



Holiday season b

Agencies help homeless during winter cold

■ LOGAN KELLY

Sports Editor

Trees, menorahs, gingerbread cookies and presents have come to be synonymous with the holiday season. Black Friday came early for the public when stores opened at 11 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. Advertisements with Christmas jingles started in early November, but for the people living below the poverty line, the holidays are a much different story.

For Portland area homeless, conditions are rough. Temperatures are dipping below freezing on a regular basis and snow has been forecast at various times. The piercing winds drop the wind chill factor considerably making conditions brutal for those without shelter.

There are organizations that make an effort to take

care of people who are otherwise ignored. One such organization is called JOIN. They believe homelessness is a complicated issue and that the community should join together to help fight and prevent it. Unlike some organizations with the same overall intention, JOIN does not take referrals from other groups.

"Our priority is to meet people where they are at, out on the street," Will Harris, Director of Development at JOIN, said. Their only criteria for helping is that the recipient must be living on the street or in his or her car.

JOIN started providing basic services to the homeless in 1998 and now has six staff members. The majority of people served are between 35 and 55 years old, but Harris, sees an alarming amount of homeless people 55 and older.

"The number of elderly people we are serving is surprising to me. It appears to me that this is a characteristic of the crisis that is not talked about a lot, but one that has grave implications as the general population ages," he said. The organization has housed about 2,800 people so far.

JOIN does not have an actual shelter. They go out and advocate for the homeless person with private market landlords. "We go out and ask the landlords to take a chance," Harris said.

JOIN is asking the landlords to take a big chance. The people that they help have a record of evictions, convictions, bankruptcy and a whole list of other issues that causes most landlords to shy away from allowing them to rent.

"JOIN's advocacy is not about the legal right to rent,

but about building personal and supportive relationships with local landlords that encourage landlords to grant people second chances to renew their lives from the safety and stability of housing," he said.

Not only does JOIN help the homeless find housing and employment, they help them make the first deposit of their first paycheck. They also assist the disabled fill out benefits paperwork, get to the doctor and JOIN has also started a program house to home which challenges donating companies employees to contribute all of the essential items that are needed in a home.

Troubled youth in the Portland-Metropolitan area are served by Janus Youth Services, which focuses on providing shelter and linking them with other help agencies to help bring teens off the street and back into society.

On Christmas, New

Avenues for Youth will be serving a special holiday meal and two days later they will be serving one similar to their late-night outreach program participants. New Avenues expects to serve around 150 youth and will provide guests with a special holiday present.

New Avenues for Youth serves those age 20 and younger by offering daily meals, showers, laundry and an alternative school for the youth to complete their education. Counseling, case management, a job training program and transitional housing are also available for those who are determined to leave street life behind.

The three agencies are not the only organizations dedicated to helping the homeless. For more information on these agencies, please call 503-232-4640 for JOIN, 503-223-6090 for Janus Youth Services or 503-224-4339 for New Avenues for Youth.

Families create own traditions

■ LOGAN KELLY

Sports Editor

Movies, books and comic strips portray Christmas in America as children running down the stairs on Christmas morning chomping at the bit to tear into their presents. Some people choose other ways to celebrate the holidays.

A growing trend is to cut down on personal gift giving and to donate to those who are less fortunate.

Alex Spady, junior, and his extended family have helping others for the last ten years, instead of focusing on gifts.

"My family donates money to different charities and organizations every Christmas instead of doing a gift exchange between cousins, aunts and uncles," Spady said.

"We created a Giving Tree. It is a small Christmas tree with envelopes attached to it. Each envelope has a different charity or organization in it," he said.

Some examples of the charities that the family supports are Red Cross, Juvenile Diabetic Association, Humane Society and Heifer Foundation."

On Christmas Eve, the parents give the money they normally would have spent on gifts to their children and then the children decide where their money should go. The adults can donate extra money and often the children do too.

"One time I donated \$150 that I had been saving up to the Heifer Foundation. This tradition is very special to my family since it lets us be



Members of junior Alex Spady's extended family choose a charity to donate money to instead of giving each other gifts. "I think this is a great tradition because it allows us to help others in need instead of frivolously spending money on gifts," Spady said.

Photo submitted by Alex Spady

together as a family and it lets us help the community and the world," Spady said.

Traditions from other countries are also a part of family celebrations. The Farnbachs include the pickle, which comes from Germany, as a part of their tradition.

"On Christmas Day, my dad makes some shtolen (bread with candied fruits baked into it and an icing on top) and then we look on the Christmas tree for an ornament that is shaped like a pickle, and whoever finds it gets to open the first present," Hans Farnbach, sophomore, said.

Although, Saleh Kekhia, freshman, is Muslim he celebrates Christmas in a traditional way.

"We still have a Christmas tree and decorations. We also give presents. The only real difference is that we don't go in-depth on the Christianity part of it," Kekhia said.

Jeff Bandel, senior, celebrates Hanukkah, "You

think eight days of gifts, this is fantastic! Well let's examine the usual gifts received: a pencil, an eraser, some paper. It's usually stuff to get you ready for second semester and most families don't make it past the fifth night."

"You wanna light the menorah tonight?" "uhhh nah, five nights is enough," Bandel said. "In the past you'd get some cool gifts, but as those days have ended and teenage years are almost over, it's all stuff from Office Max that you need, not want."

Bandel thinks that the only appealing part of Chanukah is family and big meals; like eight days of non-stop Thanksgiving.

"A lot of people miss out on Chanukah because it jumps around each year; sometimes it happens the same night as Christmas, and other times right after Thanksgiving. Most people just get so confused that it becomes a guessing game," Bandel said.

Holiday Gift List

■ KELSEY SCHRADER & SYDNEY MACNAUGHTON
Staff Reporters

One of the most stressful parts of the holiday season is the evernagging question, "What is the perfect gift?" This puzzling question oftentimes gets answered with a last minute regifting technique, but this year will be different. What follows is a list that acknowledges that your dad doesn't need another tie and that your girlfriend really doesn't want a crockpot.

Male

- Prima Artist Mannequin-\$21
- Garmin GPSmap 60CSx-\$500
- Gift cards
- Space Pen-\$22
- Emergency Hand Crank Radio-\$50
- Space Invader Mini Arcade Game-\$24
- OtterBox Waterproof Case for Ipod Nano-\$40
- Accepted DVD-\$20
- Love by the Beatles-\$10

Female

- Wireless AIM/AOL Messenger-\$29.99
- Bath Pillow-\$8
- Pilot Precise V5 Rolling Ball Pens-\$10
- Lung Ching Dragonwell Tea-\$15.45
- Recycled Wrapper Clutch-\$35
- Shower Radio-\$16
- High School Musical DVD

Game (\$20, Sears)

- Gilmore Girls: The Complete Sixth Season DVD-\$40

• BuildABear-\$18

Giving gifts to family and friends aren't the only choices for giving. The Giving Tree offers a great opportunity to give back to the community. The gifts go to the children at the Annie Ross House which helps homeless families with children regain a permanent home, self-sufficiency and dignity.

The Morrison Foundation provides health and educational services for traumatized youths as well as their families in Portland and surrounding areas. There are around 110,000 children in Oregon in need of mental health services. To donate, visit their website at www.morrisonkids.org.

The Heifer Foundation helps families by providing animals to help them become self-reliant. Choose the animals or baskets to donate at www.heifer.org.

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families and their communities worldwide by tackling the sources of poverty and injustice. To donate, log on to www.worldvision.org and click the "Ways to Give" tab.