



HOLIDAY Giving

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Ready to Give Back This Holiday?

by Christine Loewe, Volunteer Center Director of Communications

As November comes to a close we find ourselves in the heart of Holiday Season. For the marketing world this means the tinsel, glitter, and an endless supply of holiday baubles have arrived on store shelves and carols are playing over loud speakers all across America.

For those looking beyond the commercial aspect for deeper meaning, it is also that wonderful time of year when the spirit of generosity and giving has the opportunity to take center stage.

"Our phone lines always pick up this time of year with community members and businesses looking for new ways to connect and make their holiday celebrations more meaningful," states Christina Thurston Volunteer Mobilization Coordinator at the Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County.

To meet this annual increased interest in volunteerism, each year the Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County posts an online Holiday Volunteer Guide. The 2018 Holiday Guide is currently available on their website at www.scvolunteercenter.org. Individuals can register to volunteer directly online or they can download the guide. Listed in the guide, are a variety of holiday related opportunities available throughout the County between now and New Year's.

"We regularly update the guide throughout the holiday season as new projects become available, so we encourage folks to check back

regularly or give us a call if they can't find what they are looking for and we are happy to match them with an opportunity," states Thurston.

Included in the guide is the Volunteer Center's own Adopt a Family Project. This project has been running for more than 25 years and supports families struggling to make ends meet during the holidays. Each year the Volunteer Center partners with 25 fellow non-profits on this project to meet the needs of 450 families.

Partner non-profits provide the project with a short bio about each family and a list of the items that each family member requests. Adopt a Family Project staff and volunteers then set to work connecting these families with willing donors. Often times, requests include basic necessities like sheets, towels, or shoes along with special gift requests for the children.

"For many of us as the days grow colder and shorter we turn our thoughts to the joy of the holiday season with family and friends, but for local families that are struggling, the holidays become a very worrisome time. It is truly heart-breaking to read through the our binder of family stories and to know that without this project these children might not have warm jacket, let alone gifts or toys," states Thurston.

"We still have over 100 families awaiting adoption but we are confident that the generosity of our community will shine through as it does each year. This project has been successfully maintained with the support of our local businesses, community members, and

willing volunteers for so many years," continues Thurston.

There are number of ways to support the project that include adopting a whole family, purchasing individual items, volunteering in the adopt a family warehouse to wrap and sort gifts, or donating funds to support the project.

Volunteers will be at the Adopt a Family Phone Line until December 12th.

Adopt or learn more about the project by calling the Adopt a Family Hotline at 831-722-2364.

Aside from the Adopt a Family Project there are many deserving projects and programs in Santa Cruz County in need of volunteers or financial support this holiday season.

"For those who want to give a meaningful donation, I recommend you hop over to www.santacruzgives.org where you're guaranteed to find a cause you care about. Santa Cruz Gives spearheaded by Santa Cruz Good Times, is your one stop shop for holiday donations with 33 nonprofits to choose from. You can give to one or give to many- all with one transaction," states Thurston.

"One of my other favorite projects is serving as a Holiday Helper with the Family Service Agency program- I You Venture," continues Thurston.

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WE ALL HAVE A GIFT TO GIVE THIS SEASON



Give Gifts

Choose a family to adopt for the holidays.



Give Your Time

Wrap gifts, sort packages, or shop for those in need.



Give Cash

Give a donation to fulfill the wishes of local kids & families.



scvolunteercenter.org

ADOPT A FAMILY HOTLINE: (831) 457-9834

Through this project individuals can become a holiday helper by giving to the often forgotten care facility residents in the community. Many residents don't have family or friends visit them during the holidays, so they look forward to the gifts and cards provided by the Holiday Helpers.

Wrapped gifts of such items as socks, blankets, scarves, calendars etc. can be dropped off at Family Service Agency of the Central Coast (104 Walnut Ave. #208 Santa Cruz, CA) between now and December 8th.

A final best bet are the projects offered with Jacob's Heart Cancer Support Services.

Volunteers are invited to hand-make a friendship card and create a small care package for children and families coping with cancer.

"Children who receive these cards in the mail know someone that cares is thinking of them and wishing them good days," states Thurston.

Additionally, this Holiday Jacob's Heart is hosting Community Caroling as a fundraiser and they are looking for volunteers to support this effort.

Information about all of these opportunities

can be found in the Holiday Volunteer Guide on the Volunteer Center of Santa Cruz County website at www.scvolunteercenter.org.

"There is something for everyone, no matter how much time or money you have to give. If you're struggling to find just the right fit for giving back, reach out to us at 831-427-9070 or email connect@scvolunteercenter.org and we will help you find the perfect match for your needs and interests," states Thurston.

Contact: Christine Loewe-Volunteer Center Director of Communications
Call: 831-227-1994
Email: volunteer@scvolunteercenter.org



HERITAGE HOLIDAY CRAFT & GIFT FAIR

November 30th - December 2
Friday 10 AM to 6 PM
Saturday & Sunday 10 AM to 4 PM

Celebrating Our 41st Year!

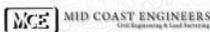
CRAFTS, GIFTS, ANTIQUES, TOYS, COLLECTIBLES, FOOD, & THOSE ONE-OF-A-KIND GIFTS THAT YOU WON'T FIND AT THE MALL!

3 BIG BUILDINGS FILLED WITH CRAFTERS & GIFTS!

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds
HWY 152 - Watsonville
fairgrounds-foundation.org

Happy Hour last two hours of each day of the Holiday Fair

Admission \$6.00
Children under 5 FREE
FREE Parking



Pajaro Valley Historical Association
Archive-House-Museum

You are cordially Invited to a **Bright Holiday Tea**

Sunday, December 2nd, 2018 ~ 1pm-4pm
332 East Beach St.
Watsonville, California

Everyone welcome ~ Donations gratefully accepted

SANTA CRUZ GIVES

Your donation to Jacob's Heart provides financial, emotional, and practical assistance to children with cancer, and brings joy to their families during the holidays and throughout the year. Join Jacob's Heart this year and adopt a family during the holidays at jacobsheart.org/adopt-a-family.

LOVE... that's what we deliver to children with cancer during the holidays and every day of the year!

Come visit **HOLIDAY HEARTS**
JACOB'S HEART AT THE CAPITOLA MALL

GAS CARD DRIVE

JACOB'S HEART PROVIDES PREPAID GAS GIFT CARDS TO FAMILIES WHO NEED ASSISTANCE getting their child with cancer to treatment. Driving to Stanford Children's Hospital and UCSF from Santa Cruz is expensive. You can help families who struggle to get their child to treatment by purchasing \$25 and \$50 pre-paid gas gift cards for needy families. Mail cards to the Jacob's Heart Family Center, or drop them off at the Jacob's Heart Holiday Hearts Store at the Capitola Mall.

JACOB'S HEART FAMILY CENTER 600 West Beach Street Watsonville, CA 95075
JACOB'S HEART HOLIDAY HEARTS STORE Capitola Mall (near the food court)
831-724-9100 • jacobsheart.org/holiday-hearts