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COPS IN THE SADDLE Giving to Berkeley Families in Need

Berkeley, California (Tuesday, September 4, 2007) On Wednesday morning, September 5, 2007, 15 current and retired members of the City of Berkeley (BPD) and University of California Berkeley (UCPD) Police departments as well as a City of Burlingame Fire Department Captain will embark on the 23rd Annual Turkey Ride. The riders are off duty and give up their vacation time to participate.

The Turkey Ride was conceived in 1983 when three BPD officers rode their bikes from Berkeley to South Lake Tahoe. During the venture, they talked about developing a community service related project and involve other BPD officers. They ultimately decided that they would raise money to buy food and give it to Berkeley families in need during the November and December holiday season.

In 1985, the inaugural Turkey Ride took place with seven BPD officers riding 216 miles from the Berkeley police station to Lake Tahoe in two and a half days. The group raised enough money to buy 250 turkeys and other food items to give away to community members. Since then, support for the Turkey Ride has blossomed such that over 500 baskets are given away each year.

BPD officers submit names of families in need to receive holiday baskets. Members of community groups along with BPD employees gather in front of the Ronald Tsukamoto Public Safety Building to assemble the baskets, and then deliver them to families throughout the city.

The Turkey Ride has become a wonderful tradition that has involved over 100 different participants over the course of 23 years, many of whom have ridden 10 years or more.

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