



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

A Little Volunteering Can Go A Long Way During the Holidays

PATRICK M. GALLIVAN November 22, 2011

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At some point during the manic cascade of Thanksgiving, Black Friday, the ritual series of holiday parties with friends and co-workers, days of shopping, feast preparations, and decorating our homes, it becomes all too easy to cast aside even our own personal understanding of this special time of year.

So I would like to ask you to take a moment and reflect upon the season – what it means to ourselves, what it means to our families, and what it means to our community. Western New York is a beautiful place to celebrate the holidays, but it's no secret that it is also one of the most economically distressed regions in the country, where tens of thousands go without food, shelter, or adequate clothing every night. While this fact is unacceptable during any time of year, it's particularly unacceptable during this season of thanks giving and celebration.

Endless opportunities exist in Western New York for individuals, families and groups to give back to the less fortunate in our community. Please consider lending your time to any of the following over the next few weeks. A day, an hour, or ten minutes can have an immeasurable impact on somebody's life.

The Salvation Army - Volunteer opportunities are available in their Toy Shop, for their Thanksgiving and Christmas Dinner events, or through their Kettle Drive, Angel Tree, Gift of Warmth, League of Mercy, or Red Barrel Toy Drive programs. Visit www.use.salvationarmy.org or contact (716) 883-9800.

The Food Bank of WNY - To lend your time to the Food Bank of WNY, helping them feed the nearly 39,000 children who go hungry each month in Western New York, contact (716) 852-1305, or to donate directly, visit www.foodbankwny.org.

The Buffalo City Mission - The City Mission is always looking for help for their annual holiday dinner drive. The Turkey Express and the Hambone Express deliver hearty holiday meals to thousands of hungry families. To help out or learn about additional opportunities, contact (716) 854 8181, ext. 408, or visit www.buffalocitymission.org.

Catholic Charities of Western New York - Catholic Charities operates an extensive toy drive for the less fortunate and has offices in Erie, Wyoming, Livingston and Ontario Counties. For donation and volunteer information, please contact (716) 854-4001.

Trinity Pantry in Lancaster, (716) 683-1111.

Tabernacle Food Pantry in Orchard Park, (716) 712-1731.

Alden Marilla Community Pantry Food Pantry in Alden, (716) 937-6922.

Let's make sure as many of our neighbors have as healthy and as happy of a holiday season as we will undoubtedly share with our families. For additional information on ways you can donate or volunteer with the organizations listed above, or others in our community, please contact my district office at (716) 656-8544.