

**T-N-S Christmas Fund
C/O Thomas G Gallant
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The Tilton-Northfield-Sanbornton Christmas Fund is once again planning its annual drive for the less fortunate members of our communities. I have pondered how I would go about the annual task of fund raising. We all know that the economy is soft and that the outlook for the next number of months is more of the same....I have thought that we will need to severely cut back on what we can do for those in need in our communities as fund raising efforts may well be as flat as the economy. I have come to the conclusion that we will need to live within our means, however we need to continue what we started some 24 years ago. I have always been blessed with the out pouring of generosity of so many and have always been able to care for those who are in need.

The need in our communities this year far exceeds any that we have yet experienced. All of us know of someone who has been laid off or lost their job due to a business closing its doors. We all have had to tighten our belts and adjust our budgets as a result of the economy. I therefore enter this fund raising campaign knowing that we will fight an uphill battle, however we will endeavor to take care of every elderly person and every family that qualifies.

I know full well, as a local small business, that we all continue to struggle to make a profit, however in many cases, some among us are just keeping the light bill paid. We need only look around our own communities to witness the burden that the less fortunate, some being our friends and neighbors are being forced to bear. The increased cost of fuel oil and prescription drugs, has always added a huge burden to seniors as well as families in our communities. This year, unfortunately will be no different, and there will again be those who have to choose between proper nutrition, keeping warm or taking prescribed medications. It seems totally unacceptable to be members of the Greatest Society on earth and be faced with these stark realities and choices.

Compassion for neighbors, friends and family and a rekindled sense of community needs to prevail now more than ever, in our neighborhoods and in our country in general. We observe it in our schools, homes, businesses and everyday in our interpersonal relationships with friends, families and acquaintances. It has been my experience and privilege, over these many years, to observe first hand much of this caring nature in our local communities. Too often we let our lives be guided, sometimes in an inadvertent manner, by the negativism that permeates our news and press. When one takes the time to step back from the daily grind, the push to get ahead or stay afloat, one can see the goodness and charitableness that so many people in our communities possess.

It is in this sense of compassion and caring for our fellow neighbors that we appeal to you this year to make a donation to help families in need during the coming holiday season. As we all know, there are many people in our communities who find themselves overwhelmed financially and who need some extra help to assist them through these times. Recent conversations with our local welfare directors indicate that we began receiving requests for

services in July. The balance of this fall and winter season show the signs of increasing the demands for assistance. We are being contacted daily by those who have nowhere else to turn. Those who never anticipated this major bump in the road.

The T-N-S Christmas Fund will again be helping by bringing baskets filled with blankets, mittens, boots, winter outerwear, toys, and food to the homes of the needy within our communities. The baskets contain all the necessities for the preparation of a full turkey dinner on Christmas day as well as canned goods and other provisions to help the average family through a few weeks.

The baskets provide not only sustenance but also the knowledge that someone cares and possibly a hope for a better time to come.

The T-N-S Christmas Fund is an all-volunteer non-profit organization which is in its 24th year. The agency is made up entirely of volunteers and 100% of monies collected are used directly to the benefit of those in need in the tri-town area. The agency has grown from collecting money in cans, placed on counters in convenience stores, to an agency who is committed to raising whatever amount of money is required to service those in need.

We coordinate our efforts with other local agencies to avoid duplications as well as to ensure that only those who are truly in need receive baskets. So rest assured that your generosity is not abused.

The T-N-S Christmas Fund serviced 163 households and 408 individuals during the 2008 Christmas Campaign. The mix of individuals serviced were as follows. We provided boots and jackets for 217 children, as well as gifts for these children and for 54 elderly people. We provided food baskets for all 163 households.

So what can you do? We are in need of donations of NEW warm clothing, hats, mittens, boots, blankets, NEW unwrapped toys and most importantly money to meet the needs of these troubled times. If you as an individual, family or business can find it in your heart to assist us in this endeavor, you may mail contributions to the T-N-S Christmas Fund, c/o Tom Gallant, 131 Colby Road, Tilton, N. H. 03276, or call 286-4279 to coordinate a pick-up and or receive additional information about this very worthy endeavor.

Your early donation to this fund will enable us to purchase sooner and to take advantage of sales. Therefore, please give our request a high priority and donate as generously as your circumstances allow.

On behalf of those whom we are able to serve through your generosity, please accept the heartfelt thanks of the Tilton-Northfield-Sanbornton Christmas Fund volunteers.

Very truly yours,

Thomas G. Gallant, for
The T-N-S Christmas Fund