

2017 Operation Stocking Stuffer Toy Drive



It's A Yule-Tide Of Toys!



Heartfelt Thanks In Words & Pictures



Scroll Down ↓

A Message From Chief Pena



Dear Friends of The Houston Fire Department,

I have been with the Houston Fire Department a little over a year now but before I assumed the role of fire chief, I was already aware of the giving spirit of this great city. The civic pride and generosity of Houstonians borders on legendary. When help is needed anywhere, the people of Houston are always among the first to offer support and assistance.

I witnessed this spirit of community first-hand in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. In the midst of all the devastation brought by the storm, I saw people from every socio-economic level come together as one for the betterment of our community. It didn't matter what part of town you lived in or your income level, the hurricane effected everyone. It did not discriminate. As I watched the events unfold during Harvey, I was filled with so much pride on how we supported each other and of course that includes the members of the Houston Fire Department. The brave men and women of HFD continued to answer the call even in the harshest conditions. The Houston Fire Department was not spared the devastation either. Not only did hundreds of our firefighters and civilian personnel suffer significant storm damage to their homes, but several fire stations experienced major flooding as well.

With supplies and financial aid pouring in from all over the world, the citizens began the long arduous task of rebuilding. Months later there is still so much to do. That is what makes the response to Operation Stocking Stuffer even more impressive. In the middle of this massive rebuild of our city and with thousands of our citizens still out of their homes, Houstonians came together once again to benefit families in need for the holidays. I cannot recall when I have seen the residents of a city go through so much and still be there to help so many others.

Houston Strong indeed.

I am truly proud to call myself a Houstonian and to be the fire chief over a department who values the community so highly. On behalf of the over 4,000 men and women of the Houston Fire Department, please accept our deepest, most heartfelt thanks to you, your employees, vendors, customers and volunteers for your commitment to Operation Stocking Stuffer. You helped bring a lot of holiday joy and countless smiles to thousands of Houston's underprivileged children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "SP", written over a white background.

Sam Pena

Fire Chief, Houston Fire Department

A Personal Message Of Thanks From Me

The planning for Operation Stocking Stuffer 2017 began in the summer of last year when members of the Houston Fire Department and KPRC Channel 2 sat down to discuss the logistics of the campaign. Dates and other details were finalized as we began preparation for one of the largest community outreach programs in the City. Little did we know that in August a massive, soaking-wet curve ball was going to be thrown at us that could change all of our plans and severely hamper Houston's largest toy drive. That curve ball of course was Hurricane Harvey.

I have seen the devastation first-hand. Living near the Addicks Reservoir, my neighborhood was absolutely ravaged by flood waters. My wife and I were one of the lucky ones. Our home was one of 300 in a neighborhood of almost 2000 homes that didn't flood. I had waterfront property complete with a boat launch which just happened to be my driveway. People are still recovering as the endless piles of debris stacked up on the brown front lawns never seem to disappear. I have lived through many of these storms and have never seen destruction like this.

All of this raised some profound questions. How do you plan an event like Operation Stocking Stuffer in the midst of all this chaos? How much can people continue to donate? What numbers do we expect and what do we need to plan for? With all of the relief efforts, money being donated and supplies and support coming in from all over the world, just what is going to happen to the toy drive? One thing was clear however, there were going to be more people in need than ever before. We just didn't know what to expect.

Well as usual, all of our questions were answered when the incredibly generous citizens of this great City came together and donated a record number of toys and money to our effort- and they were not the only ones coming to the rescue. Companies and organizations from California to New Jersey donated pallettes of toys and money to help Houston area families have a brighter holiday season. California-based Sempra Energy donated \$10,000 and their Community Outreach Director flew in to shop with their local employees using the money they gave. Mark and Barbara Nowakowski spearheaded a campaign in New Jersey and New York to collect toys for

the toy drive and ADG Creative did the same in Columbia, Maryland, a suburb of Baltimore. They shipped pallets of toys to our warehouse and more toys came in from Chicago and cash and checks came in from here and there which helped us reach a record number of financial contributions.

We had many established local companies join us for the first time in 2017 because they saw the need. Way Engineering, the Albemarle Foundation, BMC Software, Zermat USA and Doggett Heavy Machinery Services are just a few of the new elves in Santa's workshop. Long time toy drive contributors really stepped up to deliver a record amount of toys. KBR and Latham and Watkins LLP continued to amaze with the amount of toys they donated while Shell Oil hosted an employee build-a-bike day at their headquarters in West Houston and other locations. They built over 600 bikes to donate to the toy drive and then had them delivered to the distribution location. We of course ended up with a record number of bikes too. Fund raisers were hosted all over town to collect toys including two firsts for Operation Stocking Stuffer- a fashion show and a disc golf tournament. These are just a few examples of the generous spirit that brings us all together in times of need.

In fact, so many donations were received we unfortunately were not able to pick them all up before the giveaway on December 21, due to limited personnel. HFD fire stations continued to call in to report they had toys even into the second week of January. But not to worry, all of the toys and gifts will get to those who need them. We are working with several Houston area non-profit organizations and churches to make sure that happens.

So on behalf of everyone at the Houston Fire Department and all of those families who you helped to have a Merry Christmas, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. All of you are what make this event such a success and never forget that.

Thank you so much and see you in 2018.
Paul



Keep  Going

A SAD FAREWELL- MS. LORUGENE YOUNG 1943-2017



MS. LORUGENE YOUNG:
IT ALL STARTED WITH HER.



Operation Stocking Stuffer began more than 30 years ago when Ms. Lorugene Young had the idea of a toy drive to benefit Houston's underprivileged children.

