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HELPING HAND: Ruth Thomas with donated toys for the Salvation Army's appeal.

Volunteers put smiles on young and old dials

FROM page 1

ANOTHER organisation often called upon around this time of year is SunnyKids, which runs a homeless program for those in need.

SunnyKids chief executive Chris Turner said the organisation experienced high demand around Christmas, with people struggling to cope with rising costs.

"It is a time when families do come under increased financial stress and there can be added expenses of Christmas," Mr Turner said.

"If they are in casual employment, they might have unpaid holidays over Christmas and that increases financial pressure.

"It is a time when things can break down for vulnerable families."

With many families requiring the services of various charity organisations this year, the need for community support has never been greater.

And the community has truly answered the call, according to Caloundra Salvation Army Major Kevin Holland. He said the organisation could not successfully complete its work without donations or volunteers.

"The volunteers we have working are helping other people to celebrate Christmas," Mr Holland said.

One of these volunteers is Currimundi's Ruth Thomas,

who has devoted 12 years to helping the Salvos.

"Some people come in and they are pretty upset... they go out with a smile on their face and I've been able to help them," she said.

This Christmas, Mrs Thomas organised the Salvation Army's Caloundra toy appeal and said the need from local residents had been great.

"I've had people come through, really embarrassed as they've never had to rely on help before but they've fallen on hard times.

"We've found there seems to be a lot more people struggling this year and whatever anyone can do to help someone else is wonderful."

Share some festive cheer with homeless, but very cute, cats

MEET Boris. This gorgeous fluffball is likely to spend Christmas in the confines of the Sippy Creek Animal Refuge.

And he won't be alone. There are about 35 kittens in need of a good home and a further 40 adult cats and 70 dogs who could spend the holidays without the love of their own family.

The organisation has so far this year rehomed 590 dogs and about 460 cats and refuge president Rosy Symons said she hoped that number would increase in the short period before the new year.

"You are giving an animal a second chance at life," she said.

"The more animals we sell from here, the more we can take in from the pound."

However, Ms Symons warned people from rushing in to a pet purchase.

"People need to take responsibility and think the decision through.

"We want animals to go to forever homes, not be a play thing for Christmas."

The Sippy refuge was founded in 1979 with the primary purpose of provid-



FLUFFBALL IN NEED: Boris the kitten shares his current digs with more than 30 other kittens, 40 adult cats and 70 dogs.

ANIMAL

FOR more photos, view our picture gallery: www.caloundrajournal.com.au

PICS

"We have 100-plus volunteers," Ms Symons said. "These people do everything from maintenance to gardening, washing-up, walking dogs and feeding cats."

People interested in becoming a volunteer can attend an orientation session on January 15. For those wanting to support the refuge but can't adopt an animal, donations of food or pen sponsorship is also welcome.

For more information visit www.sippy creek.com.au

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