

# San Francisco Chronicle

## BAY AREA

AND CALIFORNIA

BAY AREA VOLUNTEERS HELP SPREAD HOLIDAY SPIRIT WITH FREE MEANS, GIFTS, GET-TOGETHERS



The Delancey Street Foundation got an early start Christmas Eve when it gave out more than 2,000 Christmas trees from its lot at Pier 32 on San Francisco's Embarcadero. It wasn't that Delancey Street could not sell the trees - "We did very well after a very slow start," said lot manager Mike Fakhoury. The foundation, he said, holds back many trees to give away every year. "It's a great capper on the year," said Fakhoury. The Delancey Street Foundation gave out more than 2,000 free Christmas trees on Christmas eve.

The Guardsmen, who ran a big lot at Fort Mason, delivered about 100 trees to charities, the

remainder of a 4,000-tree fund-raising operation that uses the proceeds, come summer, to send children to camp. But the climax of the season is Christmas Day, and starting at 9 this morning, volunteers will help the Salvation Army deliver 3,500 Christmas dinners in San Francisco to senior citizens and people who are unable to leave home.

Salvation Army Captain Lawrence Shiroma has about 150 volunteer drivers and as many helpers but could use more, he said. The program operates out of the Salvation Army's Harbor Light Center, Ninth and Harrison streets. The phone number is 864-7000.

At 9:30 a.m., Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco begins the service of a Christmas meal, 330 Ellis Street in the Tenderloin. Fifteen minutes later, St. Anthony Dining Room begins serving holiday dinner at 45 Jones Street. The two organizations serve the most holiday meals in the Bay Area.

The holiday was nearly a disaster for Mother Mary Ann Wright, Oakland's "Angel of the Poor," when thieves stole some turkeys intended for her annual Christmas giveaway. However, news reports of the theft brought in a deluge of donations, from a truckload of turkey and sausage and toys from a Bay Area company to a house made of gingerbread from a Walnut Creek woman.

"It was a great thing for us," said Wright yesterday. "God bless that thief. The response was the richest thing that ever happened." Wright and her assistants gave away 800 bags of food Monday and will give away toys to children, blankets to homeless men and women and food to all comers, starting at 11:45 a.m. at Jefferson Park at 11<sup>th</sup> and Jefferson streets in Oakland.

In Contra Costa County, the volunteer organization Loaves and Fishes will serve dinner at St. Michael and All Angels church in Concord and St. Peter Martyr Church in Pittsburg, starting at 11.

St. Vincent DePaul dining room will start serving at Payran and D Streets in Petaluma and at 610 Wilson Avenue in Santa Rosa at about 11:30. About 400 people, most of them homeless, are expected at the Santa Rosa location, said Ben Ortiz, a volunteer. "We will be giving out gifts at 2," he said.

At St. Paulus Lutheran Church in San Francisco, there will be a holiday dinner program and family reunion for gay and lesbian people who are alone at Christmas. The celebration, an annual event for many years, is named in honor of Tenderloin Tessie, a colorful figure in the community.

There will also be a holiday community potluck sponsored by the Urban Ministry of Palo Alto and Menlo Park at 950 Santa Cruz Avenue, Menlo Park, beginning at 5 p.m.

Most of these events have been organized and will be staffed by volunteers. As Dumatit said, "We are glad to do it."