A few years later, seeing the need in the community, Ms. Young approached the Houston Fire Department to see if HFD Fire Stations could act as collection points for the toys so the program could grow. Her vision has now taken her small toy drive forward to become the largest program of its kind in the Houston area.

Just before Operation Stocking Stuffer kicked off in 2017, on October 28, Ms. Young passed away after a series of debilitating illnesses. In her final years, even while she was battling Alzheimers and other illnesses, she would still come out to the toy giveaway. She always remembered Operation Stocking Stuffer no matter what. She will be greatly missed but we do have a message for her- ***"Rest in Peace Ms. Young. We will take it from here and we will make you proud."***

For more on Ms. Young's life and legacy, please click on the link below.

<https://www.click2houston.com/news/operation-stocking-stuffer-founder-lorugene-young-dies-at-75>

Keep Going

Thank You Everyone!

So many stepped up in 2017 after Hurricane Harvey to support Operation Stocking Stuffer and we want to thank all of those who did. Whether it was a financial contribution, in-kind donation or volunteer support, their contribution to Operation Stocking Stuffer had a profound impact on the success of the program and provided some much needed holiday joy to thousands of Houston area families.

OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER 2017 UNDERWRITERS



OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER 2017 MAJOR DONORS & CONTRIBUTORS



TOSTADA REGIA PANADERIA TIERRA CALIENTE



Thank You Everyone!

These businesses and organizations provided invaluable support to Operation Stocking Stuffer in 2017.

Volunteer Lunch Sponsors:

Brewingz
Chez Grill
Chili's
Fajita Pete's
Los Cucos Mexican Restaurants
Phoenicia Specialty Foods
Panaderia Tierra Caliente
Tostada Regia
Whataburger
You Squared Media

Volunteer organizations:

Accelerated Productions
AdvoCare
Baker and McKenzie
BHP Billiton
CERT
Charming Charlie
Chilis
The Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints-Houston
Department of Public Safety
First Community Credit Union
Houston Texas Fire Fighters
Federal Credit Union
KBR
KPRC Channel Two
Latham & Watkins LLP
New Light Christian Center
Prosperity Bank
Target
Teen and Family Services
TMK- IPSCO
Trae Tha Truth

United Airlines
Wedge Property Management
You 2 Media

In-Kind Donations:

COH Special Events
Dream Signs & Graphics
Katz Coffee
Kinkos/Fed Ex at the GRB
PODS of Greater Houston
PV Rentals
Target
Wal Mart (Heights)

Supporting Groups:

Accelerated Production Services
ADG Creative (Columbia, Maryland)
AdvoCare
Aldine ISD
AMECO
Apex Systems
Ardent Global
Baker and McKenzie
BCRN Aesthetics
BHP Billiton
BMC Software
BOMA
Borden Dairy
Brewingz
Canyon Rose Cleaners
The Cape Apartments
CBRE
The Center
Chacon Autos
Charles Taylor Adjusting
Charming Charlie
CHI St. Luke's Patients Medical

Center
Christus Health/TLRA
City of Houston Special Events
Climatec
Commerce Towers
Consortium Media + Public Relations
Costco
Diplomatic Security
Doggett Heavy Machinery
Downhole Technology
Elle Collection
Emmit's Place
Evergreen Cleaners
First Community Credit Union
Frazer LTD
Friendswood Disc Golf Club
Gensler
Gordon Food Service
Gulfhaven Adventist Church
Gurwitch Products
Harmony Schools
The Harris Center
Harris County Sheriff's Department
Hatfield & Company
Hess Corporation
Houston Club Pilates
Houston Texas Fire Fighters
Federal Credit Union
Houston Police Department
Houston Scottish Rite
Hyatt Regency Downtown
HYPE Program with The Greater Houston Partnership
J & M Cafe
Jentry Kelley Cosmetics
Jet Aviation Inc.

Kats Meow
KBR
Kerui
KPRC Local Two
104.1 KRBE FM
Las Chingonas De Tejas
Latham & Watkins LLP
LEECO Steel
Lincoln Property Company
LuLu Lemon
Lyondell/Basell
Maritime Services
Mark & Barbara Nowakowski (Toys for Children effected by disasters), New Jersey
McCarty Building Companies
Miller Grossbard Advisors
NETSYNC
New Light Christian Center
Pershing Middle School
PetsMart (Fry Road)
Phillips 66 Aviation
Phoenicia Specialty Foods
Prosperity Bank
Rice University-Jones
Graduate School of Business
River Oaks Country Club
River Oaks Women's Association
Rotary Club of University
S&B Engineers
Sargento Cheese
Sempra Energy
Shell Technology Center
Shell/Woodcreek

Sheraton North Houston
Sheraton Suites Houston
Sinopec USA Inc./Hines
Southwest Precision Printers
St. Joseph Medical Center
Strake Jesuit
Stream Realty
Studio Brand Collective
Teen and Family Services of Memorial
Southwest Schools
Texas Pipe and Supply
TMK-IPSCO
Transwestern
Trendmaker Homes
United Airlines
Van TV
Verdir at Hermann Park
Way Engineering
Weatherford
Wedge Property Management
Whataburger
Woodlake Imaging
Woodland Heights Civic Association
Zermat USA

Keep Going

Special Thank You- PODS... "Santa's Toy Boxes"



For many years the great folks at PODS of Houston have donated PODS containers and all of the pick-up and delivery service to Operation Stocking Stuffer. Even after Hurricane Harvey when their inventory was severely depleted, Tim Preston and Larry Sledge with PODS asked what they could do to once again be a part of this massive community outreach effort.

