

# Town of Porter Christmas Baskets Program underway

Community program helps area's needy – donations, volunteer help now being sought

BY TERRY DUFFY  
Editor-in-Chief

It may not seem like it lately with the mild, fall weather we've been experiencing, but the holiday season is really just around the corner.

With that in mind, officials of the Town of Porter Christmas Basket Program once again have started their planning with a goal of brightening the holidays of needy families in the River Region. And they are asking for your help.

"We know you have supported this program in the past, and we're hoping you do so once more," said Rita Rolfe, who serves as chair.

The Porter Christmas Baskets Program works with businesses, community organizations and residents in the River Region by soliciting donations of gifts/gift cards, cash and food. Rolfe said the Christmas 2022 campaign was able to provide holiday toys, clothing and food for 65 families, including more than 120 children.

"The Christmas Basket Program was a win-win for the recipients and the donors," she said of the effort that saw the involvement of many from throughout the River Region. "We are a total volunteer organization."

Rolfe said this program typically sees help come from a wide range of organizations, businesses and citizens in the River Region.



Toys collected at Lewiston-Porter Middle School under the direction of Mrs. Tina Oddy. (Submitted photo)

The list of contributors is many, including the Youngstown Lions, Youngstown Yacht Club, First Presbyterian in Youngstown, parishioners of St. Bernard's worship site, St. Peter's School in Lewiston, Lew-Port Middle and the Lew-Port elementary retired teachers and staff, DiMino's Lewiston Tops and Boy Scout Troop 829.

"We hope you will support this program again," Rolfe said.

Here's how the River Region can help out:

- Donations of cash for gift cards and children's presents. "We plan to use much of your donated money for food cards," Rolfe said. She requests those interested in donating to make checks payable to the Youngstown Civic Guild and mail them to 337 Riverview Drive, Youngstown, NY, 14174.

- Donations of gifts cards from Tops, Walmart, Target or Amazon are also welcome.

- "Please show the monetary amount of the gift on the card,"

Rolfe said. "They can be mailed to the above address or dropped off at the Village of Youngstown office. This is a really needed gift this year."

- Businesses and organizations are invited to place a food box at their locations for collecting food donations. The food drive runs from Monday, Nov. 20, to Wednesday, Dec. 13. For more information, contact Kate Myers at 716-745-7846.

- Another way to help out is to become an "Angel" by providing a gift/gift card for a designated child. Those who are interested can contact steering committee member Janet Brooks at 716-425-0952 or Janetbrooks@yahoo.com. Those who have assisted previously are now in the process of being contacted.

- Residents are asked to contribute to the Youngstown Boy Scout 829 food collection drive that will take place the morning of Sunday, Dec. 10. "If you get a flyer from the Boy Scouts, place nonperishable food in bags on your porch or by your mailbox before 9 a.m.," Rolfe said.

She said nonperishable food donations may also be dropped off in designated boxes found at area businesses, the Youngstown Free Library or the Village Red Brick Community Center, 240 Lockport

St., by Dec. 13. Nonperishable foods can also be dropped off at the Red Brick between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. that week.

- Volunteers are sought to help prepare the collected holiday gifts and food parcels for delivery at two designated timeframes scheduled that week in the Red Brick gym. Gift preparations will occur from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday-Wednesday, Dec. 11-13, while the preparation of food packages will take place at 1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 14. Those interested are asked to contact Brooks at 716-425-0952 or Rolfe at 817-998-2809 for time availability.

- And volunteers are needed to help deliver the gift and food baskets starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 16. Those interested can contact steering member Colleen Johnson Summerville at 716-531-6701.

- Finally, organizers are requesting Town of Porter-area families (including those in Youngstown and Ransomville areas) who may be in need to contact them via the Youngstown Village office at 716-745-7721 by Dec. 1 and leave their phone number.

"We will return the call and register them for food or children's gifts," Rolfe said. "Thanks for joining us in spreading the true spirit of the season!"

## Niagara Gospel Mission to hand out over 1,000 meals to people in need

Niagara Gospel Mission, at 1317 Portage Road in Niagara Falls, will hand out over 1,000 meals to the people in need in the City of Niagara Falls.

As part of this "Feed the Falls" event, volunteers from across Western New York will come into the Niagara Gospel Mission to package Thanksgiving meals on the evening of Nov. 22 and the morning of Thanksgiving Day.

"I love that we can bless the people of Niagara Falls, especially the elderly who are all alone. It is such an encouragement to see the community come together to support those in need," Volunteer Coordinator Donna Steven

said. "It is through the volunteer support of the community funneling through the Niagara Gospel Mission's doors."

Niagara Gospel Mission is still accepting donations of turkey, potatoes, cranberry sauce and corn.

A press release stated, "You can come to the Niagara Gospel Mission on Nov. 22 at 7 p.m., to our 'Pie Party,' where we will be cutting the pies, scooping the cranberry sauce, and packaging the rolls. You can also come on the morning of Thanksgiving to help with the distribution.

"If you are in the City of Niagara Falls and need a Thanksgiving meal, please call 716-298-7819 to receive a meal. The Niagara Gospel Mission appreciates all your support in ensuring the people of Niagara Falls know they are seen, they are heard, and they are loved."

Niagara Gospel Mission is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit providing services to the homeless and poor. Visit niagaragospelmission.org to learn more about current services and plans to develop services for homeless women.

## Town of Niagara (cont.)

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past winter's contract with American Rock Salt Co., outside Geneseo.

### Speed Limit Too Steep?

At the Town of Niagara's regular meeting Tuesday, Charles LaGreca wondered if there were any options available to the town to lower the speed limit crossing over the Lockport Road bridge near its intersections with both East Britton and Haseley drives.

LaGreca said he's been nearly run off the road there multiple times trying to navigate the road by vehicles driving in excess of the speed limit of 45 mph.

"With texting and bumper riding so prevalent, it's dangerous," he said. "Especially in the winter, it's very treacherous."

A wrinkle in the situation is the planned Amazon warehouse will be located at the next intersection, at Lockport and Packard roads. And LaGreca said, should

the facility ever become reality, those folks driving to and from work will only compound the situation.

Niagara Police Chief Craig Guiliani agreed with LaGreca about the intersection's hazards. He said there have been fatal crashes there, though none of them featured the issues LaGreca highlighted in his request.

"It can be tricky," Guiliani said. "Especially when you aren't paying attention and you're going too fast. It can be dangerous."

However, Guiliani said, the state Department of Transportation doesn't allow towns like Niagara to lower speed limits, especially on county-owned Lockport Road. Instead, the Town Board would need to petition the state, which would then take the matter under advisement.

And even then, the first result would be a traffic study, Guiliani said.

### Other Town Board Notes

- Town of Niagara officials approved the proposed industrial development by Uniland Development Co., at 3401 Military Road, pending a building permit.

- An agreement to sell the solar power farm in the Republic Services Allied Waste Niagara Falls Landfill was approved, giving the current owner, AC Power 15 LLC, the ability to sell the operation to Callibrant Energy. The town will receive 15 annual payments from the owner according to a negotiated fee schedule in lieu of taxes.

- December's meeting schedule will be different as the board considers the Christmas holiday. A work session will be held at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5, followed by the board's regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 12. Both will take place in the conference room at Town Hall, 7105 Lockport Road.

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Begins in the PennySaver Wednesday, December 6 and runs through December 20