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The Outlook

Westiders' purchases aid rehab center

By Jorge Casuso
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The Delancey Street Foundation is branching out for the holidays, and you can smell it in the pine-scented air.

The nation's largest rehab center for ex-convicts, drug addicts and prostitutes has set up four Christmas tree lots on the Westside this year, up from three in 1996. The group, formerly based in Santa Monica, will run a total of seven lots in the Los Angeles area, two more than last year.

Proceeds from the tree sales, which totalled \$600,000 last year, pay for the annual cost of running Delancey Street's Los Angeles branch, located at the Midtown Hilton Hotel on Vermont Avenue. The money will bankroll the mortgage, pay the gas and electric bills and buy food for the center's 230 residents.

Self-reliance

"We practice and profess self-reliance," said Diana Sanders, who co-manages the Los Angeles branch, which was based in Santa Monica from 1984-1990. "We're perfectly capable of taking care of ourselves, and people are very supportive of that."

TREES AGAINST TROUBLE



Delancey Street's tree sales brought in \$600,000 last year to pay for running the center, once based in Santa Monica and now located at the Midtown Hilton Hotel on Vermont Avenue in Los Angeles.



Rudy Marino, above, uses a chain saw on a Christmas tree trunk with help from Chris Mueller.