



Published in the Novato Advance
Volume 93, Number 46
November 16, 2016

As we approach the holiday season and begin to count the blessings in our own lives, let's continue to remember those who are less fortunate. There are many families in need, right here in Marin, and if you are looking for ways to give back, there are many terrific programs in our community. I will share a few of them here.

The Novato Human Needs Center (NHNC) will be supporting 150 families and their children through their 2016 Holiday Share Drive. NHNC has a wish list that consists of: \$25 Target gift cards so parents can purchase gifts for their children; \$25 Safeway gift cards to help families afford a holiday meal; new children's books in English & Spanish; and cash donations in any amount. The center will accept donations Monday through Friday from 9:00am-4:00pm at the NHNC (1907 Novato Boulevard) or contributions can be made on-line at www.nhnc.org. The deadline for collections is December 7. For more information, you can contact Katrina Redahan at 415-897-4147 or kredahan@nhnc.org. This year, the NHNC will not be accepting toy donations and suggests dropping toy donations at any Fire Station in Novato.

The Marin/SF Food Bank provides food for our community members in need all year long. More than 49,000 residents in Marin County are in need of food assistance. Consider making a donation to the food bank by dropping off food donations at the Marin warehouse (75 Digital Drive, Novato), Monday through Friday from 8:30am-5:00pm, Whole Foods in Novato, or at either Novato Safeway. You can also consider organizing your own Food & Fund drive at your office, school, club, or religious organization. The items most needed include: soup, chili, baked beans, canned vegetables, tuna, canned meat, cereal, peanut butter and granola bars. For more information: 415-883-1302 or www.sffoodbank.org.

The Sparkle Foundation Inc. has a mission to support women and children in need. Their holiday gift drive is a wonderful opportunity to help people in our community. There are several ways you can help: donate gifts and basic items for families, help gift wrap presents or donate funds. Donated items are needed by December 8 and the volunteer gift wrapping day is December 10. To learn more and for volunteer sign up visit www.sparklenow.org/2016-holiday-gift-drive or contact Sparkle Founder and Novato resident, Samantha Tradelius, at Samantha@sparklenow.org.

Homeward Bound of Marin is collecting gift cards and new socks for homeless children and adults, new twin sheets, blankets, and towels. Items can be dropped off at Homeward Bound's Office (1385 N. Hamilton Parkway, Novato), Monday through Friday from 8:30am-5:30pm. For more information call 415-382-3363.

Adopt A Family of Marin's holiday program served 540 Marin County families last year. If you want to feel a special connection to a particular family this might just be the option for you. Families prepare a wish list of gift ideas that would make their holiday season brighter. Donors then "adopt" one or more families in need for the holidays and go out and purchase the gifts, wrap them, and deliver them to the Adopt A Family office. Families will receive their gifts, delivered by the office staff, before the holidays. Visit www.adoptafamily.org to sign up to adopt a family or you can direct any questions to Leanne at holiday@adoptafamily.org.

Help Warm Wishes fill a need through their holiday campaign which will provide 5,000 "Streetpack's" for distribution to those in need living on the streets. Packs are filled with a pair of gloves, scarf, hat, rain poncho, socks and a holiday card made by local school children to offer warmth and warm wishes during the coldest months of the year. You can volunteer to help assemble packs on December 3 at 9:00am at Unity in Marin (600 Palm Drive, Novato). A suggested donation of \$10 at the door is appreciated. For more information: 415-472-0211 or www.warmwishes.org.

And finally, I want to wish you and your family a very Happy Thanksgiving! I am thankful for you and the work we are able to do together.

As always, my door is open to you and I welcome your suggestions and ideas. You can reach me at: (415) 473-7331 or jarnold@marincounty.org.