

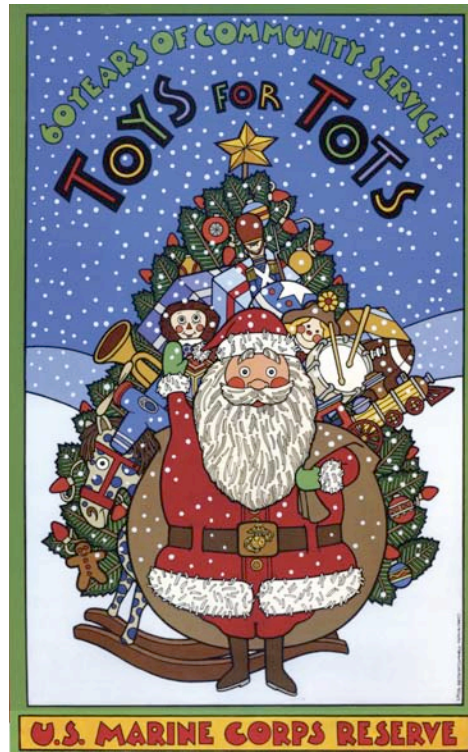
## Toys For Tots Drop Box In Orinda Grobanites On A Mission

By Cathy Tyson

Who knew one curly haired crooner could make such a difference? Josh Groban, a pop and classical singer, has inspired countless fans, who according to their website are, "inspired by the rich meaningful music of Josh Groban and his desire to help children. Naturally charitable, always thinking of ways to lift others." These fans, which go by the catchy name of Grobanites, have formed Grobanites for Charity and have partnered with Toys for Tots, to bring toys to needy children at Christmastime.

Look no further than The Framemaker shop in Orinda to find a true Grobanite, Bev Malcolm, and a drop box for Toys for Tots. She will be collecting new, unwrapped toys in containers provided by the Marine Corp until mid December.

Staff Sergeant Brian Banko, of the Fourth Force Reconnaissance Company, says his unit is just gearing up to mobilize for the season. Since so many needy children in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties will receive toys, the Marines have partnered with social service organizations, the Red Cross and Fire



Departments among others to distribute an estimated 20,000 to 25,000 toys locally this holiday season. Part of the Marines mission is putting out and collecting collection boxes, as well as hosting events to collect donated toys and cash donations.

Banko says they collect toys for children from 0 – 17, but that there is a particular need for gifts for 4 – 7 year olds and 13 – 17 year olds. The suggested toy is new, unwrapped, and costs between \$10 and \$20.

Donation boxes are ready and waiting at The Framemaker, 19 Orinda Way, Orinda. Those stopping by the store just might hear some Josh Groban on the sound system. "It's a really nice thing for the kids. Not only does he have a beautiful voice, but he has a very humble quality," notes Malcolm.

Fire stations in the Moraga-Orinda Fire District are also accepting toy donations, through December 18.

For more information go to, [www.grobanitesforcharity.org](http://www.grobanitesforcharity.org) or [www.toysfortots.org](http://www.toysfortots.org).

The United States Marine Corp Reserve's Toys for Tots Program is celebrating its 60th year! Toys for Tots began in 1947 when Major Bill Hendricks, USMCR and a group of Marine Reservists in Los Angeles collected and distributed 5,000 toys to needy children. The pilot project was so successful that the Marine Corps adopted Toys for Tots in 1948 and expanded it into a nationwide campaign. The initial objective that remains the hallmark of the program today is to "bring the joy of Christmas to America's needy children." According to Toys for Tots, the Marines have distributed more than 370 million toys to more than 173 million children. The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, created sixteen years ago to administer the program and receive cash donations, has supplemented local toy collections with more than 70.2 million toys.

For more information and to view other drop-off locations go to: <http://www.toysfortots.org/>



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