



**Secret Santa Agency Participation
Information Packet
2013 Program**

Sonoma County's Secret Santa
invites

YOU and YOUR ORGANIZATION

to participate in this wonderful holiday gift program,
designed to help you help your clients
who need a little extra at the holidays,
be it a gift, a little caring, or something bigger.

This Participation Information Packet
contains the enrollment form, a timeline,
Q&A about participation, and
a list of the Secret Santa training sessions.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!!
The Secret Santa Team



Secret Santa Information Packet

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Volunteer Center of Sonoma County, 153 Stony Circle, Suite 100, Santa Rosa CA 95401
Phone: 707-573-3399 Fax: 707-573-3380 Email: holiday@volunteernow.org



2013 Secret Santa Program Timeline

September 5-11:	Secret Santa Agency Emails Distributed
Sept 24, 25, 26 & Oct 2 (Sept 23rd 10am-12pm & 3pm-5pm, Sept 26th 10am-12pm, Sept 30th 10am-12pm & Oct 1st 1pm-3pm)	Agency Trainings at the Volunteer Center
<i>October 1:</i>	<i>SS Enrollment Form DEADLINE</i>
September 5- November 1:	Submit Secret Santa Gift Wish Forms & Secret Santa Letters
<i>November 1:</i>	<i><u>Final</u> E-Wish Form DEADLINE</i>
November 14-21:	Sonoma County & Secret Santa Volunteer Opportunities highlighted on KZST Radio
Nov 15- Dec 3:	Secret Santa Gift Hearts distributed to sponsor locations & online
Nov 25 – Dec 9	Public Events – details to follow
December 11:	Dine and Donate with Mary's Pizza
December 10-20:	Heart Central opens – Dec. 10-20 Weekdays: 12 noon - 6 p.m. Weekends: 11a.m. – 3 p.m.
December 19-20	KZST Marathon
December 20:	LAST DAY to pick up gifts at Heart Central

PLEASE Post the 2013 Secret Santa Timeline so that everyone at your organization involved with the program can remember these important dates!!!

Reminder:

Only e-mailed wishes in the correct format will be processed.
E-mail gift lists to wishlistonly@volunteernow.org.

Sonoma County's Secret Santa 2013

Program Highlights



What IS Secret Santa?

It is a community gift program for non-profit and social service agencies in Sonoma County to help provide needy clients with a little holiday cheer wrapped up in a gift. Secret Santa also provides an opportunity for Sonoma County folks to give and share with those in need in our community.

The THREE ways Secret Santa works in our community:

- **Secret Santa Gift Wishes** collected by the agencies are distributed to the public on Red Heart Gift Ornaments and displayed at business sponsor locations across the county.
- For situations needing more than a simple gift, the agency may submit a **Secret Santa letter** with a compelling client story which is read on KZST Radio and, hopefully, adopted by the public.
- Agencies needing more **Volunteer Helping Hands** during the holidays (events, dinners, gift pickup or distribution, etc), may request volunteer assistance which the Volunteer Center will attempt to fill.

Agency Responsibility During Secret Santa:

- Enroll in the program, providing proof of non-profit/tax-supported agency status and paying participation fee, if needed.
- Attend one of the Secret Santa Training sessions (**REQUIRED**).
- Collect & submit gift wishes on the provided excel gift wish list to The Volunteer Center for processing onto **Red Gift Heart Ornaments**.
- Compose and submit Secret Santa Letters to The Volunteer Center for reading on the radio.
- Pickup donated gifts at Heart Central and distribute as appropriate to clients.

Secret Santa Responsibility to Participating Agencies:

- Timely processing of gift wishes & letter requests.
- Distribution of gift wishes to community and business sponsors for public adoption.
- Collection of gifts from community to Heart Central for agency pick-up.
- Diligent recruitment of volunteers to assist as needed during the holidays.

Secret Santa looks forward to helping YOU make this a wonderful holiday for your clients!!

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Sonoma County's Secret Santa 2013

Agency Participant Training

Registration Info



Come and find out how **Secret Santa** **Red Heart Gift Ornaments** **& Letters**

can help bring the joy
of the holidays to your clients.

Hear some **compelling+Secret Santa**
Letters and find out how KZST uses the
letters to publicize the overall Secret Santa
program, as well as encouraging people to
adopt the individual letters.

