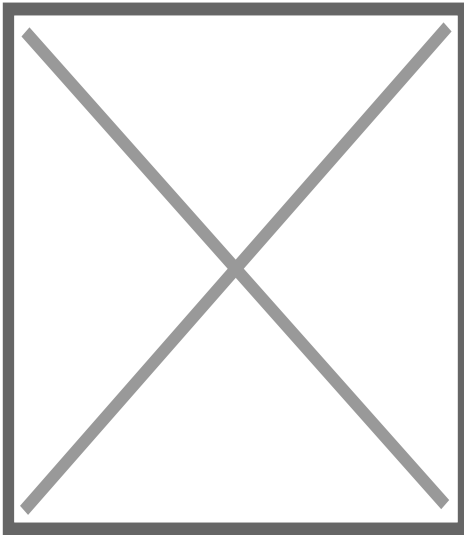


Remembering a dedicated volunteer

San Francisco Harbor Light volunteer dies.

by Judy Vaughn –



Ernie Marx [Photo by Larry Shiroma]



Long-time Harbor Light volunteer Ernie Marx has died in San Francisco at age 88.

Major Larry Shiroma, who worked with Marx for many years, indicates that it was largely through Ernie's influence and his passion for helping others that The Salvation Army San Francisco Harbor Light exists today. Through his help in the early 70's, the Army was also able to acquire the old Bridgeway building at 242 Turk Street, where the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center now stands.

In his years as a Salvation Army officer, Shiroma says he has met many fine persons, but certainly none more generous or kind-hearted than Marx, who would often welcome Shiroma in his real estate office just to chat or share some of the difficulties Harbor Light faced. Marx was always able to help resolve the issue or arrive at a solution. At the annual Sunriser Breakfast Club dinner, he made a strong pitch for members to donate to The Salvation Army. And they did so, generously.

Marx's knowledge of property maintenance saved the Army thousands of dollars, and it was his personal contacts that enabled the renovation of the Harbor Light kitchen and the construction of the beautiful Lighthouse Corps chapel to be built entirely debt-free.

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His spirit of sharing was especially evident during the Christmas season. With Ernie leading the charge, Advisory Council members would meet him at the corner of Post and Stockton Streets to ring bells on many a cold and windy San Francisco day. Doctors, lawyers, city hall officials and television personalities would all stop and write checks to The Salvation Army, because they knew Ernie and believed in him.

There were things Shiroma says he did not know about Ernie until much later, such as the fact that he received a Purple Heart and the Bronze Star during World War II, a sign of his character, courage and patriotism.

After the war Marx became a butcher, and his culinary skills were very evident during the Thanksgiving holidays at Harbor Light. With carving knife in hand, he would be the first to help carve 100 roasted turkeys, so that hot Thanksgiving meals could be delivered to shut-ins. Marx and Gertrude, his wife of 65 years, would often deliver meals to the down-and-out on 6th Street and people loved them.

In a personal letter to his widow, Major Shiroma thanked Gertrude Marx for the strong partnership she and her husband forged for the benefit of The Salvation Army's work in the San Francisco community.