

Wordfromtheeditor

BY CAROL FEINEMAN/CITY STAR EDITOR



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One Volunteer Working to Make a Difference

During the holiday season, it's human nature to want to find the good in everyone you see.

I didn't have to expend any effort to find the positive in **Dejra Turley**, who I met in November.

All statements she has made are full of concern for others.

Dejra initially contacted me to talk about A Star for the Night Foundation.

She wanted me to write a story that would increase awareness about the non-profit organization she founded nine years ago to give hope to sick, disabled and/or homeless children.

That story appeared on page 3 of Wednesday's City Star.

After listening to Dejra's altruistic efforts, however, I thought Dejra and her cause deserved more ink than just one article.

Because Dejra is truly making a difference not only in San Francisco but throughout California and other states.

And in doing so, Dejra is actively following her dream.

That's after raising a daughter and working as a small business owner.

Dejra's dream will not give her more material goods, it will not better her job opportunities



PAT DOLENIATUER/AUGIAT

Michael Pingatore and Dejra Turley pose with choreographer Cris Judd during a red-carpet event when Pingatore recently interviewed about 30 celebrities.

and it will not buy her a house in the nicest San Francisco neighborhood.

Rather, her dream will benefit sick and disadvantaged children Dejra doesn't even know.

It takes a lot of courage to change a comfortable lifestyle for the unknown.

Dejra has no idea whether her foundation will be successful five years from now.

She just knows that life isn't always fair and the kids her foundation helps have been dealt hardships that would discourage the most resilient adult.

So seriously ill children and other youth in hard situations will know that the community at large is rooting for them, Dejra is sticking to her goal, 24/7.

Even if it means that 10 months ago, Dejra had to leave her family and Chico, which she called home for eight years. Dejra did that so A Star for the Night Foundation has a better

Here's the Scoop

Mission: A Star for the Night Foundation provides life-changing events for sick and disabled children, "making them a star" by sharing the spotlight with their favorite celebrities.

You can help: A Star for the Night Foundation needs one more member for its board of directors. Also needed are volunteers who have experience in marketing, business, nonprofit organizations and office work. For questions about these volunteer positions, call Dejra at 618-0406 or e-mail Ptustar@aol.com. Check the Web at www.astarforthenight.com for more information about the foundation.

shot at raising funds in the competitive nonprofit world.

She's a volunteer.

Dejra doesn't get paid for her nine years of running the organization.

In fact, she has been fund-

ing the organization's daily operations and recently took a nighttime restaurant job to pay her rent.

Anyone who wants to believe in modern-day angels should meet Dejra.

WordontheStreet

BY JOHN PATRICK WHITAKER/CITY STAR CORRESPONDENT

Market Street

What are your plans for New Year's Eve?



Ryan Garcia, 36
guitarist and waiter, SoMa

"I'll be waiting tables. It could be good for tips. That's something to look forward to. But, I want to avoid the mass crowds creating havoc on that night."



Byrd "Harmonica" Hale, declined age
blues director, Stanford

"I'll be on the radio doing three different shows: my interview show with professors, the 'Shedding Light' journalism show and the 'Raising Sand' social justice show."



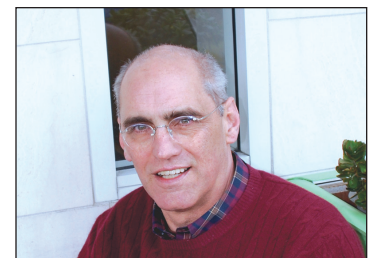
Billal Sidiq, 30
business owner, Concord

"Afghan music, dancing, baklava and a little hookah smoke. We are catering an Afghan American New Year's event at Zazoos in Oakland for the second year."



Donna Beirne, declined age
tourist, Woodland Hills

"I'll be back home, hanging out with friends and eating good food. Eat, drink and be merry!"



James Beirne, declined age
tourist, Woodland Hills.

"New Year's is amateur night. I stay home with friends. Anyway, it's too expensive to go out that night and it gets too crowded."

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