

The Mercury News

MercuryNews.com

West San Jose businesses raise more than \$2,000 to help families of two hit-and-run victims

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Article Launched: 09/09/2008 03:43:55 PM PDT
Businesses near the site of a fatal hit-and-run collision on Stevens Creek Boulevard Aug. 9 have contributed more than \$2,000 to help pay for funeral expenses for the two victims.

Pizzeria owner Kirk Vartan taped together a cardboard box from an empty 12-pack Pepsi container to create a makeshift collection box and asked customers and surrounding businesses to donate money to help with funeral expenses for Oralía Ramirez, 75, and Enedina Oliva, 70, after discovering that the two families could not afford funerals for the women.

Both women were hit and killed while crossing Stevens Creek Boulevard, less than a block away from Vartan's pizzeria, A Slice of New York.

"We are all kind of helpless in a situation like this," Vartan said.

What started at his own pizzeria turned into a two-day collection as he continued down Stevens Creek on foot.

Not only were surrounding businesses eager to donate, but employees and customers contributed anything from spare change to \$20 bills, Vartan said.

"I got everything from pennies to \$200 from one individual," Vartan said.

Vartan continues to collect for the families at A Slice of New York, at 3443 Stevens Creek Blvd., in San Jose.

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