

# In Nelson, growing need matched by increased donations, generosity

- [Photo](#)



The Daily Progress/Megan Lovett

Judith Hussey administers the Santa Fund in Nelson County. This year, Hussey says she has seen some of the greatest need ever.

By [AARON LEE](#)

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For 24 years Judith Hussey has filled requests made to the Santa Fund — spending the money that provides shoes, clothes and other necessities for needy children year-round.

And Hussey, who serves children in Nelson County, said this year she has seen some of the greatest need ever.

“It’s getting worse because people are getting laid off,” Hussey said.

It’s been so bad that in the last year she’s had requests from people who need help, but who can’t make the request in person because they can’t afford to drive.

“So, I’m delivering a lot more than I was two years ago,” she said.

Some of the increased need, however, has been blunted this year by more contributions, said Shaele Wood, Volunteer Center director for the United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area.

“The people who are able to increase their giving are certainly doing so,” Wood said.

Hussey sees that too, having received more than \$8,200 to distribute this past year, up roughly \$700 from the year before.

“People are being more generous than when I first started,” Hussey said.

Established in 1894, the Santa Fund is sponsored by the United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area, WINA 1070 AM and The Daily Progress. This year the goal is to raise \$100,000 for the fund, which serves children in Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson and Orange.

The amount of money distributed to each locality is based on the number of children who receive free or reduced-price lunch in each school system. In Nelson, the Santa Fund served 306 children during the 2007-08 school year, Wood said.

So far this year the Santa Fund campaign has raised \$26,040.97. The campaign ends in mid-January, though donations are accepted year-round.

Santa Fund envelopes are available at most area bank branches and at the offices of The Daily Progress, at 685 W. Rio Road in Albemarle County, and WINA, at 1140 Rose Hill Drive in Charlottesville.

Please mail all contributions to: Santa Fund, 806 E. High St., Charlottesville, VA 22902.

TODAY'S TOTAL: \$7,385  
TOTAL TO DATE: \$26,040.97  
GOAL: \$100,000  
TO REACH GOAL: \$73,959.03