

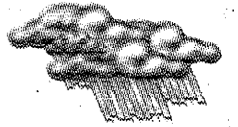
FIND NIGHTLIFE ON NEW YEAR'S

411: Stuck with nothing to do on New Year's Eve? 411 has the goods on a bunch of places, reservation-free from Monterey to Santa Cruz. **Inside**

The Salinas Californian

Thursday, December 30, 2004

Today's
forecast/6C
Periods of rain with
gusty winds



54 high
low 44

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50 CENTS

CHARITY

Group to help tsunami-ravaged village



Eric Liistwager

Global Uplift looks to raise \$100,000

By **ZACHARY STAHL**
The Salinas Californian

As India's own death toll from Sunday's tidal wave reached 7,000 Wednesday, a Salinas-based nonprofit organization planned to rebuild one

of that country's tsunami-ravaged villages.

Global Uplift, which helped build 200 homes in the village of Kauran in Gujarat, India, after an earthquake in 2001, hopes to raise enough money for a similar project in the Tamil Nadu state of India.

"This community wants to help," said Peter Shah, president of the organization and a certified public accountant

MORE

HELP ON THE WAY: President Bush sends military personnel as well as money to help in relief efforts/1B

with Stevens, Sloan & Shah in Salinas. "People are pouring their hearts into it."

The organization already has received \$10,000 in donations and hopes to raise \$90,000

more to build 200 homes, Shah said.

Some of the tidal waves spawned by a 9.0-magnitude undersea earthquake near Indonesia struck the southeastern coast of India. The official death toll across 11 countries soared past 77,000, and the Red Cross predicts it could exceed 100,000.

See **HELP**, Page 3A

TO HELP

■ **GLOBAL UPLIFT:** is collecting donations and seeking technical support to rebuild a village in India destroyed by Sunday's tsunami. Mail checks to 975 W. Alisal St., Suite D, Salinas. Information: (800) 482-0383.

■ **THE AMERICAN RED CROSS:** is collecting donations for relief efforts in Asian countries affected by the tsunami. Mail checks to 942 Lupin Drive, Salinas 93906, or make a donation online at www.montereyarc.org. Information: 424-4824.

HOTEL/ Business picks up

From Page 1A

Tourism throughout the rest of the Central Coast, stretching from Santa Barbara to Santa Cruz, declined this year, making the local success a real anomaly, McMahon said.

Monterey County is even pulling business away from places such as Lake Tahoe and Napa, he said, citing state and industry reports. "The strength of this destination is there's so much diversity here," McMahon said.

This year, the bureau has focused on marketing the county's off-season — from September to December — while for the past two years the spotlight was on promoting the typically busy summer business.

The bureau's marketing for this winter has painted the county's wildlife as the big draw, giving visitors, along with their hotel room, "value-added" packages for seasonal activities such as whale and bird watching.

"All of a sudden, we are targeting ourselves in a whole different way," McMahon said.

And persistent targeting, he said, is exactly what gets results.

"There's no one example of where you cut back a budget and things improved," McMahon said.



RICHARD GREEN/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN FILE PHOTO

The Courtyard by Marriott opened in December 2003. The hotel, along with the Residence Inn are on El Rancho Way in Salinas.

BY THE NUMBERS

The Monterey County Convention

revenue forecast," Kever said.

During the same period, he said, sales tax also increased by

the upturn. At Wild Things animal-training facility and sanctuary and Vision Quest

HELP/ Two villages in India identified for the help

From Page 1A

Shah said he spoke Wednesday with the secretary to the governor of Tamil Nadu and identified two villages in Nagapattinam district that could be adopted.

Shah's father was the late governor of Tamil Nadu.

Salinas resident Eric Liitschwager said he plans to go to India with his father-in-law, who is a contractor, to lead the project.

"We need to see what's been destroyed ... deal with the debris and get started building as soon as possible," Liitschwager said.

Shah said he hopes to have the village rebuilt within six months before the summer rains come.

"If the monsoons come, it's too late," he said.

The ASSOCIATED PRESS contributed to this report. Contact Zachary Stahl at zstahl@salinas.gannett.com.

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Global Uplift was formed on September 30, 2000. The main purpose of this organization is:

- .1. To arrange for and provide medical care and facilities for underprivileged people in the United States and throughout the world;
- .2. To provide housing and food for the homeless and the poor in the United States and throughout the world; and
- .3. To provide educational scholarships for underprivileged people in the United States and throughout the world.

It has been treated as a publicly supported organization and funded completely by the public in Monterey County.

On January 26, 2001, there was an earthquake in India. With the help of funds from the people in Monterey County, 200 homes were built in the village of Kauran in Gujarat, India. Salinas City Council member Janet Barnes went to India to inaugurate this village on June 26, 2001.

When 9/11/2001 took place, Global Uplift, through the help of one of the donors -- namely the Cosentino family, was able to provide free rental facilities for over six months in Monterey to the American Red Cross. In addition, people in Monterey County donated through Global Uplift a check of \$5,000 to be used toward the families of New York police officers who were killed in the attack of September 11, 2001.

Every year blankets are provided to the homeless at Dorothy's Kitchen during Thanksgiving.

There is no administration overhead on Global Uplift as everyone volunteers their time. The people of Monterey County have always been generous and supported any good cause. At times, Global Uplift has had to request that people not give anymore as the charitable cause has been met.

When the recent disaster took place with Tsunamis, people were calling us and sending checks without any solicitation. Grace Cosentino called Peter Shah on Sunday and pledged money to India. Mike Trescony handed over a check, as well. Dr. Kumar of Los Palos Medical Group personally donated money. John Hambey from Soledad wanted to donate money. Eric Liittschwager wanted to go with his father-in-law, who is a contractor, to do charity work in India.

On account of this outpouring of support of people in Monterey County, Peter Shah of Global Uplift called Wilbur Stevens and Jim Sloan and resolved to adopt a village in the affected disaster area to rebuild it. Peter Shah's father was the late governor of Madras

(Tamil Nadu). He was therefore able to talk to the Secretary to the Governor of Tamil Nadu and propose a plan to rebuild an entire village. She called him back this morning and was pleased to state that she would be able to identify two villages in Nagapattam and any one of those could be adopted. If this goes well, it will be an entire village rebuilt by Americans!