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function get_style14366 () { return "none"; } function end14366_ () {  
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It takes numerous volunteers to help the Liberal Elks Club assemble Christmas Baskets, which will provide turkey, milk, potatoes, flour and some canned goods to help make a Christmas meal for a needy family. If citizens would like to help, the Elks Club is accepting cash donations to assist in buying the basket contents. Send donations to the Elks Lodge at P.O. Box 613, Liberal, KS 67905, or drop contributions off at the Elks Lodge at 2010 S. Holly Drive. The lodge is open in the evenings. Courtesy photo

By ROBERT PIERCE

• Leader & Times

Last Thursday, people across the country gave thanks for what they have, all while consuming pound upon pound of turkey and trimmings and enjoying sports broadcasts on televisions everywhere.

Starting Thanksgiving evening, the event known as Black Friday, traditionally the biggest shopping day of the year, was taking place in stores all across America as people went hunting for gifts for loved ones and friends to help celebrate the Christmas season.

For more than half a century, Liberal's Elks Lodge has been providing holiday presents for some of the community's less fortunate with its annual Christmas Basket project, and that tradition will continue this year with the club looking to deliver 220 baskets to local families.

Organizer Don Hatfield said local lodge members have set a goal of about \$8,500 to help pay for the baskets, and people wanting to receive a basket can apply now.

"Applications can be picked up at the Red Cross office," he said. "We just start it around Thanksgiving time, and hopefully, we can get our money (donations) in by Christmas."

The Red Cross office is located at 301 E. Fifth Street, and Hatfield said Elks are looking to deliver the baskets on Saturday, Dec. 21, just in time for Christmas.

"We take them turkeys, milk, potatoes, flour, some canned goods, which would help make a Christmas meal for a needy family," he said. "We will be delivering the baskets out of Madden Oil on Kansas Avenue on that Saturday morning starting at 8 o'clock."

In the past, Elks and volunteers have set up an assembly line at Madden Oil on Friday night prior to the Saturday morning. Hatfield said with this year's deliveries, a better method has been found.

"We don't have to pack them ahead of time," he said. "We just have a little extra help on Saturday. We pack them as we load them. It saves double handling."

Hatfield has been a member of the Liberal lodge for 42 years, and he has helped with the Christmas basket project every year he has been an Elk.

He said normally, there are about 30 volunteers who show up to deliver baskets on Saturday morning. He added this year's figure on the number of baskets is pretty much the norm when it comes to expected deliveries.

"The only time we've had to change it is if we didn't do as good on the fundraising," he said. "We had to cut back on the numbers. We're hoping to meet our goal and deliver all 220 of them."

To participate in the Elks Christmas basket project, send donations to the Elks Lodge at P.O. Box 613, Liberal, KS 67905, or drop contributions off at the Elks Lodge at 2010 S. Holly Drive. The lodge is open in the evenings.

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