

## **SR HOTEL OWNER OFFERS TO MATCH \$100,000 IN TSUNAMI-AID FUNDS**

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The owner of Santa Rosa's Flamingo Resort Hotel and Convention Center offered to match up to \$100,000 in donations toward relief efforts in tsunami-stricken regions of Asia.

Hoping to inspire donations from throughout the region, hotel owner **Pierre Ehret** will match up to \$100,000 in contributions to the Greater Bay Area's Red Cross International Response Fund between today and Jan. 9, a publicist said Wednesday.

``It's great because it's covering the whole Bay Area, so this is going to go from Mendocino to the South Bay, so there's ample opportunity for people to jump in and help," Sonoma County Red Cross spokesman Ellen Maremont Silver said. ``And we know everybody wants to, because our phone hasn't stopped ringing for two days. We've actually had lines of people waiting to donate money, as well as on the phone and on the Web site. It's extremely gratifying."

Ehret, a Sonoma County resident who reportedly has family and friends in Asia, has been traveling in Europe on business but contacted the local Red Cross chapter from overseas to offer his help, Silver said.

The result was a collaborative effort involving four Red Cross chapters: Bay Area, Lake County, Silverado-Napa and Sonoma County, which will coordinate the 10-day fund-raising effort.

``It's really wonderful," Silver said. ``It's just a great way to focus people's generosity."

Credit card donations can be made through a secure Web site at [sonomacounty.redcross.org](http://sonomacounty.redcross.org) or by calling 577-7600.

Checks can be sent to the American Red Cross -- Sonoma County, 5297 Aero Drive, Santa Rosa 95403.

American Red Cross International Relief Fund/Flamingo must be indicated on all donations.

Kaiser-Permanente also announced Wednesday that it had contributed \$100,000 to the Bay Area chapter of the Red Cross for tsunami relief efforts.