- Learn ways to make simple gift requests with descriptions that capture the heart of the person selecting the gift request. See the new **Hearts Online+virtual Secret Santa Heart Tree** for online gift heart selection.
- Understand how Heart Central works and what changes to expect in check-in & check-out this year.
- Learn about the new opportunities to get volunteer assistance from Secret Santa to help run your gift program **behind the scenes+**. help create gift lists, perform gift pickup at Heart Central, or gift sorting/delivery to clients.
- PLUS you'll have a chance to get your Sonoma County Secret Santa questions answered!

Please email (holiday@volunteernow.org) or call **573-3399** x108 to confirm your attendance at one of the sessions listed below. ***EVEN IF YOU have participated in Secret Santa in the past, the training is REQUIRED!!*** REMEMBER: your gift form will NOT be processed until at least one person from your agency team has attended training.

Sept 23rd 10am-12pm or 3pm-5pm

Sept 26th 10am-12pm

Sept 30th 10am-12pm

Oct 1st 1pm-3pm

***All Secret Santa Agency Training sessions will be held at
The Volunteer Center, 153 Stony Circle, Ste. 100, Santa Rosa.***

Working Together ó We WILL make this the Best Holiday Yet!



2013 Sonoma County Secret Santa Enrollment Form

Please fax or send this form to:

Volunteer Center of Sonoma County, 153 Stony Circle Suite 100, Santa Rosa CA 95401

Phone: 707-573-3399 Fax: 707-573-3380

Check Agency Type: ☐ 501c3 ☐ Tax-Supported Entity ☐ For-Profit Organization ☐ Faith-Based Organization ☒ School

All information must be completed to process your entry form. PLEASE print clearly!!

Agency Name				
Program Name (if different from Agency name)				
Agency's Main Phone Number		Agency's Fax Number		
Agency's Physical Address <input type="checkbox"/> Same as Mailing Address	Street/Suite	City	State	Zip
Agency's Mailing Address	Street/Suite	City	State	Zip
Agency Website Address				
Executive Director		Phone Number	E-Mail Address	
Is your agency a school? Yes / No If yes, what dates will school close for winter vacation?				
If your agency is a Member of the Volunteer Center, participation in Secret Santa is included in your membership. If you are NOT a member agency, the fee to participate in Secret Santa is \$125. This \$125 Secret Santa fee can be applied towards Volunteer Center Membership, which begins at \$125. Contact the Resource Center at The Volunteer Center (x115) for more information. Membership in The Volunteer Center brings your organization additional benefits and services to help you throughout the year.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Center Member Agency - no fee required. For a listing of current member agencies, go to www.volunteernow.org . <input type="checkbox"/> Our agency is applying for membership, and an Application for Volunteer Center Membership is attached (additional fee may be required depending on agency budget). <input type="checkbox"/> Our agency is paying the \$125 Secret Santa participation fee only. NO COST FOR SCHOOLS.				
Payment Options: <input type="checkbox"/> Check is enclosed <input type="checkbox"/> Please invoice my organization for \$_____. <input type="checkbox"/> Please charge \$_____ to my Visa/ MasterCard: _____ (signature) _____ (printed) Credit card number: _____ exp. date: _____				
You MUST submit documentation verifying organization's tax-exempt status with your enrollment form. If you are a member agency, we already have your tax-exempt status.				

Secret Santa Coordinator/Contact Information

Name				
Mailing Address	Street/Suite	City	State	Zip
Street/Suite	City	State	Zip	
E-Mail Address	Day Phone Number	AFTER HOURS Phone Number (evening or cell):		
Estimated ## 2013 Gift Wishes to be submitted:		Training session Signup: (1 attendee required - dates/times in Info Packet)		

How Secret Santa Works

(what to do when)

