



# Christmas in Jefferson County

Christmas in Jefferson County evolved from an earlier community program founded in 1996, called “Sharing Christmas”. County volunteers handled the food division while partnering with Toys for Tots to help bring Christmas joy to underprivileged children. In 2001, The Chamber assumed full responsibility for the program and changed its name to Christmas in Jefferson County.

Christmas in Jefferson County is sponsored by the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce and brings together many community resources to help provide food and toys to disadvantaged families in Jefferson County. The Chamber of Commerce and the school system’s Family Resource Center, under the leadership of Karen Blomdahl, coordinate all the activities and rely on contributions by businesses, neighborhoods, churches, civic clubs and every school in Jefferson County. With the help of around 400 volunteers the Chamber brings together all these resources to extend their care and support. Fred Taylor serves as chair for the food and toy division. Karen Blomdahl serves as the chair for registration, Fonda Garvin as the volunteer chair and Donna Yates as the Administrative chair.

Angel trees are located at businesses around the county. On the Angel tree cards, buyers will find a child’s name, his or her wish list, and the information about how to buy for, and drop off purchases made for the child. Walmart and the Fire Departments throughout the county are collection points for these unwrapped gifts, and volunteers will follow up with packaging once all the toys are collected.

The food donations are dropped off at the distribution point, which is the National Guard Armory in Jefferson City. Volunteers from Carson-Newman’s football team help with assembling boxes, with Jefferson County High students and many other volunteers packing them full of goodies for families. Distribution of the food and toys takes place in December but only for those people who had pre-registered at the Armory.