

DONATIONS

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its largest fundraiser, had five fewer days to collect this year because of a late Thanksgiving. That timing along with widespread winter storms in early December could cause a shortfall of \$20 million in donations by the time the campaign ends Christmas Eve. The site said such a shortfall would be a large drop from previous record-breaking years.

As a result, Salvation Army officials say it's possible the organization will not meet its national fundraising goal for the Christmas season.

Mayfield said one problem at the local level is the lack of volunteers to ring bells at the kettles.

"It is important someone stands at the kettle to meet and greet those who are giving and thank them for their donation," she said. "I don't have enough people stationed at the sites we have."

She said people can still contact the Salvation Army at 283-3394 to volunteer before 2 p.m. on Christmas Eve when the kettles will be removed from Stewart's Super One, K-mart and

To double your donation:

- Give at a kettle
- Give online at SalvationArmyNorth.org.
- Call 800-SAL-ARMY (725-2769)
- Drop off a check at the International Falls Salvation Army, 1301 3rd Ave West

County Market.

"We thank everyone for their generosity during this time of year," Mayfield said. "People are a blessing to those who may not have a bright Christmas without the generous donations of others."

Mayfield said what is collected locally, stays within the community to provide critical services to people's neighbors in need at Christmastime and throughout the year.

According to the organization's website, \$25 helps give a child clothing and school supplies, \$50 helps feed a hungry child for a week, \$75 will help keep a family warm during the winter, and \$100 will provide five nights of shelter for a homeless family.

For added incentive, the site said, here's an idea

of how donations – big or small – will pay off in 2014. Each year, about:

- 60 million meals are served to the hungry.
- 10 million nights of shelter are provided for the homeless.
- 19 million individuals receive basic social services.
- 4.2 million individuals receive holiday assistance, including presents for underprivileged children and seniors, as well as heat and utility assistance for families in need.
- 300,000 kids experience the joy of summer and day camps.
- 800,000 senior citizens are served with lodging, food, exercise, emotional and spiritual care.
- 200,000 men and women will undergo a six-month counseling program for drug and alcohol rehabilitation at The Salvation Army's Adult Rehabilitation Centers.
- Thousands more are met with job training, referrals, education, life skills classes, and employment.
- Thousands are provided with food, shelter, material and financial assistance after a natural or manmade disaster.

For more information, visit www.SalvationArmyUSA.org.

COUNTY

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spending and initial change in the economy. The indirect impact is the impact closure would have on businesses that provide supplies and materials to the LMC. Induced impact is the loss of employee spending in the community.

The total impact of all three types results in an estimated loss of \$6.6 million in sales for Koochiching County, and a total loss of 109 jobs county-wide, according to the report. The LMC employs 94 full-time and part-time employees, and losing those 94 jobs would mean a loss of 15 jobs in industries that serve the medical center and its employees.

The loss of employee income in the county would have a larger employment effect on service industries, including eating and drinking establishments, retail trade businesses, and health care providers, according to the report. In terms of lost dollars to industries, the largest impact would be on the housing market, as housing payments are one of a

household's major expenses. Other industries like banking, food services and drinking places, and health care would be affected.

While agreeing the report was accurate, Koochiching County Commissioner Brian McBride said he believed the report was conservative. Losing the jobs in a town like Littlefork would mean the unemployed would have to go elsewhere to find work, he said.

"Those jobs are gone and those people are going to have to leave," McBride said. "That's going to devastate not only the town, but the school district. The ripple effect on the school district is going to be tremendous."

The report focused on the economic impact of the loss of the LMC, and not the health care impact it would have on the county's aged population.

The study also provided numbers on available beds in Koochiching County health care facilities. Of the 104 available nursing home beds in the county, 50 are at the LMC. Of these 104 beds, 94 are occupied.

Including assisted living and adult foster care along

with nursing home beds, there are 191 beds in the county. Of these 191 beds, 153 are occupied, according to the report.

The study provided U.S. Census data on the county's population in terms of age. It provided data from the 2010 Census, more current 2012 data, and predictions for 2017. In 2012, there were 779 residents over 80 years old in Koochiching County. For 2017, that number will decrease slightly to 769 residents.

Because of an aging population and current shortage of nursing home beds, keeping the LMC open is "critical to the county," Koochiching County Commissioner Wade Pavleck said.

"We have to make this work, it's just a matter of how we're going to do it and put it together," Pavleck said.

The LMC is currently managed through an agreement with Bigfork Valley, and the agreement was extended through the end of the year, Littlefork Mayor Mike Fort said. Bigfork Valley is working with the LMC to find a chief executive officer who will be able to take over management of the facility.

KEDA

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"I'm always willing to travel, it's not a problem, I've got a couple clients in Northome, too," Herman said. "I try to get the word out to everyone."

Herman worked 808 hours with clients, either one-on-one or working on projects, she said. She also spent 300 hours with economic development activities not with clients. These include Women's Business Network meetings, chamber economic development meetings, coordinating the CEOs in the Classroom program, and organizing Junior Achievement, she said.

The Junior Achievement program is a national non-profit organization dedicated to teaching students in kindergarten through grade 12 about entrepreneurship and financial lit-

eracy, according to the program's website. Herman coordinated with Falls High School and Falls Elementary to bring the program into the classrooms, and all grades except one signed up, she said.

The JA program classes are taught by volunteers who are attorneys, bankers, parents, and small business owners, Herman said. It also doesn't cost KEDA or the school district any money, she said, and doesn't create more work for the teachers. The program will reach 890 students this year, and the curriculum gets progressively more involved as the students get older.

"It gets especially fun, I think, when you into the higher grades," she said. "I think we've got a really good lineup of classes."

SBDC clients also received \$3 million in loans in 2013, compared to \$842,000 in 2012, Herman said.

"I think that shows a sign that businesses are able to get funding, maybe things are improving a little bit for them, and banks a little bit more willing to do loans," she said.

The SBDC also worked with the Turn Around Assistance Program in 2013, which was a federal grant to the Small Business Administration to help small businesses looking for additional assistance, Herman said. These funds helped provide specialized consulting services, which included developing marketing strategies for clients and working with an attorney to get the correct legal structure in place for a business, she said.

"I was pretty proactive in making sure International Falls got a piece of that by working with my clients and really finding out what their needs were," Herman said.

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