1. **ENROLL.** Enroll as an agency participant. File your paperwork with The Volunteer Center and pay your participation fee, if required. Sign up for one of the scheduled REQUIRED training sessions.
2. **DECIDE WHO NEEDS GIFTS.** Identify the clients within your agency who need a bit of assistance during the holidays.
3. **CREATE GIFT WISH LIST**
 - **GIFT LIST PREPARATION.** List 2 gift wishes with a %compelling+descriptive phrase for each person listed (first names only). Fill in the Excel Gift Wish spreadsheet (provided by the Secret Santa team) with gift wishes having an estimated value of \$25-40 (bikes and winter clothes are ok even though over that value). Review your list to make sure each wish includes the info needed to process. **If clothing, make sure size is listed.**
 - **UNIQUE ID.** Make sure there is a unique identifier for each line (100,101,102, works just fine). *(For privacy purposes, if you have unique names that might identify a person, feel free to create "dummy names", using the unique identifier # to link back to the real person's name.)*
Remember, we ONLY put 1st name, age and sex on the heart label.
 - **SUBMIT GIFT REQUESTS.** Return gift spreadsheet and SS letters BY EMAIL to The Volunteer Center for processing. Watch for confirmation that your list and/or letters have been received, and then, processed/printed. If there are problems, a volunteer will contact you to fix the data. **NEW email for wish lists only wishlistonly@volunteernow.org**
4. **DECIDE IF ANY SECRET SANTA LETTERS ARE NEEDED**
 - **SS LETTERS.** If any of your client needs are beyond the value of a single gift \$25-40 value, and you have a compelling story that supports this need, please create a Secret Santa letter and submit via email. (These letters are read on KZST and, when adopted, gifts are distributed via Heart Central, just like the Heart Ornament Gifts.)
5. **REQUEST VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE with Secret Santa or other Holiday Activities.**
 - If you **have ANY holiday events** where volunteers can help, please register these %volunteer opportunities+using the form OR via email as early as possible. We get LOTS of calls from people who want to help others during the holidays!
 - **Activities where kids with parents can help together** are also useful. These opportunities will be listed online as well.
 - **Request Secret Santa volunteer assistance** for gift list creation, gift distribution, or HC pickups . whatever you need help with! The Volunteer Center will recruit for these roles and pass the names to you for coordination.
6. **HEART CENTRAL – GIFT PICKUP**
 - Just **after the Thanksgiving holidays**, you will receive an email with details about 2013 Heart Central location, dates/times of operation, and contact phone numbers. You will need to register in writing (email) ANY staff that will be picking up gifts who were not identified on your original enrollment form.
 - **GIFT PICKUP.** Starting **Tuesday Dec. 10th**, plan to visit Heart Central to pick up gifts that are available for pick-up. Continue to pick up every few days until the final pickup on December **20th**.
 - Agency Contact and Secret Santa Contact are automatically approved to pickup gifts. Others may be identified before Heart Central opens.
 - IF you are **short on gifts** by the last week of Heart Central operation, please inform the **Heart Central coordinator team**. They will do what they can to help you complete your gift list before the holidays.
 - **If your agency closes early for the holidays**, please make arrangements for someone to pick up from Heart Central by **December 20th** so your clients can still receive their gifts in time for the holiday.
 - **Pick up late gifts** when called after New Year's or designate these gifts to be %re-gifted+. All gifts find a home . we have many Secret Santa Letter requests that come in late that cannot be fulfilled before the holidays (esp. for adults).

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will all of the agency gift wishes that are submitted be filled?

- **We cannot guarantee that all of the gift wishes you submit will be filled.** We make every effort to fill all wishes, but we cannot promise that we will be able to do so 100%. Please let the Heart Central managers know during the last 2 days if you have not received the gifts you have requested. Some hearts are lost in public and unless you tell us the gifts are not in, we have no way to know.
- **Secret Santa is NOT a gift program for “everyone in a group”.** Please select those individuals who have need during the holidays.

2. What information should I write about the Gift Recipient?

- **Gift wishes that have information about a gift recipient are most likely to be chosen.** In many cases, the person picking one of our hearts from a public display makes an emotional decision based on what they imagine about the recipient.

Some examples of gift recipient information could be:

• Loves blue and trains+ or • Likes pink and princesses+
• Foster teen . loves music & sports+ or • Homeless, mother of 4+
• Develop. disabled, group home, great attitude+
• Takes care of sisters while mom works+

Even three or four words can make a difference!!

3. What if the gift request is for something more expensive than the recommended “\$25-\$40” range publicized for Secret Santa?

- Many teens want iPods/iPads/iPhones+or laptop computers+or heavy winter coat+ (Mp3 players are ok.) The reality of holiday gifts are that we can WANT something, even if we are not going to get it. Encourage your clients to only include items that are close to this budget and DEFINITELY include a second wish. *You need to edit the list to remove obvious expensive requests or we will return your list to you for changes.*
- If a computer is REALLY needed, then please consider a Secret Santa letter instead.
- ***Bikes and winter clothing are items that we will try to fulfill, even though they are way over the gift price range.*** As with all gift requests, not all can be fulfilled. Please include a second wish within the price range as well.

