

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **The Salvation Army Kicks-Off 2009 Red Kettle Campaign Goal** ***Bell Ringers Working Toward Record Goal of \$650,000; Kilbourne Group Issues First-Day Challenge***

**FARGO, ND – November 18, 2009** – The Salvation Army kicked-off its annual Red Kettle campaign today with a press conference held at the J.C. Penney wing of West Acres Shopping Center. With a theme of “Ring a Bell for Hope,” the campaign will enlist the help of up to 3,000 volunteer bell ringers who will collect donations at 31 red kettles located throughout the Fargo-Moorhead area through December 24.

“We’re excited to build on the success of last year’s campaign,” said Captain Bill Mealy, who with his wife, Captain Ann Mealy, were named commanding offices of The Salvation Army of Cass and Clay Counties in June 2009. “We know that because of the generosity of our donors, we’ll meet and exceed this year’s goal.”

Captain Bill Mealy announced a 2009 Red Kettle campaign goal of \$650,000, which is \$25,000 more than last year’s goal. The campaign earns about 58 percent of the Salvation Army’s annual budget. The donations go toward services such as the more than 68,000 hot meals served last year, the 184 emergencies responded to by The Salvation Army’s disaster team, and other types of assistance provided such as rent, utilities and prescription care.

“Last spring, our community shone in the national spotlight as a place where neighbors help neighbors and where volunteers of all ages literally saved our cities,” said Doug Burgum, founder of Kilbourne Group and honorary Red Kettle campaign chairperson. “In addition to its overall year-round mission of helping those in need, The Salvation Army played a key role in supporting those directly affected by the flood waters as well as supporting the tens of thousands of volunteer flood fighters. I am grateful for the opportunity to now pick up a bell – instead of sandbag – and to give something back to an organization that serves so many so well.”

Additionally, Burgum announced that Kilbourne Group will donate \$5,000 to the campaign if the first day record-total of \$11,295 can be exceeded with today’s donations. This is the first time such a challenge has been issued.

The campaign got off to a good start with a \$2,500 donation from State Bank & Trust, a \$2,000 donation from Gate City Bank, and a \$1,000 donation from West Acres Development, all presented to The Salvation Army at the press conference. Microsoft Corporation announced that donations from Microsoft team members to the Red Kettle campaign will be matched dollar-for-dollar by Microsoft.

The Salvation Army played a key role in disaster relief during the 2009 flood and clean-up efforts by providing food, beverages, and emotional support for 62 consecutive days. More than 900 clean-up kits were distributed along with financial assistance and long term case management.

#### **About The Salvation Army**

Motivated by the love of God, as a leader in Christian faith-based human services, The Salvation Army is committed to serve the whole person, body, soul and spirit with integrity and respect, using creative solutions to positively transform lives. The Salvation Army has served in Cass and Clay Counties for 112 years. The Army’s spiritual and social services affect the lives of thousands of people in our communities each year. This holiday season alone, more than 1,800 families will be served.

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