Dear Christmas Gifting Room 2017 Host,

Thank you for volunteering to take this on! I found out it was more work than I anticipated so I strongly suggest partnering up with a co-host and delegating early on. This document includes the overall information on how it works, what is expected, some graphics I used to set criteria for the donations bin (which worked as I only had to throw away 3 items) and the instructions I gave our shopping assistants that I think helped a lot.

Here are some other things I did to help make it a successful event:

* Created an online survey that I posted in advance to Facebook about what went well last year and suggestions they had for this year – this really helped me to anticipate any problems.
* Followed the Facebook AV-Coop Giveaway page for any items that fit the donations criteria for a month up until the event – this gave us about 20 more items than we needed which helped for good selection.
* Did an inventory of the donations one week before the event so that I could anticipate if we needed any more items or items of a certain type like gender neutral.
* Created shopping cards for every child that registered – this informed our shopping assistants on the name of the child, the names of the people they are shopping for and anything that the child should avoid buying. I included a comments section of what not to buy in the children’s registration sign up sheet.
* For set up, we put the coop table-tops on top of children’s clothing-share bins to make them low enough for the kids to see all the items, but the gifting wrapping station was at a proper table so that little ones couldn’t reach things like scissors and tape.
* Ended up giving all the proceeds to the White Helmets – I didn’t use any of it to pay for gift wrapping supplies (wrapping paper, tape, name tags) because my heart wasn’t in it. Depending on where you want proceeds to go, you may want to check with Events committee if they’d pay for supplies before the event.
* During the event, I asked volunteers to wear Christmas colours and any Christmas accessories (Santa Hats, snowmen earrings etc) which made it fun!

Some things I would do differently:

* For the sign up of 22 children, I would make the event shorter, say about one hour. Most of the children were finished within the hour leaving a number of volunteers with nothing to do.
* Most of the children arrived right away and so that is when I should have booked the most volunteers.
* Make some treats or bring some kind of beverage for the volunteers.
* Delegate more and ask for supplies on Facebook before purchasing them.

Have fun! Sincerely Sharon Inkpen

Christmas Gifting Room Event:

Where children choose gifts for their parents or grandparents without their parents’ help!

**Please register your child by December 4th by filling out the survey in the lobby by the mailboxes.**

The Christmas Gifting Room is a volunteer-run event where children get to pick out gifts for parents and/or grandparents with the help of a Shopping Assistant rather than their parents. What children love most about this event is the way they get to independently choose gifts and then surprise their parents on Christmas day. What parents love most is the amount of pride, thoughtfulness and joy they see in their children because of this event. Members who do not have very young children enjoy volunteering for the event, which allows them the opportunity to help and get to know the children in the building.

When: December 18th from 4pm to 7pm

Where: Common Room

How:

1. Register your children by December 4th (this will give us enough notice to know how many volunteers and items we will need)
2. Donate at least the same number of items that your children will buy in the Christmas Gifting Room Donations Box in the Common Room closet. The box will be checked and emptied regularly up until the event. Criteria for what to donate are listed below.
3. Sign up to volunteer if you are able. Volunteer Sign up sheet will be available in the Lobby by the mailboxes on Dec 4th. You will just have to step outside during the time that your child is shopping.
4. Bring your child to the event on Dec 18th between 4pm and 7pm. Your child will receive a “Shopper’s Card” which will help your child’s Shopping Assistant with picking out gifts (ie: what not to get like things the receiver is allergic to) and with labeling the gift after gift wrapping. Each item will cost $2. The proceeds go towards paying for giftwrapping supplies and to future AV Coop events. Please also bring a shopping bag for your child to use.

Donating Criteria:

The following is based off feedback from members.

* Small items
* Handmade items
* Unopened perishable items
* Service coupons
* Low cost and desirable

\* Items that do not meet the criteria will not be included in Gifting Room possibly resulting in a call to members for more items.

Donations Examples:

Small items (in new or great condition) examples:

* Mittens
* Scarves
* Men’s ties or belts
* Jewelry (no earrings)
* Cool, unused stationary
* Family Games
* Kitchen items

\*Please **NO** books, CD’s, DVD’s or Blue Ray’s

Handmade items:

* Jam/Preserves (please include ingredients and unit #)
* Crafts
* Natural skincare/soap products

Unopened Perishables:

* Tea, Coffee or Hot Cocoa
* Chocolates
* Cookies
* Mixed nuts
* Hot Sauce/Curry
* Soda
* Soap/Skin care
* Bubble bath
* Candles

**\***Please **NO ALCOHOL** but see “Service!” for a way around this

\*Please check expiration dates before donating

Service Coupons:

* Babysitting coupon
* Home-Cooked Meal coupon
* Home-Baking coupon
* Bike-Repair coupon
* Laundry Washing, Drying and Folding coupon
* Ukulele Lesson coupon
* Visit Unit # \_\_\_\_\_ to pick up your beer coupon

\*Please decorate your coupon with pictures showing what your coupon is about.

Low Cost and Desirable items:

* If you cannot find items in your home, you may want to purchase something. Just remember that this is more about children giving than parents receiving so don’t spend a lot but don’t buy something you wouldn’t want to receive.

Shopping Assistants!

Thank you for your help! We can’t do this without you!

Your job includes doing the following tasks on an as needed basis:

1. **Letting a little shopper in** and giving them their **shopping card**
   1. those without shopping cards didn’t register/donate and are welcome to shop at 5:40
   2. Make to check that we are not full before letting a child in (full looks like everyone is busy helping little shoppers)
2. **Helping a little shopper pick out gifts** based on the shopping card criteria (younger children/toddlers will need the most help with this)
3. Helping a little shopper **pay for their items** (ex: “2 items means that will be at least $4 please”)
4. **Wrapping the gifts** for the little shoppers or putting the gifts in a gift bag with tissue paper (shoppers have to choose one or the other)
5. Making sure that **little shoppers connect with their parents** in the lobby

Other things you’ll need to know:

* Each item is a minimum $2 and proceeds go to the White Helmets in Syria. Little shoppers/parents are welcome to donate more.
* Little ones may feel more comfortable with you if you get down to their eye level when you introduce yourself/provide help
* Older ones may need less help and may desire to do most things independently
* If you see a fellow Shopping Assistant overwhelmed, help them out before letting another shopper in.









