

# Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign Aims to Raise Another \$100,000 Before Jan. 31

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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ALTON - The red kettles might be packed away, but the Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign will continue until Jan. 31, 2024, and they have another \$100,000 to raise to meet their goal.

“Now that the kettles have been put away and the ringers are kind of silent now, this might be the more important part of the journey just because...we’re not as visible,”

said Mike Roberts, who co-chairs the campaign with his wife Karen. “This second half of the campaign is more important only just because the need isn’t changing. If anything, it’s still growing.”

The local Red Kettle Campaign raises money to benefit the Alton Salvation Army, located at 525 Alby Street. As of Dec. 28, 2023, the campaign had collected a little over \$116,500. They are hoping to reach their goal of \$217,000 by the end of January.

This money goes toward the Salvation Army’s services, including their food pantry, after-school program, hot meals and shelter programs and additional resources for those in need. These programs serve hundreds of individuals and families in the Riverbend community.

“The Salvation Army, this kind of humble brick building over on Alby, does such incredible work,” Roberts added. “And for people who are concerned about the needs of our community, they’re servicing those needs in such a fundamental but important way, from providing food and clothing and daycare programs for the kids. I have to say, I was a little astounded when I walked in and I saw the breadth of services that they provide. But it doesn’t come without cost.”

The Red Kettle Campaign is the Salvation Army’s biggest fundraiser. The money they collect will continue to fund their services throughout the year.

Roberts, who teaches theology at Marquette Catholic High School, said that his students choose to pray for unhoused community members almost every day. He noted that while the prayers are helpful, the Red Kettle Campaign donations are a way to go even further and help out the community. The need can be overwhelming, but this is a tangible step that people can take to help.

“I can’t do anything but pray for the folks in Ukraine and the Middle East and Myanmar, but what I can do, and I feel like what we’re all being called to do, is help those right here in front of us,” Roberts said. “There are just days where it seems like darkness is coming in at light speed, and you can just be frozen in place by that. But what happens is when you just ring the bell for a couple of hours, when you make a donation of just \$1 or five or 50, all of a sudden that feeling of being overwhelmed and frozen in place goes away because now you did do something.”

Roberts voiced his appreciation for those who rang bells throughout November and December, and he also expressed gratitude for the Salvation Army and the Red Kettle Campaign committee. Cassy and Sean Grey, the captains of the Alton Salvation Army, are “true Christian warriors,” he added.

He is hopeful more donations will come in soon. All of the money will go toward Salvation Army services in the community. They need \$100,000 to reach their goal by Jan. 31, 2024.

“I would like to just remind everybody that sometimes you see something and it grabs your attention and you pray for it and maybe even you make a donation to help it, but then life goes on,” Roberts said. “But even though you have moved on, those needs still need to be addressed. So just keep this effort in your prayers, and if you have an opportunity to pull something out of your wallet, do that, too.”

You can mail donations to 525 Alby Street in Alton or [donate online](#) at the [official Alton Salvation Army website](#).