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Guardian Angels help keep residents warm this Christmas

BY MARTINA BEATTY • MBEATTY@RGJ.COM • DECEMBER 24, 2008

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Guardian Angel Eric Thompson brought his family along Tuesday to help pass out blanket bundles to cold, needy people.

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One hundred men and women received bundles from the back of a truck in the parking lot of the St. Vincent's Center on Fourth Street. Rolled inside red blankets with white Guardian Angels logos were gloves and a hat.

Thompson's wife, Ginger Thompson, had her two daughters along to help. Both Girl Scouts, Kim Mix, 9, and Martha Mix, 12, were cold, but said it was fun to help.

"You want to do what you can," Ginger Thompson said.

The family lives in Sparks, and Eric Thompson works at the Henry Shein distribution company on Vista Boulevard. But years ago, Ginger said she was on the receiving end of the kind of charity she's now able to provide.

"We've been in shelters," she said, referring to herself and her daughters. "We've been in the motel situation. I've had a rough life ... It feels good to help."

Eric Thompson joined the Guardian Angels recently because he wanted to get involved in the community. He's a member of a team of Angels that periodically patrols downtown Reno.

"If the homeless fall asleep, we make sure they're breathing, still alive," he said.

Fellow Guardian Angel Scott Tootell said the

100 blanket bundles went quickly Tuesday, but the group soon will be getting 200 more to hand out next week.

The Angels raised about \$6,000 from the community. Their original goal was \$2,000.

At the beginning of the month, the Guardian Angels went "door-to-door," to businesses, lawyers' offices and banks to request donations for the blanket bundles.

They said the community was extremely generous to their cause.

Larry Noble, 61, was one blanket bundle recipient Tuesday. Although he said he does have a home -- "I've got one but I can't get to it" -- he's stuck in Reno for the time being. He came to gamble, and things didn't go well.

About the Guardian Angels, Noble said: "They do a real good thing."



Provided to the Reno Gazette-Journal People in need of blankets, gloves and hats received them Tuesday from the Guardian Angels at the St. Vincent Center on Fourth Street.

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Provided to the Reno Gazette-Journal Scott Tootell with the Guardian Angels hands out a "blanket-bundle" Tuesday at the St. Vincent's Center parking lot on Fourth Street.

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DETAILS The Guardian Angels are volunteers who provide public safety and education in neighborhood streets and schools. Details: www.guardianangels.org

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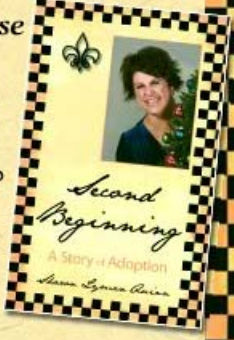
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