



2020 Holiday Giving & Volunteering Opportunities

United Way of Northwest Vermont's mobile-friendly Volunteer Connection search platform connects you to hundreds of volunteer needs with local nonprofits. Go to www.unitedwaynwvt.galaxydigital.com or contact us at megan@unitedwaynwvt.org.



HOLIDAY GIVING



APPEAL FOR GIFT CARDS FOR CHILDREN SERVED BY DCF - As you know not all children experience happy, fun-filled holidays, and this season will be especially difficult. Your response to appeals for local support can make a real difference now. **KidSafe Collaborative** is again coordinating with Chittenden County's Department for Children and Families Family Services to get gift cards for kids and families, e.g., children in foster care, or kinship care, or whose families are struggling and therefore DCF is involved. Please consider making an office/business appeal or donate as individuals or as a family. Old Navy, Walmart, Target, Phoenix Books, Flying Pig Book Store, and grocery store cards in amounts of \$20 or \$25 are just suggestions. Buy cards for donation in person and mail them to KidSafe or purchase cards online to be sent directly to KidSafe Collaborative, 45 Kilburn Street, Burlington VT 05401. Families will appreciate these donations, so please get them to KidSafe by December 2, to allow for delivery to the local DCF holiday coordinator for distribution. For information, contact Lisa Simon lisas@kidsafevt.org

OPERATION HAPPINESS, a Program of United Way of Northwest Vermont helps families in Franklin and Grand Isle each year to provide and holiday meal, winter wear, and toys. This effort helps 1,000 local families each year. For information on how you can donate, visit <https://unitedwaynwvt.org/operation-happiness> or email Megan Bridges at megan@unitedwaynwvt.org.

LUND – Due to the many challenges of COVID-19 and our priorities in ensuring the health and wellbeing of our clients, staff, and community, **Holiday Giving** will be different in 2020. We are asking for Gift Cards in place of the traditional items. This will allow a counselor to work with their client in purchasing an item for their child and assist Lund for future needs. We would be grateful for gift cards in increments of \$25, \$50 and \$100 to:

- Amazon
- Gas Cards
- Grocery Store
- Michaels
- Old Navy
- Target
- TJ Maxx/Home Goods/Marshalls
- Visa/Mastercard
- Walmart

Gift cards can be mailed to: Julie C. Richards
Lund
50 Joy Drive
South Burlington, VT 05403

A CHILD WAITS – Steps to End Domestic Violence invites volunteers to sponsor a child affected by domestic violence by fulfilling a holiday wish list. Volunteers will be provided with the age and gender of the child and the option to buy up to two gifts not to exceed \$50. Businesses and organizations are invited to consider sponsoring a whole family. Volunteers are also needed to accept presents and help sort them so that every child participating receives the items on their holiday list. Contact Bessie McManus at 658-3131, Ext. 1068 or email bessiem@stepsvt.org.

THE GIFT OF READING – Fletcher Free Library invites people to share the joy of reading during their 30th annual “Books for Children Gift Campaign.” Choose from a list of books or make your own selections, then purchase books at Crow Bookshop or Phoenix Books for a discount. Books can be dropped off at FFL before December 13th. Books will be distributed to children through the Burlington Head Start preschools and COTS shelters. Contact Rebecca Goldberg at 865-7216 or email rgoldberg@Burlingtonvt.gov.

H.A.N.D.S. (Helping and Nurturing Diverse Seniors) – *Donations for Holiday Gift Bags to be delivered December 25*

Every Christmas we provide a giftbag with our meal deliveries – Shhh, please don’t tell the seniors! Due to safety concerns this year, unfortunately we’re cancelling the sit-down dinner. That means instead, we’ll be making lots more deliveries all over the county. We need lots of giftbag donations and we’d love your help. We are seeking financial contributions in any amount, canned goods & food items, hats & gloves for both men and women, toiletries, art supplies, crossword puzzle books, \$20 Hannaford cards, and several other items. To learn more about how you can help with donated items, visit <http://handsvt.org/>. Please contact Jess at jessicahymanvt@gmail.com if you have questions about donations.

HOLIDAY GIVING PROJECT – Howard Center provides services to thousands of children, adults, and families each year, many of whom have very limited financial resources. Progress in addressing mental health, substance use, and developmental disabilities happens when basic needs have been met and when people have opportunities for personal enrichment. And so each year we ask for gifts that will directly support clients to buy food and other basics and enable them to participate in holiday observances and cultural and educational activities that enrich their lives.