Every year PODS containers are placed at selected HFD fire stations based on the involvement of the surrounding community. If a station receives an abundance of toy donations each year a PODS container will be placed at their station if possible to store the toys. The containers act as satellite warehouses (think of them as "Santa's Toy Boxes") to allow the firefighters to save driving time as they make their pick-ups. Houston is a city of over 620 square miles with over 90 participating fire stations and with a limited amount of personnel able to pick up all of these donations, saving driving time is essential to the success of the campaign.

With the devastation brought by Harvey, Houstonians called upon PODS of Houston to provide secure storage options as they began to rebuild their homes and lives. This put a great strain on the inventory at the PODS warehouse but with a little logistical problem solving, PODS of Houston was still able to provide 21 containers for Operation Stocking Stuffer that allowed for another year of record numbers of families and children served in time for the holidays.

Larry, Tim, all of the drivers and everyone at PODS on the local and national level, the members of the Houston Fire Department would like to express our deepest thanks to you for your incredible efforts as a part of Operation Stocking Stuffer. We truly could not do what we do without you.

FOR MORE ON THIS STORY
PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINKS:

<https://www.click2houston.com/video/the-great-toy-giveaway-opens-at-6-am>
<https://www.facebook.com/HoustonFireDept/videos/1756122431088507/>

Keep Going

Operation Stocking Stuffer 2017- Prep Work

A lot of work goes into planning Operation Stocking Stuffer but it all has to start somewhere.

2017:
A NEW TOY DRIVE LOGO
WAS DESIGNED



NEW COLLECTION BOXES AND BIG TOY BAGS WERE DESIGNED AND ORDERED



BILL BALLEZA, DOMINIQUE SACHSE AND FRANK BILLINGSLEY OF KPRC CHANNEL 2 JOINED FIRE CHIEF SAM PENA AND THE FIREFIGHTERS AT FIRE STATION 68 TO FILM THEIR PART OF THE TOY DRIVE TV SPOT AND THE TOY DRIVE POSTER...MEANWHILE...

JENNIFER REYNA, BRITTA MERWIN, RACHEL MCNEILL AND OWEN CONFLENTI, THE KPRC CHANNEL 2 MORNING NEWS TEAM, JOINED HFD FIREFIGHTERS AT TARGET TO FILM THEIR PORTION OF THE TV SPOT.

MIX IN A LITTLE MAGIC AND HERE IS THE FINAL TV SPOT. CLICK ON THE LINK TO VIEW.

<http://www.houstontx.gov/fire/OSS17.mp4>

IN THE MEANTIME, THE NEW POSTER HAD TO BE CREATED. THANK YOU FIREFIGHTER MEAGAN HURL ONCE AGAIN FOR ALLOWING US TO USE HER KIDS EMME AND NOLAN AS A PART OF THE TOY DRIVE POSTER.



NEW POSTER



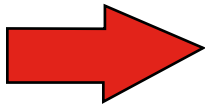
WHILE ALL THIS WAS GOING ON, TOY DRIVE LETTERS WERE SENT, EVENTS WERE SCHEDULED, VENDORS AND SPONSORS FINALIZED AND MUCH MORE. IT IS A LOT TO DO BUT YOU WILL SEE THAT IT WAS ALL WORTH IT.

November 17, 2017 - The Kick Off at Station 37

NOVEMBER 14, 2017: THE FIRST SHOPPING TRIP FOR OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER 2017. THE GREAT FOLKS AT FIRST COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION SPEND \$5,000 AT TARGET IN COPPERFIELD. CLICK ON THE LINK FOR THE VIDEO.

<https://www.facebook.com/FirstCommCU/videos/10159653239520253/>

PERSHING MIDDLE SCHOOL PROVIDED THE ENTERTAINMENT THROUGHOUT THE KICK OFF DAY.



THEN THEY BROUGHT ALL OF THE TOYS THEY PURCHASED TO THE KICK-OFF AT FIRE STATION 37 ON NOVEMBER 17.



THANK YOU KATZ COFFEE, WHATABURGER AND CHEZ GRILL FOR YOUR TASTY TREATS AT THE KICK OFF!



<https://www.facebook.com/KSBJRadio/videos/10155492118184143/>
<https://www.click2houston.com/video/operation-stocking-stuffer-kicks-off-for-2017>
<https://www.click2houston.com/video/operation-stocking-stuffer-kicks-off-1>
<https://www.click2houston.com/video/operation-stocking-stuffer-kickoff-1>
<https://www.click2houston.com/houston-life/kbr-operation-stocking-stuffers-toy-drive>
<https://www.click2houston.com/houston-life/2017-operation-stocking-stuffers-toy-drive-kicks-off->

FOR MUCH MORE ON THE KICK OFF, PLEASE CLICK ON THESE LINKS.



Keep Going

November 30, 2017- Huge Announcement from Hess

On November 30, a press conference was held to announce the Hess Corporation was donating nineteen thousand of their classic toy trucks to the Houston Police Department, Texas State Guard, Students from Baylor Academy at Rusk, Students at Baylor Academy at Ryan and the Houston Fire Department. Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, HPD Chief Art Acevedo, Sgt. John Gately, Students from the Baylor Academies and HFD Fire Chief Samuel Pena joined Andy Slentz of the Hess Corporation to make this historic announcement. Operation Stocking Stuffer received three thousand of these amazing trucks.

Thank you Hess Corporation for your incredible donation.



YES...
3,000 OF
THESE
TRUCKS!!!



Keep Going

Operation Stocking Stuffer 2017- And Away We Go!

