Belmont, CA – As San Mateo County residents go about their errands and shopping this season, they might notice shiny red barrels placed in storefronts, banks, and office buildings. These toy donation barrels are part of San Mateo County Human Services Agency’s Children’s Fund drive. They have placed 67 toy donation barrels throughout the region, thus making it easier for residents to donate toys and items in the barrels while doing their own errands.

The toy barrel campaign is in place November through early December. In addition, there is a gift tag campaign which allows individuals, or groups, to provide a child with their most wished-for item this season.

County volunteers sort the donations of new, unwrapped gifts and deliver to children, ranging in age from newborn to 18 years. Recipients are identified through the pool of families currently in County programs such as foster youth, and those receiving food and shelter assistance. “We all have a responsibility to make sure that the least fortunate among us can really share in the joy of this holiday season,” said County Supervisor and Children’s Fund Advisory Board Member Adrienne Tissier.

Last year, the Children's Fund provided gifts to over 3,822 children. “Every year, it makes me proud to see the generosity of the employees of San Mateo County, private businesses and our residents who come together to collect toys and deliver them to families in need,” stated Tissier.

The County of San Mateo Children’s Fund has been helping the County’s underprivileged children since 1973. Current programs include the annual holiday toy drive, orthodontia and specialized dental assistance, a school supply drive, and re-programmed computers. The County of San Mateo Human Services Agency assists individuals and families to achieve economic self-sufficiency, promote community and family strength, and works to ensure child safety and well-being. More information can be found at www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/childrensfund

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