For more information and the donation form, click here: <http://howardcenter.org/community-education/howard-center-giving/>

Those interested in supporting can either send gift cards of their choosing in whatever amount they would like, or they can give online with a credit card (just choose “Help is Here Client Needs Fund” in the drop down menu [here](#)), or they can mail a check. Gift cards and checks can be mailed to: Howard Center, ATTN: Client Needs/Holiday Giving Fund, 208 Flynn Avenue, Suite 3J, Burlington, VT 05401

TOYS FOR KIDS OF VERMONT – Vermont Marine Corps League is once again collecting new, unwrapped toys during the Christmas season and oversees their distribution to children in need in Vermont.

Because of COVID 19 this year we have set up a "Virtual Toy Barrel" so that you can purchase toys online ([Amazon](#), [Walmart](#), [Target](#), [Gamestop](#), [Koh'l's](#), etc.) and have them shipped to us at JeriHill hardware in Jericho Vt. Visit [here](#) and click on the donate link above to get the full details.

Toys for Kids of Vermont is a volunteer program sponsored by the Vermont Marine Corps League which collects new, unwrapped toys during the Christmas season and oversees their distribution to needy children in Vermont. All money collected stays in Vermont and is used to purchase age appropriate toys to supplement donations, and for older children.

SANTA CALLS – Ronald McDonald House Charities has heard from Santa and he still wants to see his friends from the Jingle Bell Express! Although we are unable to host you all aboard our holiday train ride this year; we can still celebrate the holidays together! This holiday season, Santa is making (virtual) house calls! With the help of ol' St. Nick, Ronald McDonald House of Burlington is able to offer personalized videos, Face Time calls or phone calls with Santa to children across the globe. This is a donation based virtual event – by making a donation at a certain level, you may opt to sign up for a day to have Santa call your child(ren). To learn more, visit <https://donorbox.org/santa-calls-2020>



HOLIDAY VOLUNTEERING



THANKSGIVING MEAL – Dismas House invites volunteers to help cook a portion of their Thanksgiving dinner and then join residents for the meal. A great opportunity for those without plans for the holiday or for small families who want to share a meal with an appreciative group! Contact Kimberly Parsons at 658-0381 or email kim@dismasoft.org.

SWEETWATERS CARES – Thanksgiving Day marks our 30th year for this event and things will look a little different.

- The **coat drive** will kick off the day as usual. Donations for clean, warm coats only, can be dropped off at Sweetwaters up until the day before Thanksgiving.
- The **community dinner** will be to-go only from 10:00am – 2:30pm. Due to the nature of this year's event, there are limited volunteer spots available. Please call the restaurant at 802-864-9800 to see how you can help.

RED BARREL MONITORS – Toys for Kids of Vermont needs volunteers to check the red "Toys for Kids" toy donation barrels at various sites throughout Chittenden County. Volunteers will be assigned one or more barrels to check from November 1 through December 18 with most of the toys coming in the last couple of weeks in December. Collected toys will be delivered to the Salvation Army in Burlington or a Williston collection site. A great job for a family. You do need your own transportation to barrel and collection site. To volunteer, contact John Welsh at 872-0354. Volunteers will be provided with a Toys for Kids face mask.

10th ANNUAL RUNNING OF THE BELLS – Virtual or Live Run to benefit Operation Happiness

- **Live Run** *Cost \$10.00 per person – registration required in advance*
The Running of the Bells is being held at the 2020 Holiday Extravaganza on *Thursday, November 27 from 6:30 – 8:00pm, St. Albans Bay Park*
A festive one-mile walk and jog. Costumes encourage. Participants are encouraged to bring donations of canned goods and toys for Franklin and Grand Isle County families in need.
- **Virtual Run and Costume Contest** *Cost: \$5.00 per person*
Register online and receive your printable race bib. Walk or run anytime/anywhere between **November 1 – November 27**. Share photos of you and your friends during your run to the Saint Albans Messenger Facebook page to be featured in the Saint Albans Messenger and show your support to Operation Happiness.

A portion of the proceeds benefits **Operation Happiness**. To register, visit <https://runningofthebells.com/>

FESTIVAL – The Vermont Performing Arts League will present the **28th Vermont International Festival** virtually this year December 4th – 6th. This annual celebration of cultures from around the world, will bring crafts, foods, music, and dance to your computer screen (instead of the usual festival at the Champlain Valley Exposition). Since the 2020 festival will virtual, volunteer needs are very different than every other year. As soon as organizers have a better idea of what is needed, they will post it here:
<http://vermontinternationalfestival.com/become-a-vif-2020-volunteer/>

CHRISTMAS MEALS – Burlington Dismas House is looking for volunteers to help prepare portions of their Christmas meals at both houses. Volunteers are invited to join residents for the meal. Contact Kimberly Parsons at 658-0381 or email Kim@dismasofvermont.org.