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RENO GUARDIAN ANGELS STRIVE TO DOUBLE THEIR FUNDRAISING GOAL

Donations increase as temperature drops. Local chapter now plans to give away 200 sets of blankets, hats and gloves for their inaugural Blanket-Bundle Drive.

RENO, Nev. – December 18, 2008 – The Reno chapter of the Guardian Angels have met and exceeded their initial fundraising goal, and continue to raise as much money as possible to purchase blankets, hats and gloves for Reno’s Downtown Homeless.

Initially planning for 100, the chapter now plans to give away 200 blanket-bundles to homeless recipients on Tuesday, December 23.

“It’s awesome. Just awesome,” says Scott Tootell, a chapter member and spokesman, who conceived the idea with chapter leader Ed Park. “When we thought of the idea, we weren’t even sure if we could make enough, and the initial response looked like it might prove us right. But we kept at it, even going door-to-door.”

Then, Tootell says, he received a call from a local business owner whose wife had read an article about the blanket-bundle drive, and how it was falling short, and that they wanted to donate whatever the chapter needed to make the goal.

“I almost fell out of my chair.”

“Their sons had told them that that they wanted to do something for the homeless. It was perfect timing, and a perfect opportunity.” Tootell explains that the family didn’t want publicity or accolades – personally or for their business – but simply wanted to help the chapter reach their goal of \$2,000.

“When I picked up the check, they said ‘hey, if you raise even more, maybe you can buy more blankets and help more people.’” The chapter accepted this as a challenge, and set their sights on doubling their goal. They prepared a press release, sent email announcements, submitted online listings, and even used craigslist.org and social networking sites to generate some interest.

News of the campaign started to spread as the newspaper and local television stations picked up the story. About the same time, record-breaking low temperatures were forecast, making the situation for those living on the streets that much more life-threatening.

“People started coming out of the woodwork, with donations from \$5 to \$500, and some donating their own personal blankets and coats,” Tootell says. “We officially doubled our goal to \$4,000, and now we’re at 73%, with promises of even more checks and online donations. We couldn’t have dreamed of a better outcome, and we’re eager to get these blanket-bundles into the hands of those who need them, as fast as possible.”

With the increased funds, the chapter plans to extend their drive into January, distributing the first 100 blanket-bundles on Tuesday of next week, and the rest as soon as they can get more blankets, hats and gloves. As money comes in, more blankets will go out.

Each blanket-bundle contains a 4-foot by 5-foot signature-red fleece blanket with Guardian Angels logo, a red stocking cap and a pair of men’s large black fleece gloves with cinched wrist and clip. The bundle is contained in a polyester carrying strap, allowing the items to be easily carried and stored.

To donate to the Reno Guardian Angels blanket-bundle campaign, please visit www.renoguardianangels.com or mail a donation to Reno Guardian Angels, 2868 Vista Blvd. #124-116, Sparks, NV 89434. A donation of \$20 will pay for one blanket-bundle. All donations are tax deductible, and donors will receive receipts for tax purposes. For more information, contact Scott Tootell at 775-343-9242 or at renoangels@flexativity.com.

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About the Reno Chapter of the Guardian Angels: The Reno Chapter of the Guardian Angels was founded by Ed Park in 1996. Park was a member of the San Francisco chapter of the Guardian Angels before moving to Reno. The Reno chapter is now the third longest-running chapter of the organization. Membership numbers vary over the years, but it currently has six members who volunteer for street patrols, public events and other community service. The chapter hopes to increase its membership through public education about the organization, and active recruitment. Visit www.renoguardianangels.com.

About Guardian Angels: The red beret of The Guardian Angels has become an icon for safety around the world. Founded in 1979 by Curtis Sliwa, The Guardian Angels began as a group of 13 dedicated volunteers who patrolled the subways, streets and neighborhoods of New York City to combat and deter crime. The organization has evolved into today's global network of Angels - volunteers from all walks of life, respected by law enforcement, welcomed by citizens and applauded by governments. Visit www.guardianangels.org for more information.

About Flexativity: Flexativity, Inc. is a full-service marketing agency based in Northern Nevada, with a wide variety of clients around the world. Founded by veteran marketer Tracy Tootell, Flexativity is an expert in integrated marketing strategy, working with visionary companies who are looking to improve their game. To learn more about Flexativity, visit www.flexativity.com.