early December for local people in need this holiday season. A list of participating locations hosting a box is available at [HelpingPeople.org/CommunityChristmas](https://www.HelpingPeople.org/CommunityChristmas)

This year, the top needs in the community are blankets, household and personal care items, new coats, and other clothing items. Other items needed by local agencies include non-perishable food, new toys for kids of all ages, baby formula and diapers, and new socks, hats, gloves, and scarves.

All of the items collected will be distributed to the following agencies to help people in the community during the holiday season and beyond:

- 100 Black Men – Alton Branch
- Beverly Farms
- Boys and Girls Club of Alton
- Caritas Family Solutions
- Catholic Children's Home
- Centerstone
- Children's Home & Aid
- Crisis Food Center
- Illinois Center for Autism
- Oasis Women's Center
- Operation Blessing
- Riverbend Family Ministries
- Riverbend Head Start Family Services
- Salvation Army
- Madison County Urban League
- Village of Royal Lakes
- YMCA

In addition, monetary donations are also accepted and will be used to purchase items in short supply or not collected. Donations can be made online at [HelpingPeople.org /CommunityChristmas](https://www.HelpingPeople.org/CommunityChristmas) or mailed to United Way at 707 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 270, East Alton, IL 62024, marked Attn: Community Christmas.

“Community Christmas is one of my favorite holiday programs, as the generosity we witness year after year from so many local businesses, and individuals is outstanding,” said Maura Wuellner, director of the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way. “Every gift brings joy to children and families who may be struggling during the holidays. Through Community Christmas, our neighbors will be able to meet their basic needs and have something to smile about during this special time of the year.”

There are still donation boxes available for businesses and organizations to host. Those interested in requesting a box can call 618-258-9800.

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.