

# LIVING

## The kettle that warms

*Salvation Army volunteers lend a helping hand to York Region's less fortunate*

BY MICHELE MCLEAN  
CORRESPONDENT

Just see those kettles swinging and hear bells ringing, and you know it's time for the Salvation Army's Christmas fundraising.

Last year, the Markham Salvation Army used money raised from the kettle campaign to provide approximately 275 Christmas food and toy hampers while the Newmarket Corps distributed 325.

"Christmas kettle fundraising money

stays in the community," said Lt. Owen Budden, pastor of the Markham Salvation Army Church.

As in previous years, the Salvation Army is looking for volunteers to help in its busy Christmas season.

"The kettle ministry requires people to do a three-hour shift," Budden said. "The need is to stand at our kettles, be pleasant and gently ring a bell. That kind of ministry is something some people gravitate towards and others don't enjoy at all."

Volunteers are also needed across the region to help with Christmas hampers.

Captain Sandra Rice, pastor of the Newmarket Salvation Army church, encourages people to donate as much or as little time as they can.

Some donate a few hours while others, such as retirees, come by daily to help out with Christmas hampers, Rice said.

"Our volunteers are a real mix," she said. "There are teens and seniors."

It's still too early in the season for Budden to estimate how many hampers will be needed this year.

Besides people donating their time, others in the community hold fundraisers with the Salvation Army reaping the rewards.

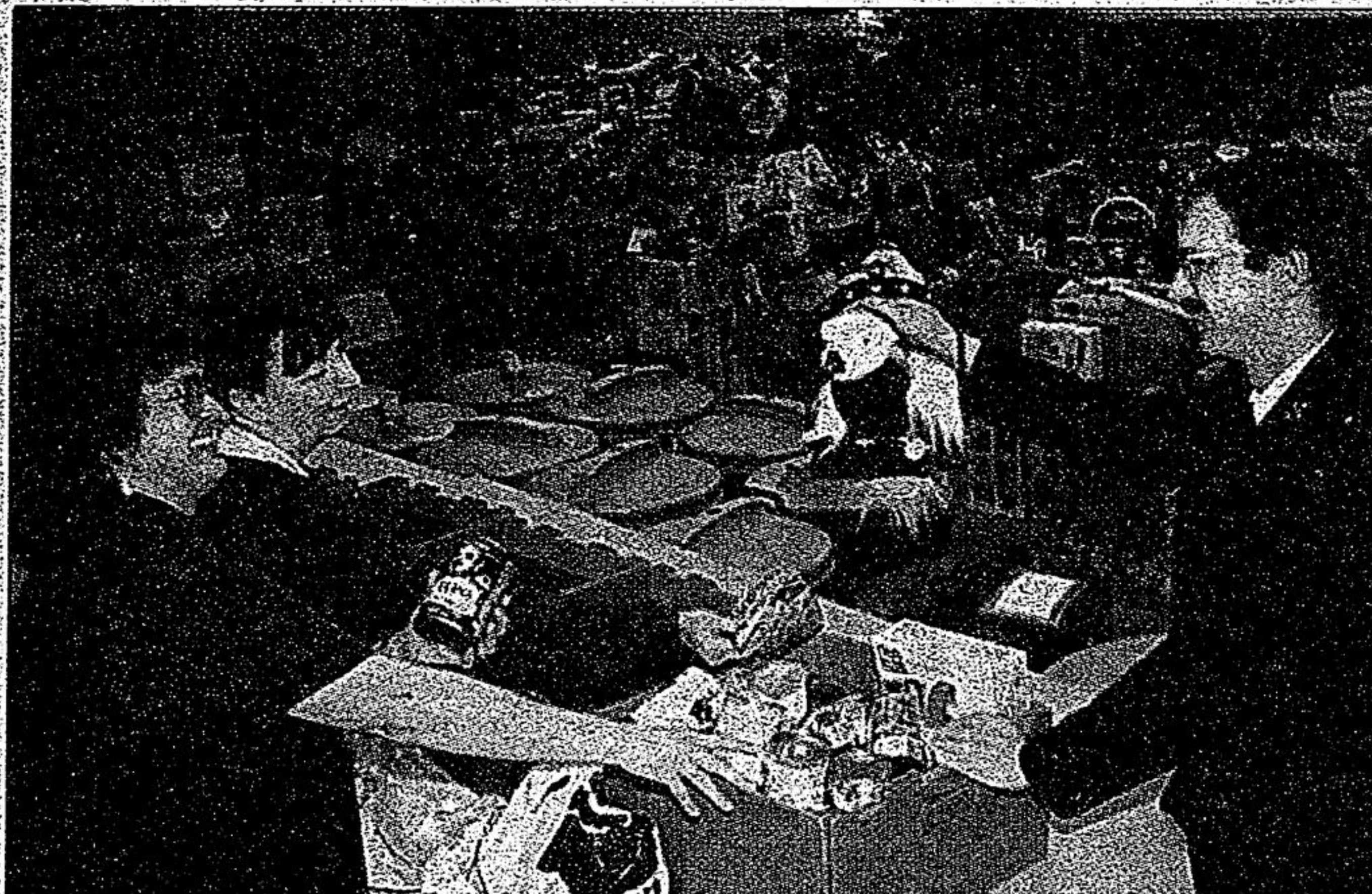
"Almost every year I go to Unionville Public School," Budden said. "They split their fundraising between the Salvation Army and the Children's Aid Society. They give us food, toys and sometimes monetary donations, and we take it back to the centre and fill the hampers."