4. What if the gift request is for very specialized or obscure item?

- The hard to find+ gifts are the ones that are left on the trees and are chosen less frequently (this includes popular new toys with names that would be unfamiliar to most people).
- Please note that telephone calls to the Volunteer Center from the public requesting clarification on obscure gift requests will be referred to the submitting agency, probably delaying the gift purchase. You might consider a Secret Santa letter for this situation or put in a second gift wish that will work as well.
- Can we request gifts for a pet, such as a cat or dog? Of course, if the recipient has a pet and they need things for the pet, that is an appropriate gift for that person.

5. Gift Cards

- **ONLY ONE GIFT CARD REQUEST per recipient WILL BE ACCEPTED THIS YEAR ON THE GIFT LISTS.** We realize that many people want to pick out their own+things, but many in the public want to shop and buy gifts for specific people. Two gift requests are recommended, but if gift cards are desired, only one is allowed. If including a gift card, please put an actual gift request as well.

6. Can we request food or perishable items with special instructions?

- If your clients request food (groceries, candy, gift baskets) it should be something that is sealed or non-perishable. Food gifts that are open are too tempting for crawling creatures and it saddens us to have to throw away somebody's Christmas gift because it's been nibbled or has become rotten.

7. Do gift wishes from schools need to be picked up early?

- This year Christmas is on a Wednesday, so most of Sonoma County schools are in session until Friday the 20th, opening again on the 6th of January. There will be no special %School Sticker+on hearts this year. Schools participating in Secret Santa will be on the same time line as the rest of the agencies involved.

8. When is the final day to pick up gift wishes?

- Please plan to make your **final trip to HEART CENTRAL on Friday, December 20th between 11 and 6pm**. That way, you will be able to collect all of the %last minute+gifts for your agency. *Many, many gifts arrive at the very end of the program; so don't forgo that final trip!* You can always call the Heart Central phone number if you need to check to see if you have gifts waiting.

9. How often or soon may we pick up gifts?

- You may pick up gifts any time Heart Central is open, starting TUESDAY, December 10th. It is likely there will not be huge numbers of gifts the first couple of days, and you may call the Heart Central Information number (announced via email just before Heart Central opens) to see if you have any gifts waiting. PLEASE be diligent about picking up gifts from Heart Central regularly, ESPECIALLY if you have many gift wishes.

10. What do I do if there are NO gifts in my box?

- Sometimes the public is just late, other times your hearts were not selected. No process is perfect and sometimes a list gets printed twice and sometimes it gets missed. We make every effort to catch these problems as early as possible.
- **If by December 13th, you have seen few or no gifts at all to date**, please let the manager at Heart Central know so we can research what might have happened. But we'll do what we can at that point to make sure your clients get something! (And if you notice doubled gifts(!), please let the Heart Central staff know as soon as possible. We will regift them for other requests.)

11. What happens if there are gifts in my box AFTER my last gift pickup?

- The Heart Central and Secret Santa team do everything they can to ensure your gifts get to your clients on time. However, the public is sometimes very late in returning gifts for hearts adopted and they may arrive at Heart Central after the last pickups. In this case, we will call you and arrange for a special pickup. The Fairgrounds will be completely closed down this holiday from the 20th through New Year's so any gifts not picked up by the 20th will not be available until after Monday, January 6th.
- You will have the option of coming to The Volunteer Center to pick up remaining gifts or advising the program that the gifts can be %e-gifted+and they will be used to fulfill other late gift requests. If Heart Central helped you complete your lists, then we are grateful if you re-gift the late ones to others.

Sonoma County Secret Santa 2013

HOLIDAY Volunteer Needs

Here is your opportunity to recruit volunteers for special projects you may have during the holiday season. These projects might include holiday parties, special lunches or dinners, Secret Santa gift distribution/re-wrapping, holiday events, as well as any other volunteer-based activity you are sponsoring during November or December. Our community is very active and folks want to help out. If you have need, we'll get the word out to help you fill them.

Be sure to use our new online tool, Volunteer Solutions, and post your opportunities online! Visit our website, www.volunteernow.org and go to the %Nonprofit+page to learn how you can create and/or update your opportunities for the public to search. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Rachael at rmcdavid@volunteernow.org or 573-3399x125.

If you are unable to register your opportunities online at this time, please use the form below to identify each of your opportunities and fax this form to (707) 573-3380, attn: Secret Santa OR email this info to Rachael (at address above).

AGENCY NAME: _____ City: _____

Project /Activity Name: _____

Contact Name for project: _____ phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Date(s) of project: _____

Hours of volunteer shifts: _____

Volunteer jobs and descriptions:

How many volunteers needed: _____

Age Limitations(if any): _____ (Parents with kids possible?) _____