

# NORTH COUNTY TIMES

April 9, 2009

## Donors are getting creative with gifts

In times such as these, nonprofit agencies would love to see money falling from the sky into their coffers.

They'll take it any way they can get it. Needs are ever increasing and many people are keeping a tight grip on their funds as they worry about their own job security and/or investment losses.

Still, a few folks are finding some interesting ways to



**JEFF  
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contribute to their favorite charities, perhaps none more unusual than Leah Shader's leap of faith for Elizabeth Hospice.

The 23-year-old Vista native, who now lives in San Diego, is raising money for the hospice with the goal of making a parachute jump from a plane when she reaches her \$700 goal.

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Hospice spokeswoman Lisa Marcolongo calls it "pennies from heaven." Shader calls it "a way to kill two birds with one stone."

"Some people do marathons to raise money. I don't like to run. Skydiving is perfect," Shader said. "I wanted to do it before I knew about hospice."

Shader's grandmother spent some time in a hospice and her mother, Pattie, is operations director for Elizabeth Hospice. So it was a natural fit to designate the agency as recipient of her charitable gift. Shader sent a letter to family and friends asking for donations. She hopes to reach her goal within two months.

"This is a first. She has a lot of courage," Marcolongo said. "We greatly appreciate her efforts to fundraise for hospice, especially in such a creative way. This is definite-

ly the most unusual contribution we've ever received."

Hospice isn't the only organization benefiting from some thinking out of the box. Interfaith Community Services, on a recent day, got contributions from both young and old.

Leah Sarnoff of Poway donated a portion of the money she received after her Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Mom and dad, Traci Childs and Steven Sarnoff, and brother Zachary also added money to the pot, bringing the donation to \$1,000. They then matched that donation with funds from the family business.

"(Leah) had gone on Mitzvah Day (a time for doing good deeds) and saw what nice work they do," Steven said. "At a time of need like they're experiencing now, she was happy to have a place where money could go to people who need it."

On the other end of the donation age spectrum was Highland Valley resident

John Snow, who pledged his monthly Social Security checks to Interfaith. He's following in the footsteps of Escondido businessman Jack Raymond, who made a similar pledge to help provide housing for seniors.

"I saw an article written when Jack had decided to donate his Social Security check. I thought that was kind of a neat idea," Snow said. "I've been blessed to have enough money to get by. This is an easy way to make our giving more consistent."

Greg Anglea, Interfaith's director of development, was impressed that the agency catches the eye of both young and old. "Gifts like this don't happen every day. To hear about them on the same day was pretty cool."

Also feeling cool about a current donation is Tammy Walz, executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of Oceanside. Jean Josepho, a third-generation resident and partner in the Josepho

Group, read a recent article that the city was cutting funding to the club by \$15,000.

Josepho offered to make that up with a challenge grant of \$7,500, hoping that will inspire other community members to match that amount to give to the club. Call (760) 433-8920 to make a pledge.

"I'm hoping through small or large donations that we can raise another \$7,500," she said. "I think it's a great organization. I hate to see it suffering."

The contribution's effect is simple, Walz said.

"We'll be able to service more kids," she said. "It's \$500 a child for a year of service. That's 30 kids. We'll stretch that to 45 to 50."

It's not falling from the sky, but in these difficult times, nonprofit agency workers agree on this: Every dollar counts.

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