WHATAHAUL!

OUR FRIENDS AT WHATABURGER FOR YEARS HAVE SUPPORTED OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER AND SO MANY OTHER HFD OUTREACH PROGRAMS. 2017 WAS NO EXCEPTION. NOT ONLY DID THEY PROVIDE FOOD FOR THE KICK OFF AND GIVEAWAY, THEY ALSO COLLECTED A TRUCK FULL OF TOYS! THANK YOU WHATABURGER!



THANK YOU
WOODLAND
HEIGHTS
FOR YOUR
AMAZING
EFFORTS!
THAT'S A
BUNCH OF
TOYS!



Keep Going

December 3, 2017- Charming Charlie Shopping Trip

Charming Charlie, in just their second year with Operation Stocking Stuffer, have become an indispensable partner with the toy drive. Not only did they raise money, they collected toys at each of their locations and then provided \$2,000 worth of coupons when we shopped at their Katy location on December 3, 2017. During the toy giveaway, gifts for the tween and teen girls always run out first. Partnering with Charming Charlie allows us to provide hundreds of the perfect gifts for girls of these ages. Thank you Bryan, Jule, Ilissa and everyone at Charming Charlie for all you did to benefit the children of Houston.

ON THE DAY OF THE TOY DRIVE KICK OFF, CHARMING CHARLIE HOSTED A CHIC CHARITY EVENT AT ALL OF THEIR STORES WITH PROCEEDS BENEFITING OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER. THEY RAISED OVER \$1,400.00 DURING THIS ONE DAY EVENT. ON DECEMBER 3, THEY PRESENTED US WITH A CHECK AND THEN WE DID A LITTLE SHOPPING.



WE WENT IN WITH \$10,000 AND WALKED OUT WITH **\$12,000** IN GIFTS FOR LOCAL TEEN GIRLS IN NEED!!!



December 4, 2017- Shell "Build-A-Bike" Day

On December 4, Shell Oil hosted a "Build-A-Bike" day at their two west Houston Offices. Employees from Shell were joined by members of the Houston Fire Department to build bikes to donate to Operation Stocking Stuffer. Once the bikes were built, they were shipped directly to the giveaway location in northeast Houston. After all of the nuts were tightened, tires filled with air and all of the tools put away, Shell donated over 600 bikes to HFD's toy drive. This donation was the biggest factor in helping Operation Stocking Stuffer collect and distribute a record number of bikes in 2017. An estimated one thousand bicycles were given out to Houston area families. Thank you everyone at Shell Oil for your unbelievable contribution.



A Couple of Firsts for Operation Stocking Stuffer

A FASHION SHOW!

On December 7, the River Oaks Women's Association hosted a fashion show luncheon at the River Oak Country Club to collect toys for Operation Stocking Stuffer. Not only did they collect hundreds of toys, they also raised almost \$1,000 to buy gifts for the severely burned children at the Shriner's Burn Center in Galveston. They raised the money by selling the centerpieces from the tables at the fashion show. The gifts were taken to the children at Shriner's on December 15 by members of HFD. Due to the severity of their injuries no photos were taken.

Thank you ROWA President Carrie Miller, Event Chairs Sue Nan Cutsinger, Stephanie Arnold and Emily Van Houtan all of the wonderful women of the River Oaks Women's Association and everyone at the River Oaks Country Club.

2017 ALSO BROUGHT TWO FIRSTS FOR OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER. EACH EVENT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MORE DIFFERENT BUT EACH HAD THE SAME GOAL. TO PROVIDE TOYS AND SOME HOLIDAY CHEER TO HOUSTON AREA FAMILIES SUFFERING GREAT HARDSHIP.

A DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT!

On December 16, the Friendswood Disc Golf Club hosted a disc golf tournament to collect toys for Operation Stocking Stuffer. Not only did they collect toys, they also raised \$1,600 we used to purchase more toys. Thank you Brandon Bailey and Joseph Marshall and everyone who participated.



More Toy Pick Ups and Donations- Thank You!



Zermat USA Convention at the Marriott Marquise

From December 15-17, Zermat USA hosted a huge convention at the Marriott Marquise to benefit the toy drive. They collected hundreds of toys for Houston area kids. Thank you Haydee Bello Olbekson, everyone who planned this event and everyone who donated a toy to a child in need.



Keep Going

Toy Pick Ups Continue- Thank You!

COMMERCE TOWERS



U. S. STATE DEPARTMENT

APEX SYSTEMS



TRANSWESTERN

STUDIO BRAND COLLECTIVE



Getting
Close ↓

Latham & Watkins LLP - Another Amazing Year

Latham and Watkins LLP joined Operation Stocking Stuffer several years ago and each year their donations seem to get bigger and bigger. It all starts with their shopping trips. In past years, each of the three floors of their downtown office would be in competition to see which one could shop and collect the most toys. In 2017, all of their floors acted as one to see if they could break their combined record number of toys. So on December 11, 2017, we did a little shopping with them.

THEY SPENT OVER \$20,000 AND IT TOOK 2 TRIPS TO FINISH ALL OF THEIR SHOPPING!!!

ONCE THE SHOPPING WAS DONE, WE TOOK THEIR TOYS TO THE LATHAM & WATKINS OFFICES. THEN ON DECEMBER 13 WE RETURNED TO PICK UP EVERYTHING.



LATHAM & WATKINS LLP COLLECTED ENOUGH TOYS TO SERVE OVER 900 FAMILIES...AND YES...THAT IS A NEW LATHAM & WATKINS RECORD.



