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News

Asa's Angels to deliver Easter baskets (with video)

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Asa's Angels will deliver Easter baskets to 1,000 children Wednesday — twice the number of children served last Easter season.

Asa's Angels' donation drives have grown steadily every year since 2007, when real-estate agent Asa Cox founded the charity. Asa's Angels also has grown from two to four seasonal donation drives since its founding. It collects donations for Easter, back to school, Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

Easter is Asa's smallest donation drive season, but this year, it has generated possibly the most publicity because of an unsolved theft reported a few weeks ago. Sometime after its Christmas season drive, someone broke into her realty business's Madison location and stole enough candy and gifts for 300 or 400 Easter baskets, Cox said. Cleveland TV stations WJW and WOIO dispatched news crews soon after the stuff was found missing.

"Like I told a lot of my workers: 'It was sad, but it was also good because nobody really knew what we did,'" Cox said. "When Channel 8 and Channel 19 did their stories, we only got four donations (that day), but we got another 186 kids that didn't know about us. Their parents went online and registered."

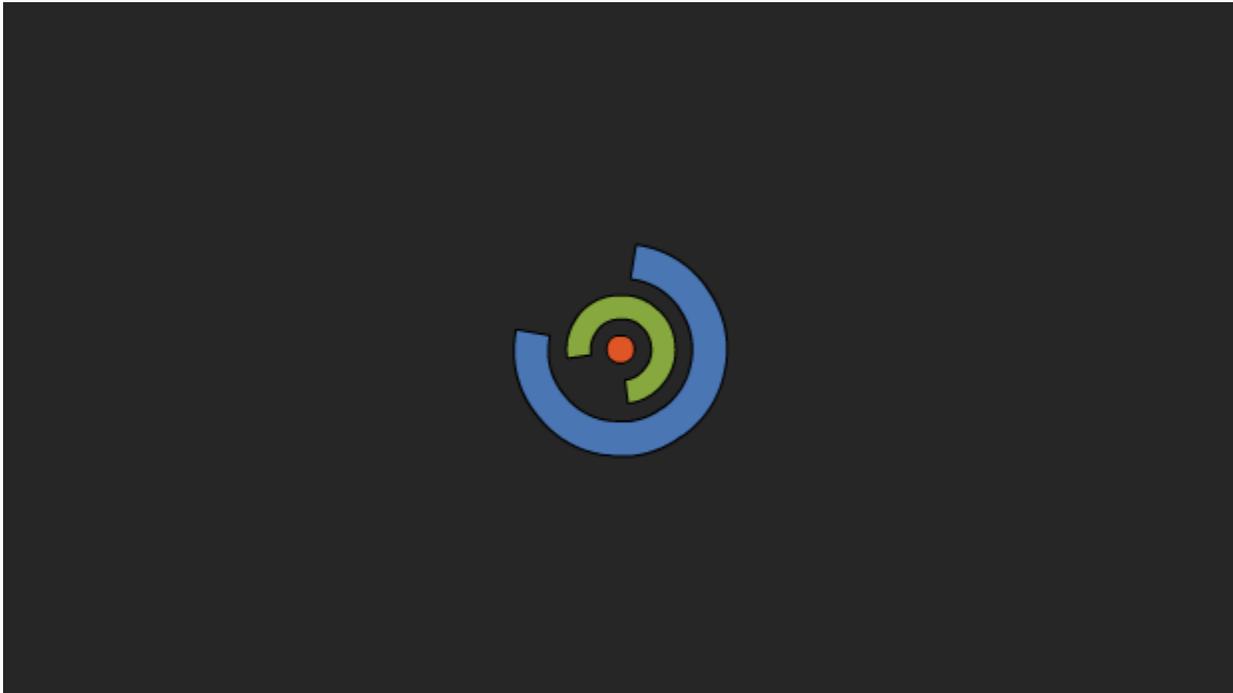
Cox said 80 percent of the registered children live in Lake County. But some also live as far away as Brook Park, Middlefield and North Bloomfield in Trumbull County.

The publicity also has challenged Asa's Angels to collect more donations to meet the needs of so many new children.

Cox's real-estate business, Asa Cox Homes, donated \$6,000 for this Easter season to help meet the demand.

But Asa's Angels also is getting help from more Lake County businesses than ever before. Erie Optical and Tryst Salon and Spa at Mentor's Corner Plaza on Mentor Avenue joined Thursday to host an "Eggtravaganza" event to generate donations for Asa's Angels. For four hours, Erie Optical offered families pictures with the Easter Bunny and Tryst offered free nail polishing and temporary tattoos to kids. Seventy-five basket worth of donations were given that evening, Cox said.

Kim Aikey of Mentor came out Thursday with her two daughters, 15-year-old Megan and 8-year-old Ashlyn, and donated five bags of assorted Easter goodies.



Kim learned about Asa's Angels in 2012 from an Erie Optical employee. This is the second donation drive Kim has donated to.

"It's nice that we have something that is honestly going to the kids," Kim said.

"Because kids are cool," Ashlyn added.

Cox said Asa's Angels still needs to collect 100 more baskets of goods before the end of Monday to meet its goal. Most of what's needed is Easter candy, Cox said.

Donations can be dropped off at Cox's two office locations: 1505 Madison Ave. in Painesville Township and 1975 Hubbard Road in Madison Township, or at the location of a business partner, which includes Mentor businesses and organizations Dodd Camera, Bixels Salon and Studio, Maracas Bar and Grill, Manhattan Deli, Lake County Council on Aging, Erie Optical, Tryst Salon and Spa, Imagine Salon in Willoughby, and Jackie's Sports Bar and Lake County Speedway in Painesville Township.

Families are expected to pick up Easter baskets Wednesday at the former Madison Goodwill store at 1985 Hubbard Road. Cox asked that registered families call her at 440-479-3100 if they haven't yet scheduled a pickup time.

Also next week, Asa's Angels will start off its back-to-school donation drive and expects to give free supplies and gifts to as many as 6,000 children before the 2013-14 school year begins.

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