

### CURRENT WEATHER

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## CALENDAR

### Group asks for donations and volunteers to help those in need

Tiffany Tuell

(Updated: Thursday, December 17, 2009, 5:04 PM)

A local group is following their hearts and God to help community members in need, or alone, on Christmas Eve. They are gathering donations for a free Christmas Eve dinner, complete with entertainment and free gifts of clothing.

"God laid it heavily on our hearts and there are a lot of people in this community that are struggling and many people don't realize that," said Jami Fenton, a member of the Epicenter Prayer Room. "There are a lot of families struggling, aside from money. There will be a good environment just to show them love."

Although the group says God laid this idea on their hearts, they say the event, sponsored by the Epicenter Prayer Room and Nelson Press, is not to be associated with any religious affiliation.

"This is not about the religious community," Dr. Candy MacAlpine said. "Yes, God has directed, but this is birthed by God through people, not the religious community. It is by the community for the community to bless the community."

This is the first time the dinner has been held but Fenton hopes it will not be the last. "I'm hoping it's the first annual dinner and people take it to other areas such as Coarsegold, Auberry and North Fork," Fenton said.

The group is asking for donations and volunteers. Donations can be dropped off at the Oakhurst Chamber of Commerce and Nelson Press on Highway 41. Prepared food donations of turkey, salads with dressing, mashed potatoes and pies are also needed along with volunteers to help serve the dinner on Christmas Eve.

"We're trying to bring the community together and would like participation from the community to serve the community," MacAlpine said.

The dinner will be from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Oakhurst Community Center and all are invited. The Grocery Discount Center is giving free aluminum pans to those that are willing to donate casseroles for the dinner. Leftover food and gift donations will be given to Manna House.

Details: Jami Fenton, (559) 760-0432 or [oakhurstoutpouring@yahoo.com](mailto:oakhurstoutpouring@yahoo.com) or Dr. Candi MacAlpine, (559) 760-4101.

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Tiffany Tuell/Sierra Star

The free evening of food, gifts and music will be held at the Oakhurst Community Center. The group behind the event gathered at the center to prepare for the event. Left to right: Brad Nelson, Cam and Bud Siebeneicher, Jami Fenton, Nancy and Richard Rhodes, and Candi MacAlpine.

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