

## Letter: 'Santas' who give to Treasure Coast children year-round

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Debbie Butler, Port St. Lucie

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Yes, Virginia, Santa Claus does exist and lives in the hearts of many, many people I know. His kindness and generosity are brought to fruition by these individuals not only at Christmas but throughout the year.

Our Santas are amazing advocates for children, and provide support and collaboration throughout the year to help raise awareness of issues impacting our kids: St. Lucie County Sheriff Ken Mascara provided more than 70 bikes this year for our kids at Christmas; Indian River County Sheriff Deryl Loar hosted multiple workshops on issues impacting our youth; Martin County Sheriff William Snyder facilitated a human-trafficking seminar; Okeechobee County Sheriff Paul May hosted a drug abuse symposium to raise awareness and begin a conversation.

Every week Sydney Liebman and Luminaries promote volunteerism and philanthropy for our less fortunate. Scripps' editors and their staff keep news focused on issues impacting kids and outing those who hurt our children.

Wendy Dwyer and Mitch Kloorfain work through multiple venues to help improve others' lives, especially children. Chief Judge Steven J. Levin and Judge Larry Schack strive daily to protect our most vulnerable.

By hosting our Treasure Coast GFNF Child Summit, Indian River State College helped provide just under 500 individuals representing 180 organizations with two full days of child-focused training and free continuing education units. Michelle Akins devoted countless hours of dedication and training on behalf of maltreated children.

Scott VanDuzer, Andrew Hunt, Ruth Stromak, Dr. Pamela Roberts, Susan Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Houpt, Richard Stark, Elizabeth Mackenzie, Doris Plym, Kathy Hurt, Joey Beale, and the many generous individuals in our community helped to provide almost 3,000 gifts to maltreated children here on the Treasure Coast while dedicated to protecting them from further harm.

Yes, Virginia, Santa is alive and forever giving.