



Jim Mason/photo

Pies, turkey, ham and more will be delivered to approximately 400 residents on Christmas Day by a group of volunteers from the Stouffville Christmas Dinner Wish.

# Volunteers to deliver Christmas meals

*Councillor Maurice Smith and other volunteers organize meals for anyone who wants one*

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It's the season of giving, and what better to way than to help your community than with free Christmas meals, no questions asked.

That's the guiding principle for the Stouffville Christmas Dinner Wish, now in its 21st year of providing free Christmas meals to

residents, seniors' homes and virtually anyone who asks.

A team of 100 volunteers spearheaded by Ward 2 Councillor Maurice Smith and his wife Jane organize the meals on Christmas Day, ensuring they're delivered to all those who requested one.

"We have people come in and cut up the turkeys, other volunteers cut up all the pies," Smith said.

"We have a series of drivers that come in and deliver the meals to folks who ordered them."

Volunteers use the auditorium at EastRidge Church, Smith says the church has large cooking facilities and its big size allows for plenty of room to organize the meals. Last year, 469 meals were delivered and this year's target is 400.

The meal consists of turkey, ham, mixed vegetables, mashed potatoes, stuffing, cranberries, bread and a slice of pie. Most of the meal is prepared by volunteers overnight Christmas Eve at EastRidge, with more volunteers joining Christmas morning to set up the turkeys, pies and delivery.

Originally started by Norm Clements 21 years ago, Smith and his wife have volunteered for the last eight years. With Smith's involvement, residents can contact town customer service to volunteer or request a meal.

"We need volunteers," Smith said. "For cooking pies, cooking turkeys and deliveries."

Smith said the preparation of vegetables, stuffing and other items is well underway,

but there exists

a need for volunteers to prepare the turkey and pies to deliver to EastRidge at 9 a.m. on Christmas morning. Deliveries to residents commence at 11 a.m.

Smith says anyone - a family, a seniors' residence - can request a meal and volunteers will deliver it.

"No questions asked," the councillor said.

Residents who wish to volunteer or request a meal can contact town customer service on 905-640-1900, and leave their name and address.

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