



## The Elves Program Frequently Asked Questions

Visit our website for more information about the program and how to get involved, <http://elves.cornell.edu>

### What Is The Elves Program and Who Is Involved?

The Elves Program is a non-denominational group of volunteers that was founded to benefit children in need in Tompkins County and the surrounding area. Starting with one elementary school and a few students in 1989, The Elves now assist at least 1,000 students each year in more than 30 area schools. Thanks to hundreds of volunteers, the program provides clothing, toys, school supplies and warm blankets to kids who are identified by school personnel as being in the greatest need. There are absolutely no overhead costs.

Caring people from across the Cornell community and beyond are encouraged to participate. Anyone can become an Elf, individuals as well as members of families, office groups, and community organizations.

### How Does It Work?

There are three program efforts.

#### 1. Winter Holiday Program

Started in 1989, this is our largest program. Between October and December, nurses and social workers at area elementary schools identify the children who are in greatest need. Using Profile Sheets they provide information on each boy and girl to Elf Leaders. These leaders then distribute the profiles to individuals, families, or groups who want to sponsor a child. Sponsors (Elves) purchase items, making sure that each child receives every item on a checklist, available on our website, including socks, underwear, an outfit, pajamas, a hat & gloves, and a toy (all gifts are new). Elf Leaders deliver the bags of gifts to the school where they are picked up by parents or delivered to the homes. The anonymity of the children and their parents is always protected.

#### 2. Summer Backpack Program

Initiated in 2007 by Maureen Brull after discovering that many children attend their first day of school with no backpack and few or none of the required school supplies. The Elves now provide more than 1,000 new backpacks to elementary children every summer and each contains items from our checklist, available on the website. The program gets started in June and involves an approximate \$30 cost for each backpack/supplies. Contact Maureen [mpb8\(at\)cornell.edu](mailto:mpb8@cornell.edu) if you would like to participate.

#### 3. KozyKids Blanket Bee Program

Joanna Bock started this program in 2016 after learning that one little girl asked for only a warm blanket during the previous winter holidays. During a one-day event, usually held at an area school in early November, we produce at least 300 warm, "polar fleece blankets and deliver them to our participating schools.



### **What Does It Cost to Participate?**

This varies by program. For the Winter Holiday Program, it costs approximately \$150 to sponsor a child. A new backpack with school supplies is about \$30. Workers are usually needed for our "Blanket Bee" day, a no cost option. Contributions for each of the programs are always welcome.

### **How Can I Get Involved?**

Take a look at each of our three programs to decide which one(s) you find most appealing. Our website, [elves.cornell.edu](http://elves.cornell.edu), provides details and pictures for each. Next, email the appropriate Elf Leader so you can be added to their contact lists. Use the "Elf Leaders & Schools" tab on our website for both our Winter Holiday and Summer Backpack programs to get their contact information. To help with the "BlanketBee" email Joanna Bock, [joanna@htva.net](mailto:joanna@htva.net). (This event is not just for sewists! Volunteers are needed for cutting, folding, boxing, etc.).

You are welcome to direct any general questions to the CEO (Chief Elf Organizer) Bill Alberta, [wnal@cornell.edu](mailto:wnal@cornell.edu).

### **How Can I Make A Donation?**

To make a donation to the Winter Holiday or Summer Backpack Program you may either:

1) Contribute directly to one of our Elf Leaders, listed on the website. This is probably best for people who work on the Cornell campus. Cash is great and saves us time. Checks are fine too and should be made payable to "The Elves";

or

2) Send a check, made payable to "The Elves", to Bill Alberta, 751 Elm Street, Ithaca, NY 14850. Bill will cash the check and bring the money to the Elf Leader of your choice.

To donate to the KozyKids Blanket Bee, contact Joanna Bock directly, [joanna@htva.net](mailto:joanna@htva.net).

Every penny you donate goes to help an area child who is truly in need!

### **How Did It Start?**

The main program was started in 1989 by Bill and Sherry Alberta as an alternative to the December gift exchange in the Cornell office where he worked. Instead of buying each other five-dollar gifts, people pooled their money and purchased new clothing and toys for five needy children at Enfield Elementary School. The program blossomed from there.