THANK YOU MARISOL, EMILY AND EVERYONE AT LATHAM AND WATKINS LLP!!!

Keep Going

December 13, 2017- KBR Goes Shopping

KBR continues to be one of the largest contributors to Operation Stocking Stuffer and one of the largest supporters of the Houston Fire Department. Every year KBR hosts a huge golf tournament that raises money for several charities including HFD outreach programs like the toy drive. In 2017, not only did KBR raise \$10,000 for the toy drive, they also donated another \$80,000 for a high-water rescued vehicle. On December 13, employees from KBR and members of the of the Houston Fire Department went shopping with the \$10,000 and bought a POD load of toys.



**WANT
A LITTLE
MORE?
CLICK ON
THE LINK:**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MNQM4TpZgs>

Keep  Going

December 14, 2017 - Sempra Energy Goes Shopping

Working on Operation Stocking Stuffer allows us to work with so many great people, corporations, small businesses and other organizations. Sempra Energy, a California-based energy company, is one such corporation. After Hurricane Harvey, Sandra Dedic, The Community Outreach Advisor for Sempra Energy saw what was going on in Houston from her office in San Diego and reached out to us to see what they could do to help with Operation Stocking Stuffer. What they did was donate \$10,000 and then Sandra came to Houston and on December 14, she shopped for toys and gifts with the local Sempra employees.



HFD CHAPLAIN GARRY BLACKMON AT THE REGISTER AGAIN TO SUPERVISE ANOTHER AMAZING SHOPPING TRIP!



ON DECEMBER 15, THE DAY AFTER THE SEMPRA SHOPPING TRIP, WHILE ON HER WAY TO THE AIRPORT, SANDRA STOPPED AT THE CHURCH WHERE WE WERE SORTING TOYS. THANK YOU SANDRA AND EVERYONE AT SEMPRA ENERGY. MAKING NEW FRIENDS WHILE HELPING THE KIDS.



\$10K
IN
TOYS!



Almost
There ↓

Toy Pick Ups Continue And Continue...



BAKER AND MCKENZIE NOT ONLY COLLECTED TOYS BUT THEY ALSO DONATED THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS TO THE TOY DRIVE. THANK YOU WILLIAM, BONNIE & EVERYONE AT BAKER AND MCKENZIE!



DOWNHOLE TECHNOLOGIES



CHARLES TAYLOR ADJUSTING



UNITED AIRLINES

UNITED AIRLINES ALSO DONATED \$5,000 TO THE TOY DRIVE AND WE USED THAT TO BUY A TRAILER FULL OF TOYS.

THANKS AMY, TERRI, JUDY, DARRIN, CODY AND YUNEALDA AND EVERYONE AT UNITED FOR ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT!



WAY ENGINEERING

WAY ENGINEERING IS NEW TO OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER BUT THEY JUMPED RIGHT IN. AS YOU SEE THEY COLLECTED A BUNCH OF TOYS PLUS THEY ALSO VOLUNTEERED FOR THE GIVEAWAY. JEFF AND TAYLOR WORKED THE BIKE ROOM AND HELPED GIVE AWAY 1000 BIKES IN LESS THAN 2 HOURS! THANK YOU JEFF, TAYLOR AND EVERYONE AT WAY ENGINEERING FOR AN INCREDIBLE DEBUT!

Keep Going

Prosperity Bank Comes Up Huge Again!

For several years now, Prosperity Bank has been a chief underwriter of Operation Stocking Stuffer. Working with KPRC Channel 2, they contribute thousands of dollars to the toy drive, plus each branch serves as a collection location so hundreds more toys and gifts are being collected all over the city. Then on December 18, all of the gifts from each branch were consolidated to the location in Heights and we went to go get 'em.



THANKS PROSPERITY BANK FOR ALL YOU DO FOR OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER!



Pick Ups Continue And The PODS Arrive At The Church

Remember, as we make the toy pick ups from all of the businesses you see, almost 90 HFD Fire Stations were also collecting toys from our great citizens who just wanted to help. Thousands and thousands of toys were collected at our fire stations and we had to get those too. It was an enormous undertaking. On December 13 and 14, the PODS containers located at the stations began their journey to the New Light Christian Center and then on December 15, the toy sorting began. Volunteers arrived at the church early to get started.



Thank You New Light Christian Center

For many years the New Light Christian Center has been the epicenter of the Great Toy Giveaway. Not only are the toys given away at the church located at 7317 East Houston Road, but all of the toy sorting is done there as well. New Light provides the perfect venue for the sorting and giveaway because of their acres of parking, large sorting rooms and their tremendous staff. Also, not only did New Light provide all of the facilities, they also donated 100 new bikes to the toy drive.

Thank you Pastor I.V. Hilliard, his wife Bridget, Pastor Aresha Hilliard, Pastor Khalis Lemons, Pastor Terry Egans and Uncle Nate and everyone at New Light for your outstanding support of Operation Stocking Stuffer throughout the years.



Pick Ups Continue But Now Sorting Starts

Toy sorting began on December 15, when the great employees from Shell joined with the members of the KPRC Channel Two morning team to sort through 21 PODS containers filled with thousands and thousands of toys, bikes and other gifts.



LONGTIME TOY DRIVE FRIEND AMY DAVIS WITH KPRC CHANNEL 2 WENT TO WAL-MART IN THE HEIGHTS TO TEST THE HOTTEST TOYS. AFTER THE TESTING WAS DONE, WAL MARTH DONATED ALL OF THE TOYS IN THE REPORT TO OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER... INCLUDING THE HUGE FROZEN SLEIGH PICTURED HERE.

