Written by Janna Ross
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The Charlestown Police Department is working to help make this year's holiday season a little jollier for local first graders. Anthony Snell, the department's Christmas With A Cop Coordinator, has been working diligently over the past few months on collecting donations and organizing this year's event. This program has been ongoing at the department for approximately 30 years.

"This is the longest running charitable program the police department has. It is all worth it just to see the smiles on the kids' faces that night," Snell commented.

Snell, in his fourth year as Coordinator of the Christmas With A Cop program, is excited about shopping with the kids. Snell, along with the Officers of the Charlestown Police Department and their families will take the 20 first graders to Walmart on December 12. The students are chosen for the program through the two elementary schools in Charlestown, 10 students from Jonathan Jennings and 10 students from Pleasant Ridge. Teachers, staff and officials at the school help chose the students from their daily dealings with the students.

"We spend half of the money we have for the kids on clothes and then half on toys," Snell explained about the upcoming shopping experience. "We send a letter to the parents asking them what are the kids needs and what some of their wants are."

After the kids fill their shopping carts with clothes and toys, the kids are then brought back to the A&E Center in Charlestown for a nice hot meal. Copper Kettle donates the majority of the food for the meal while Donna Carpenter and members of the Ladies Auxiliary of the VFW Post 1427 help prepare the meal.

"Donna Carpenter and the VFW ladies prepare the meal, and then clean up afterward. I just want to publicly thank Copper Kettle, Donna Carpenter and the VFW Ladies Auxiliary for their work in making this event a success," Snell added.

Snell continued, "I also want to thank Teresa Wimsatt for driving the bus every year. I have been a police officer for nine years, and she has driven the bus every year. Don Garr meets us at Walmart and helps to load all the gifts in the truck and then brings them back to town. U Haul in Clarksville donates a truck for the event. I just want to thank all of these people who help make it a success."

He concluded, "I also want to thank Kenny McDaniel."

If you would like to make a donation to this year's Christmas With A Cop you may call Snell at the Charlestown Police Department at 812-256-6345. The department can send an officer out to your business or home to pick up your donation. You may also drop a donation off at the Charlestown Police Department located at 701 Main Street in Charlestown.

You may also donate during the upcoming road block. The Charlestown Police Department will also hold their final road block for the Christmas With A Cop program on Black Friday, November 23, from 2 to 6 p.m.