

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

EAGLE VILLAGE NEWSLETTER | WINTER 2022



THE SPIRIT OF *the Season*

This time of year we celebrate the true meaning of the season. We make certain to spend time with people we care about, we give to people and causes, and we focus on being thankful.

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give”. - Winston Churchill



We are inspired by your thoughtful gifts. You care about the lives of the youth that we serve and trust that we will use our expertise to change lives. Joining our mission by giving time or resources makes a definite difference. Our work is not only essential, it is important, and life-saving.

Christmas Eve and Christmas morning are filled with fun. Our youth wake up to cinnamon rolls in the oven and presents to unwrap under the Christmas tree.

Unwrapping presents is a slow process for some as it may be the first time they have experienced a traditional Christmas and they want to enjoy every moment.

It is a gift to see the power of many. You all combine to make Christmas a time of fun, excitement and joy. At least half of our youth don't have families to share Christmas with so we do our best to make it a special time to teach them how families enjoy the holiday.

Thank you to those who have already given in 2022 and those who are planning to give by December 31st. The collective impact of many really is powerful and makes a difference we all see and experience. We are fortunate to see the satisfaction givers feel when they make a difference for our kids, our staff, and our organization.

We all want to make the world a better, kinder, more hopeful place. Eagle Village is a great place to reach out to children who have endured abuse and neglect. We do all that we can to value each individual life and create a path to a positive future filled with hope. Thank you!

Merry Christmas!

OF **THE SPREAD**
Holiday Cheer

03
DECEMBER
OPERATION
GOOD CHEER

12
DECEMBER
MANY DAYS OF
CHRISTMAS

20
DECEMBER
VILLAGE CHRISTMAS

21
DECEMBER
SECRET SANTA SHOP

25
DECEMBER
CHRISTMAS FEAST

31
DECEMBER
NEW YEAR'S EVE

OPERATION GOOD CHEER

For more than 30 years, Eagle Village has played a role in Operation Good Cheer. This is a volunteer program that brings donors, pilots and non-profit agencies together with one goal in mind; to make Christmas special for thousands of kids in foster and residential care.



Every year, during the first weekend of December, the elves of Eagle Village arrive at the Roben-Hood Airport in Big Rapids to collect the items received from generous donors and sponsors. These gifts in turn get placed under the tree for our kids in both residential and foster care to open up on Christmas day.



“The holidays can always be a difficult time of year for the kids we serve. What our partnership with Operation Good Cheer does is it ensures that our kids wake up on Christmas morning and have gifts under the Christmas tree with their names on them,” said Heather McClellan, Foster Care & Adoption Program Manager at Eagle Village. “For some of our kids this may be their first Christmas in a long time. For others it may offer that comfort and familiarity of Christmases they’ve had in the past.”



Secret SANTA SHOP

This is the second year we have been blessed with a wonderful donation that is to be used to teach our kids the joy of giving. Keeping this in mind, we came up with a Secret Santa Shop where our youth can come shop for a secret pal within their own home and gift them with something they think they will like. What



we may think of as a simple and common act is something our kids never got the opportunity to learn and is an exciting moment for them. Watching their faces light up with anticipation of whether they will be guessed or not truly shows one of the meanings of Christmas; joy.



VILLAGE CHRISTMAS

Christmas is truly the most wonderful time of year for us here at Eagle Village. It is a time for us to spread the warmth and cheer as the holidays near and one way we do this is by opening our doors for our annual Village Christmas.

Every year, our kids host a Christmas program in our Chapel for all to see! Guests and staff gather around to watch our youth perform a Christmas pageant and then head off to the houses for a special tour. Each house is assigned the task of selecting a Christmas story to use as inspiration when decorating their houses and making



baked goods. For our kids, this is an exciting time as they get to show off their hard work and host people within their home. After the walk through is complete, the guests are welcomed back to the Chapel for a light reception and message from our leadership.