THANK YOU RYAN POLLUCK AN EVERYONE AT THE HEIGHTS WAL-MART. PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW FOR AMY'S STORY.

<https://www.click2houston.com/consumer/testing-the-hottest-toys-of-the-holiday-season>



VOLUNTEERS WERE TREATED TO LUNCH DONATED BY CHILIS. TASTY WINGS, SLIDERS AND A WHOLE LOT MORE WERE DELIVERED SPECIAL BY OUR NEW FRIENDS AT CHILIS ALONG WITH TOYS THEY COLLECTED AT THE SOUTHPOINT LOCATION. THANK YOU CANDI, WOLKY AND EVERYONE AT CHILIS FOR ALL YOU DID FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS AND HOUSTON'S KIDS.

Keep Going

Still Picking Up Toys- Thank You!



COSTCO WHOLESALE IS ANOTHER NEWCOMER TO THE TOY DRIVE. IN 2017, EACH OF THEIR HOUSTON STORES PARTICIPATED IN AN EMPLOYEE TOY DRIVE WHERE THEY COLLECTED A BUNCH OF TOYS. THEN COSTCO DONATED \$2,000 TO SUPPORT OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER. ONCE EVERYTHING WAS IN PLACE, ONE OF COSTCO'S BIGGEST VENDORS, SARGENTO CHEESE APPROACHED THEM TO SEE HOW THEY COULD GET INVOLVED. AND DID THEY!... SARGENTO DONATED \$5,000 TO BUY TOYS AND THAT IS A LOT OF CHEDDAR!



THANK YOU EVERYONE AT COSTCO AND SARGENTO CHEESE FOR ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT!

Keep Going

December 19, 2017- KBR Toy Pick Up

After the shopping trip with KBR on December 13th, PODS took a container full of toys to the warehouse for storage. Then on December 19, the POD full of toys was brought to KBR headquarters downtown where the KBR employees, HFD firefighters and even Santa Claus got together to get all of the toys ready for transport to the church.



THANK YOU STUART, PHILIP, CINDY, JUDY AND EVERYONE AT KBR FOR ALL OF YOUR SUPPORT OF THE HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT'S COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS.



Keep Going

The Varnett School- Repaying The Favor

The students, faculty and staff at the Varnett School have collected toys to support Operation Stocking Stuffer for years. Their support has been a huge factor in the success of the toy drive. So when they contacted HFD Public Affairs to say they were not going to be able to help in 2017 we had to find out why. Well it seems that Harvey, of course, was responsible. Not only did Harvey damage the campus on Maxey Road in east Houston, but it also impacted over 300 students. Once this information was received it was decided to repay the favor they have been doing for us for years by donating hundreds of toys back to the students. Thank you everyone at the Varnett School for all of the support over the years and we look forward to working with you again in 2018.



More Toys Coming In

HOW AWESOME IS IT WHEN CHILDREN WANT TO HELP OTHER CHILDREN IN NEED? PRETTY AWESOME INDEED. THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED AT THE HARMONY SCHOOL CAMPUSES IN HOUSTON. THANKS TO ALL THE STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF OF HARMONY SCHOOLS!

HARMONY SCHOOL OF DISCOVERY



THE HARRIS CENTER



THE RESPONSE TO OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER 2017 WAS TRULY REMARKABLE AS YOU CAN SEE...AND IT AIN'T OVER YET!

Keep Going

Special Events Supporting Operation Stocking Stuffer

Local businesses are the backbone of any successful campaign like Operation Stocking Stuffer. They have the ability of setting up their own special events with their loyal customers that can turn into annual fund raising efforts to benefit many community causes. Here are just two examples.



Pick Ups And Sorting Continue



AFTER DELIVERING THEIR \$5,000 COLLECTION OF TOYS TO THE KICK OFF, THE INCREDIBLE TEAM AT FIRST COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION CONTINUED TO COLLECT TOYS FOR OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER. THEY BROUGHT ALL THEIR TOYS TO THE MAIN BRANCH IN COPPERFIELD AND BELOW IS A LINK TO THE VIDEO WHEN WE PICKED THEM UP.

THANKS NANCY, AMBER, BREANA AND EVERYONE AT FIRST COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION FOR YOUR YEARS OF SUPPORT. YOU WILL SEE MORE OF THEM AT THE GIVEAWAY. CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18YenKY12hl>

ON DECEMBER 16, PHOENICIA SPECIALTY FOODS DOWNTOWN HOSTED THEIR ANNUAL "YUMMY WONDERLAND" TO BENEFIT OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER. THEY COLLECTED A BUNCH OF TOYS AND EVERYONE HAD A GREAT TIME. THEN, TWO DAYS LATER, THEY DELIVERED 100 DONATED BOX LUNCHES TO THE VOLUNTEERS WHO WERE SORTING THE TOYS. ADRIENNE AND EVERYONE AT PHOENICIA FOODS, WE CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR WHAT YOU DO TO SUPPORT THE TOY DRIVE.



Keep Going

December 18-20, 2017: Toy Sorting Gets Serious

Although the Great Toy Giveaway was still three days away, families wanting to receive toys started to line up across the street from the church on December 18. They camped out for days waiting to claim a spot at the front of the line. Meanwhile, inside the church a flurry of activity was continuing. So many toys had to be sorted and readied for the big day. So from December 18 through early evening of December 20, preparations were being made and all of Santa's helpers were busy in the workshop.



Sorting Continues- December 19, 2017



As the trucks keep coming in, the volunteers continue wading through the tidal wave of toys in the church sorting room. While this is going on here, over in the bike room, more bikes were being delivered with every truckload.



