

## Cal's All-Star Angel toy drive kicks off

By Harry Hitzeman | Daily Herald Staff

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In addition to dropping coins in the kettle this holiday season, you're probably considering donating some a toy or two to someone, somewhere.

While all causes are worthy in their own right, one interesting local effort is being held by the South Elgin-based Cal's All-Star Angel Foundation.

The group's second annual toy drive aims to help children in the pediatric ward at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

The foundation was formed in memory of Cal Sutter, a South Elgin baseball player who died at 13 from a rare form of leukemia in 2006.

But instead of delivering toys this month, organizers will wait until the end of January and beginning of February.

Just call it Christmas, the trilogy.

"From personal experience with Cal, we know the kids are inundated with more items than they know what to do with from so many other generous organizations plus the hospital itself pushes to clear the floor of patients to get them home for the holidays," wrote Cal's dad, Tom Sutter, in an e-mail to donors.

"By creating a second and third Christmas Holiday for these kids, we are able to reach more kids with gifts while breaking up the winter blues."

Donations may be dropped off beginning today through Dec. 18 at 15 area locations.

For a full list of drop-off points, call (847) 960-5317, email [infor@calsangels.org](mailto:infor@calsangels.org) or visit [www.calsangels.org](http://www.calsangels.org).

The hospital does not accept stuffed animals as gifts, but other items requested are: DVD movies rated G, PG, or PG-13; Legos; puzzles and board games; Leapster and Leap Pad games or systems; hand-held games; scrapbooking kits, Craft Kits, Art Supplies, Play Dough Sets; Barbie dolls or action figures; preschool puzzles and games; and games for the Wii, PlayStation 2 or 3, Xbox 360, Game Boy or DS. Games may be used.

If you want to help now, though: If sending off new and unwrapped toys is not your thing, then you might consider helping out "Operation: Elgin Homefront."

It is held in conjunction with downtown Elgin's 11th annual "Window Wonderland" on Saturday, Dec. 12, donations and supplies for military personnel can be dropped off at Mad Maggies, 51 S. Grove Ave.

The restaurant also will host World War II themed music and performances and have an area where people can write letters and make cards for soldiers.

The effort is a partnership between Books at Sunset, the American Legion Post 57 and the VFW Post 1307.

For more information, call (847) 888-1860.

On Dec. 12, the Salvation Army will have 20 large red collections cans in downtown Elgin for people to drop off new, unwrapped toys for kids 12 and under, along with nonperishable canned or boxed food.

Sing for the season: The First Congregational Church of Elgin will host its second annual "Joy to the World: A Community Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long" at 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 19.

Admission is \$5 at the door, 256 E. Chicago St., with the proceeds being evenly divided between the church renovation fund and the Community Crisis Center in Elgin.

For more information, call (847) 741-4045 or visit [fcc-elgin.org](http://fcc-elgin.org).