

For Immediate Release

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Salvation Army Announces Dates for 2011 Christmas Cheer Registration **Record Number of Applicants Expected**

(FORT MYERS, FL) The Salvation Army of Lee, Hendry and Glades Counties is expecting a record number of people to apply for help this holiday season. Today the organization announced registration dates for its annual Christmas Cheer program. The first day applications will be taken is **Wednesday October 26th beginning at nine a.m.**

Last year, people began lining up as early as three a.m. to wait in line. By the time doors opened the line stretched around the block. Over 55% of those that asked for help last year had never asked for help before. That figure is up from 2009. Due to the economic situation in southwest Florida, even more people are expected this year. (Photo opportunities usually decrease significantly after 9:30 am.)

In 2010 The Salvation Army served a total of nearly 18,000 individuals, including more than 5,000 families through its Christmas Cheer program. Nearly 640 families signed up on the first day alone.

Below is the complete list of dates and times:

Registration Information:

Dates/Times:

October 26, 27 & 28	9 a.m.-Noon
November 3 (morning & evening)	9 a.m.-Noon/5 p.m.-8 p.m.
November 4	9 a.m.-Noon
November 12 (Saturday)	9 a.m.-Noon
November 21	9 a.m.-Noon

Location:

The Salvation Army
10291 McGregor Blvd.
Fort Myers, FL 33919
(239) 278-1551

Applications will not be taken without the following items:

Adults: a) Valid Florida Driver's License or Lee County Picture I.D. **AND** b) Social Security Card

Children: a) Social Security Cards **OR** b) Birth Certificates for Each Child

Proof of: a) Income **AND** b) Benefits

Christmas Cheer is a community wide effort and is The Salvation Army's largest outreach event each year. The Christmas Cheer program is funded by donations raised during The Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign which begins in mid November. For registration information, or to volunteer to assist with applications or holiday bell ringing, contact The Salvation Army's offices at (239) 278-1551.

Merrilu Bennett

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