SANTA'S HELPERS HAVE TO EAT TOO. HOURS OF SORTING THROUGH THOUSANDS OF TOYS CAN BUILD UP AN APPETITE EVEN IN THE BIGGEST ELF. SO, ENTER SOME OF HOUSTON'S FINEST RESTAURANTS TO PROVIDE LUNCH FOR THE VOLUNTEERS. DECEMBER 19, LOS CUCOS PROVIDED A DELICIOUS FAJITA BUFFET. THANK YOU SERGIO CABRERA JR. AND EVERYONE AT LOS CUCOS. ALSO BREWINGZ PROVIDED DELICIOUS WINGS, FRIES AND ALL THE FIXINGS. THANK YOU COURTNEY TURRIN, LARRY KOLTUN AND EVERYONE AT BREWINGZ!



TASTY FACT: ALL OF THE FOOD FOR THE TOY DRIVE WAS DONATED!!!

Keep Going

Last Official Day of Sorting- December 20, 2017

December 20 was the last official day of sorting and preparation. The next day was the big day and there was still a lot to do.



SPECIAL SHOUT OUT TO CLARENCE ESTES WITH YOU SQUARED MEDIA. CLARENCE IS A GREAT FRIEND OF HFD AND WORKED WITH LOS CUCOS AND FAJITA PETE'S TO SET UP THE VOLUNTEER LUNCHES. PLUS HE TOOK SOME GREAT PICTURES, VIDEOS AND ALSO SORTED AND DISTRIBUTED THE TOYS. THANKS CLARENCE!!!



ON DECEMBER 20, PETE MORA WITH FAJITA PETE'S BROUGHT HIS CREW OUT AND SET UP A DELICIOUS FULL FAJITA BUFFET FOR THE VOLUNTEERS. PETE ALSO WORKED IN THE TOY ROOM AND CAME BACK THE NEXT DAY TO GIVE THE TOYS AWAY. THANK YOU PETE AND EVERYONE AT FAJITA PETE'S FOR EVERYTHING YOU DID FOR OUR GREAT VOLUNTEERS AND THE KIDS OF HOUSTON.



The Great Toy Giveaway Is Finally Here!!!

EVERYONE GETS THERE EARLY



VOLUNTEER BRIEFING BEFORE STARTING



After all the preparation, collecting and sorting, the big day finally arrived. December 21 got off to an early start when all volunteers reported to the site at 5:00am. The giveaway was scheduled to start at 6:00am but after a volunteer briefing and everyone receiving their assignments we got underway at 6:30. So here we go....

**BOYS
6-9 YEARS**



Take this card to the attendant at the bike area once you receive your other toys. You **MUST** have this card to receive a bike. 1 bike per family.

Lleve esta tarjeta al asistente en el área de la bicicleta una vez que reciba sus otros juguetes. Usted debe tener esta tarjeta para recibir una bicicleta. 1 bicicleta por familia.

**GIRLS
10-13 YEARS**



Take this card to the attendant at the bike area once you receive your other toys. You **MUST** have this card to receive a bike. 1 bike per family.

Lleve esta tarjeta al asistente en el área de la bicicleta una vez que reciba sus otros juguetes. Usted debe tener esta tarjeta para recibir una bicicleta. 1 bicicleta por familia.



GETTING READY:
UNLOCKING SANTA'S TOY BOX

THESE BIKE CARDS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO THE FAMILIES AT THE REGISTRATION TABLES. EACH CARD HAD A CORRESPONDING TAG ON A BIKE IN THE BIKE ROOM. ONCE THEY RECEIVED THEIR TOYS, THE FAMILIES WOULD BRING THEIR CARD TO THE BIKE AREA TO GET THEIR BIKE. WITH ONE BIKE PER FAMILY, ALL 1000+ BIKES WERE DISTRIBUTED IN LESS THAN 2 HOURS THANKS TO OUR GREAT VOLUNTEERS!

CLICK ON THESE LINKS FOR MORE ON THE GIVEAWAY

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtvLhHGPG8c>

<https://www.click2houston.com/video/the-great-toy-giveaway-underway-in-northeast-houston>



Keep Going

The Giveaway Continues- Dawn Breaks

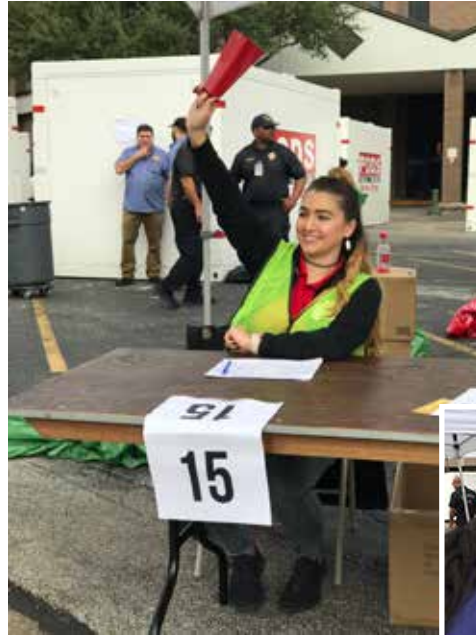


STILL SO MUCH TO DO. THANK GOODNESS TOSTADA REGIA BROUGHT SOME YUMMY HOT CHOCOLATE, TIERRA CALIENTE BROUGHT SOME DELICIOUS KOLACHES AND SWEET BREADS AND KATZ COFFEE PROVIDED SOME FRESH HOT COFFEE TO GET US THROUGH THE MORNING. THANKS ALL!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EveYyirNCQU>
<https://www.click2houston.com/video/the-great-toy-giveaway-at-new-light-christian-center>
<https://www.click2houston.com/community/the-great-toy-giveaway-kicks-off-thursday>

The Big Day Continues- The Sun Comes Out



WE GOT SOME GREAT HELP FROM THE ELF!