Not everyone who asks for a hamper necessarily gets one. Those who receive a Christmas hamper are carefully screened.

"Sadly, we've had to do that because of the abuses to our system," Budden said.

Before people receive a hamper, which includes a turkey, perishable and non-perishable food plus toys (based on a family's need), they must show proof of residency as well as sources of income.

"Last year, we did 100 hampers for our area," said Geoff Hamill, the minister at the Salvation Army Oak Ridges



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Shirley Scott, Heather Piper, and Lt. Owen Budden pack a Christmas hamper at the Salvation Army warehouse on Bullock Drive in Markham.

Community Church. "But we're expecting the demand to go up 50 per cent."

Even though the strict rules are in place and the Salvation Army helps many local families, Budden admits some people who are in need still fall through the cracks.

"Sometimes it's the proud people who we don't reach," he said.

"They say they're going to do it on their own and they don't call us."

The Salvation Army, founded by Methodist preacher William Booth, has been helping people since the organization began in England in 1865.

Booth was troubled by the numbers of homeless men he saw during that time and was moved to act, according to Budden.

Booth told his wife he had a special calling to reach out to homeless people. He encouraged people to get off the streets and

used a three S model — soup, soap and salvation. He gave them food, soap and taught them about the love of God.

When the men weren't accepted back in their own churches, they joined with Booth, who began the Christian Mission Movement.

Booth was militant in his ordeals and became known as "the General."

If Booth was a general, he decided he would be general of an army he called the Salvation Army.

Currently, the Salvation Army operates worldwide and during times of world disasters, often works side-by-side with the Red Cross.

"Sometimes, people think of the Salvation Army as just a social organization when we're actually a bona fide church," Budden said.

### ARMY WELCOMES VOLUNTEERS

*Christmas is a busy time for the Salvation Army, although helpers are needed all year round.*

- Markham Salvation Army's Family Services Office, located at 50 Bullock Dr., offers food, clothing vouchers for the Salvation Army's Thrift store, a connection to service groups in the Markham area, ESL classes and a Lighthouse after school program for three York Region schools. Call 472-3009.
- Newmarket Salvation Army's Family Services Office, located at 415 Pickering Cr., provides food, clothing vouchers as well as a referral service to community services in the Newmarket area. Call 895-0577.
- Salvation Army services in Richmond Hill are provided from two locations: The Salvation Army Community Church in Oak Ridges at 13025 Yonge St, 889-8011, and the North York Temple, 25 Centre Ave. 225-7968.



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