Each December, the minds of children are filled with fantasy as they envision all that Christmas brings. One of the most enchanting symbols of this season is Santa Claus. The opportunity to meet him, and personally whisper requests for gifts is a joy for every child. The Crown Club of Junior Auxiliary of Brookhaven attempts to offer this exciting and engaging opportunity for the children in our community each year. The Chapter’s annual Milk and Cookies with Santa Event has become a tradition that children of all ages eagerly anticipate. Due to the rural location of the community, opportunities to “meet” Santa and his helpers are not always easy for all families. Several years ago, the Chapter discovered that this was an unmet need in the community for many children and their families. Our Crown Club chapter stepped in to address this need.

The project takes approximately 2 months plan, beginning in October of each year. During this 2-month period, Crown Club members and Junior Auxiliary sponsors decide which activities will be provided, determine the expenses for materials, food, and milk, and prepare decorations. Rather than designating one leader for the project, members work collaboratively and share responsibility for planning and execution. All girls are responsible for planning a specific activity for the day of the event. All girls assist with decoration and set up the day prior to the event and everyone is present on the day of the event to “man their stations”. It is truly a team effort as everyone plays their part to make this event a success. This collaborative effort allows Crown Club members to learn how to manage a collaborative projective with a given budget, timeline, and desired outcome. Many girls have found that this opportunity allows them to discover skills they never realized they owned.

Two to three Crown Club girls are responsible for each activity station. They serve as Santa’s elves and interact with the children throughout the day. While waiting on their turn to meet Santa, children can participate in several fun and exciting activities with the Crown Club girls – face painting, letters to Santa, photo booth, reindeer lollipops, and creating food for Santa’s reindeer.
Milk and Cookies with Santa is open to all children in the community and brings together a very diverse population that would not normally share in this special season together. This year was truly a success with well over 100 children served. They stepped into a world of magic and imagination as they enjoyed this thrilling event. They mingled and laughed with children that they may or may not have known. This project demonstrates initiative, ingenuity and imagination in searching out a need in the community by bringing together children from various backgrounds together in a fun and exciting way to play and have fun with each other. If only for a moment, children can escape from their everyday lives and participate in a whimsical moment with a cherished symbol of the love of Christmas.