



SVHS seniors Kelly Kneis, Lindsey Wright & Samantha Hasler happily haul in a truckload of blankets into Novato's Homeward Bound shelter.



Homeward Bound staff & residents receive a bounty of bedding donated from the SVHS Community Concerns Club's annual supply drive to benefit Novato & Petaluma homeless shelters.

SVHS Students Warm Up the New Year for the Homeless

*More than 200 blankets donated to
Homeward Bound of Marin and C.O.T.S. Shelters*

St. Vincent High School students are helping to keep homeless families warm this new year by donating more than 200 blankets to Homeward Bound of Marin and to C.O.T.S. (Committee for the Shelterless), donations collected from St. Vincent High School's student-run **Community Concerns Club's 5th Annual Supply Drive** to benefit the homeless.

A U-Haul trucked loaded with blankets, sheets, towels, shampoo, conditioner, soap, and other toiletries were delivered to the shelters at a time when they are needed most. Novato teens including Lindsey Wright, 17, of Novato, who has served as club president for the past three years and headed up the annual drive, also held several hot chocolate and soup sales to raise money to buy dozens of brand new blankets to contribute. "Over the years we have collected everything from towels to toys, but blankets are what the shelters need most right now," said Wright. The club also collected sleeping

bags which are especially helpful for homeless people who must sleep inside of churches when the shelters are full, she explained.

This year's Blanket Drive is just part of the student's efforts to support agencies that help the homeless and underprivileged children in our community. For five years they have collected these much-needed basics for area shelters along with hosting other fundraisers and to benefit five agencies that support low-income and homeless families in Marin and Sonoma Counties. Founded in 2005, this active group of teenagers have raised approximately \$3,000 and held annual supply drives including a *Towel Drive in 2005* (more than 400 towels donated to Homeward Bound's New Beginning's Center), a *Toy and Baby Supply Drive in 2006* to benefit San Rafael's Ritter Center Safety Net and C.O.T.S. Family Resource Center (409 toys donated to their agencies), two *Summer Back-to-School Supply Drives* to benefit the Ritter Center Safety Net's Back to School Program for no-income and low-income families (\$800 in supplies contributed), *Blanket Drives in 2007, 2008 and 2009*, a *Medical, School and Art Supply Drive* for orphans in Afghanistan (monthly Care Packages sent to the National Guard for distribution in Kabul, Afghanistan), and an *Emergency Food Drive* last spring to benefit the C.O.T.S. Kitchen which serves more than 100,000 meals to homeless individuals, seniors, and low-income families every year.

"These donations make a huge difference to the comfort, warmth and self-esteem of the homeless residents in Homeward Bound of Marin's programs. We would like to thank the students of Saint Vincent's High School for their community awareness and compassion," said Paul Fordham, Development Director for Homeward Bound of Marin. Blankets, sleeping bags, bedding, towels and toiletries are needed on an on-going basis and can be donated by calling Homeward Bound at (415) 382-3363, x211. For more information or to find out how you can support the Community Concerns Club or Homeward Bound, please visit the club's website at www.communityconcernsclub.org or call (415) 883-6556.