

Salvation Army gets \$1.5 billion bequest: From estate of philanthropist Joan Kroc

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The Salvation Army, an evangelical denomination best known for its charitable work with the poor, says it will receive about \$1.5 billion from the estate of philanthropist Joan Kroc to build 25 to 30 community centers modeled after one she had funded in San Diego, California.

The gift is one of the largest single donations ever in the nonprofit world, and it was more than the Salvation Army received from all sources in 2002. But it was typical of the many gifts given to medical and other charities, often without publicity, by the McDonald's restaurant heiress before she died October 12 at 75.

"Mrs. Kroc was a wonderful friend of the Salvation Army and we miss her," said Commissioner W. Todd Bassett, national commander of the Salvation Army. "Her passion for children and families, and her hope for community peace will live on forever through this incredible gift."

The wife of Ray Kroc, the founder of the McDonald's fast-food chain, specified that half of the funds be placed in an endowment from which the interest will be used to help support the operation of the community centers. The other half must be used for the construction of the centers. "We can utilize these centers to broaden services for individuals, families and children at risk," Bassett said.