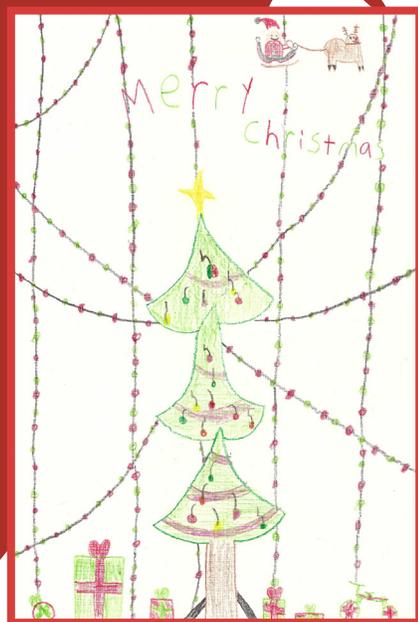


By opening our doors, we are welcoming new opportunities for our kids and guests. Our hope is to not only provide a positive experience for our kids to reflect on, but also show outside guests what we are really about here at Eagle Village; a chance to give our kids a normal childhood. Our kids didn't ask for the circumstances they were given, but with our help, we can give them the guidance and support for the life they deserve.



ART GALLERY

Every year, we challenge our youth to a Christmas card decorating contest and this year, our kids really knocked it out of the park!



🎁 Many Days of Christmas 🎁

As we approach Christmas day, we love to give our kids a special gift along the way. Starting on December 12, our kids will start the 10 days of Christmas by receiving a gift at their front door. These gifts can be used in a group activity like a board game or sports ball or an individual gift such as a blanket or plush toy. It is one of our favorite things to do during the holiday season as we see the kids rush to the door to receive their gifts or eagerly head home to see what was left behind.

CHRISTMAS CRACKER CANDIES

INGREDIENTS

- 10 full-size graham crackers, enough to cover the pan
- 1 cup salted butter
- 1 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/3 cup toffee bits
- 1 cup Christmas themed sprinkles

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a 9 x 13 inch pan line with aluminum foil and spray with cooking spray.
- Place the graham crackers in a single layer along the bottom. Make sure it is fully lined, break crackers if needed.
- In a medium saucepan, over medium-high heat, add the butter and brown sugar. Stir constantly until butter has melted. Let the mixture boil for a few minutes until it starts to thicken.
- Pour over the graham crackers, bake for 7 minutes.
- Remove pan from the oven and sprinkle with chocolate chips. Use a spatula to spread the chocolate over the top. Sprinkle with the toffee bits.
- Add Christmas theme sprinkles while hot to ensure they stick. You can press lightly as needed to help them cling.
- Allow to cool completely and harden. Cut into two inch squares for a consist look or break into random piece sizes for fun!




A Season TO BE THANKFUL

Every day we are reminded in some way of the blessings in our life, one being our youth. They are so strong, resilient and courageous.



Last month at our annual Thanksgiving meal, staff, students and teachers gathered together under one roof to share the tales of Thanksgiving and enjoy a meal together. During our time together, we took a moment to share the things we are thankful for. Some being:

- Coming to Eagle Village where staff can help support me
- For always being there for me and always saying I am loved and worth it
- More people to love me
- Thankful for another chance
- People caring about me
- Clothes and food



These things sound simple, don't they? They are things that we take for granted every day, things our kids so desperately needed in their lives. We are so blessed to be able to provide our kids with the things most take for granted like a loving home, caring loved ones, warm food and clean clothing.



THE POWER OF GIVING



When several gifts of all sizes from individuals combine, it is amazing what can be accomplished. You can make a real difference by giving to Eagle Village. You support children who have been removed from their homes because of abuse, neglect or abandonment. Your support helps us do more for youth while they are with us. We have a great deal to do to help children work through their trauma and learn that their past doesn't determine their future.

Please join us in our work for children who haven't had the start in life we expect all to experience.

There are different types of giving:

1. *Eagle Fund* - combines all unrestricted gifts that we use for youth scholarships, facility updates, transportation, spiritual life, teaching skills and trades, and field trips for youth.
2. *Renovation/Addition Activity Therapy Center* - this project designates spaces for expressive therapy for dance, drama, art, music, a weight room, sensory room, IT lab, an expanded library, a game room, a full gym, a welcome center and training room. Expressive therapy is an alternate to a clinical setting that has many benefits.



We have an amazing cause and many stories of meaningful outcomes. We are in our 54th year of existing to help youth realize their potential and soar. We are grateful to do great work to change lives. Thank you!