

Metro Bus Operator Socorro Alvarez-Mitchell, center in T-shirt, is joined by fellow DAC members and many of the Division 3 operators who are making the Holiday toy drive possible.
PHOTO BY LISA HUYNH



Division 3 Raising Money for Less Fortunate Kids' Holiday Gifts

By LISA HUYNH

(July 23, 2002) North Los Angeles Division 3 is giving back to the community by raising money to buy holiday gifts and toys for less fortunate children in Cypress Park and Highland Park.

Metro Bus Operator Socorro Alvarez-Mitchell is co-chair of the Division Advisory Committee (DAC). She and other DAC members – Florence Bingham, Barbara Davis, Manny Haro, Gabriel Jimenez, Rosalia Medina, Albert Parker, and Margaret Russell – are devoting their off-duty time to selling raffle tickets.

"It's my day off today and I've been selling tickets since four in the morning," says Alvarez-Mitchell. "I also came in last week on my vacation to sell the tickets."

The group's efforts already have brought in more than \$1,000 in one month. They hope to raise \$3,000 by the end of November, enough to buy 150 to 200 presents.

"I couldn't have done this without the rest of the DAC members, who have been supportive of me, but most of all, our operators here at Division 3 are mainly the ones who buy the raffle tickets," Alvarez-Mitchell says.

Some operators already have volunteered to donate wrapping paper and their time to wrapping the gifts.

Family-oriented division

"We have always been a family-orientated division and, thanks to the operators, we're able to do this," she says.

Alvarez-Mitchell is grateful that she has a good job and is able to buy presents for her own children.

"It breaks my heart that other children do not get anything for Christmas.

That's why we thought a toy drive would be a good idea," she says.

When the school year starts again, she plans to visit various schools in Cypress Park and Highland Park to get names of needy children from social workers. She also is receiving help with names of under-privileged children from Saint Ignatius Church in Highland Park.

"If we receive a positive outcome or feedback from the community, then we would like to continue to raise money every Christmas," Alvarez-Mitchell says.

Employees interested in buying raffle tickets may contact Socorro Alvarez-Mitchell at 26289.

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