Keep Going

The Big Day Continues- Wrapping It Up



EVEN AS THE GIVEAWAY WAS WRAPPING UP FOR ANOTHER YEAR, WE STILL HAD TRUCKS COME IN FULL OF TOYS. SO WE SORTED ALL THIS WHILE THE FAMILIES CONTINUED TO WAIT.

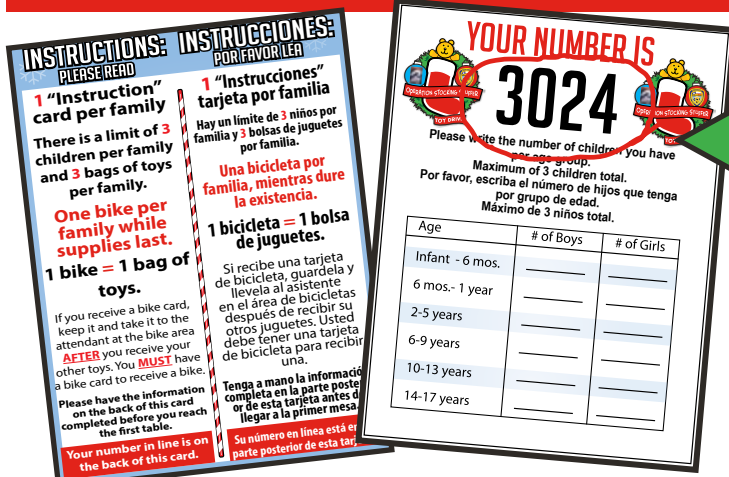


IT TOOK ALMOST 6 HOURS TO DISTRIBUTE EVERYTHING AND ONCE WE WERE DONE, WHATABURGER PROVIDED BURGERS, CHICKEN FINGERS AND SALADS FOR ALL THE VOLUNTEERS. THANKS JENNIFER & EVERYONE AT WHATABURGER!!!

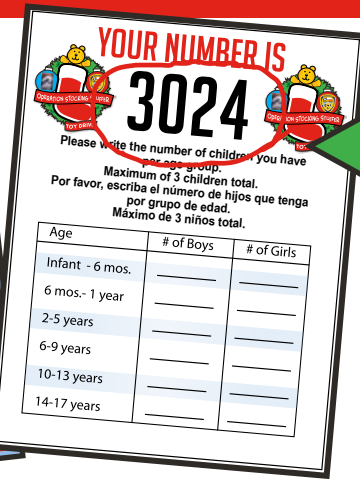


Keep Going

Final Numbers and One More Big Thank You



THE MAGIC CARDS
 THESE CARDS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO THE FAMILIES WAITING IN LINE. THE NUMBER CIRCLED IN RED IS THEIR NUMBER IN LINE. THIS IS THE LAST NUMBER RECEIVED BY THE VOLUNTEERS.



COMBINING THE NUMBERS FROM THE GREAT TOY GIVEAWAY ON DECEMBER 21 WITH THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF FAMILIES ASSISTED THROUGH OUR NON-PROFIT PARTNERS, OPERATION STOCKING STUFFER IN 2017 PROVIDED TOYS AND GIFTS FOR OVER

5,000 FAMILIES!*

WITH 3 – 5 CHILDREN PER FAMILY THAT ALL ADDS UP TO...UM... A WHOLE BUNCH OF KIDS! GREAT JOB EVERYONE!!! * YEP...THAT'S A RECORD!



Thank You from Al Bennett to the community

I would like to thank all of you for supporting Operation Stocking Stuffer. Without your generous contributions to this program all that we do would not be possible. With your help, we were able to assist more than 5,000 families in the Houston area and distribute over half million toys to needy kids in the Houston area. It has been my delight to have been part of an event that grown from such humble beginnings to one that now ranks amongst one of the top toy drives in the great State of Texas. Mrs. Lorugene Young, the founder of Community Outreach Inc., could only look down on us all and smile as you have helped make her vision become a reality. On behalf of the Houston Fire Department, Community Outreach Inc. and the citizens of Houston I would like to thank you for all you do to make this great seasonal event possible. May you all continue to be blessed and be a blessing to others.

Sincerely,
 Al Bennett, HFD Community Liaison

As you have seen in this presentation, the demand for a program like Operation Stocking Stuffer is great. 2017 was particularly challenging. Thousands of families across the city needed support for even the most basic of services. That is why this event is so important. You have seen the photos of the long lines of people waiting to receive gifts for their children- but the outreach of the Operation Stocking Stuffer doesn't stop there.

The Houston Fire Department works with many non-profit organizations to provide toys and gifts for even more families in need-many of those who just can't make it to the giveaway.

Organizations like the Black Professional Firefighters Association, the Hispanic Firefighters Caucus, VAN TV, Children of Incarcerated Parents, Children's Protective Services and many others all benefited from the donations collected for Operation Stocking Stuffer in 2017.

In fact, HFD still receives toys and stuffed animals into January from generous Houstonians who just want to help. These extra donations allow us to provide some comfort and joy to children who may be battling disease, a family who just lost their belongings in a fire or may experiencing other type of tragedy or hardship.

The demand is huge and HFD along with the great partners and contributors of Operation Stocking Stuffer will be there to answer the call.



The End



Thank you and see you in 2018!