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Group to give away 100 blankets Tuesday

STAFF REPORT • DECEMBER 21, 2008

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The Reno chapter of the Guardian Angels exceeded its initial fundraising goal and continues to raise as much money as possible to purchase blankets, hats and gloves for Reno's downtown homeless.

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

"It's awesome." "Just awesome," said 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 said, 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," he said.

"Their sons had told them that they wanted to do something for the homeless. It was perfect timing, and a perfect opportunity."

Tootell said the family didn't want publicity or accolades, personally or for their business, but simply wanted to help the chapter reach its 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 members set their sights on doubling the goal.

They prepared a press release, sent e-mail announcements, submitted online listings, and even used



Provided to the Reno Gazette-Journal

Published without caption or credit. ooo The Guardian Angels are trying to provide this type of blanket-bundle to about 100 homeless in downtown Reno this holiday in season. Provided by the Guardian Angels

see if this photo is for sale



HOW TO HELP

What: Guardian Angels blanket-bundles will be given to homeless men in Reno

To donate: visit www.renoguardianangels.com or mail a donation to Reno Guardian Angels, 2868 Vista Blvd. Suites 124-116, Sparks, NV 89434.

Details: Call Scott Tootell at 343-9242 or e-mail renoangels@flexativity.com

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 said.

"We officially doubled our goal to \$4,000, and now we're at 73 percent, with promises of even more checks and online donations," Tootell said Friday.

"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, 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 red fleece blanket with the 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. Suites 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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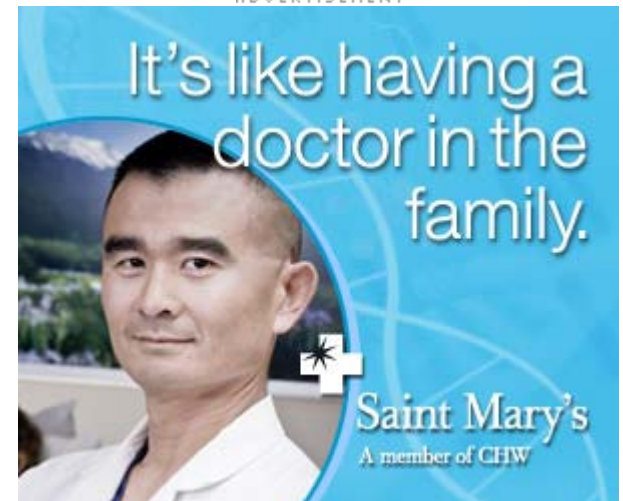
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