

Salvation Army now accepts plastic

By Kevin Downey



Old traditions die hard. When it comes to Christmas and the tradition of being generous to people who are less fortunate than you, that's a good thing.

One way to donate that's so familiar this time of year is by tossing coins into a Salvation Army red kettle. Those are the red cans outside of grocery stores and other locations, where a Salvation Army volunteer rings a big bell and collects your donation.

In 2013, the Salvation Army drummed up nearly \$140 million in Christmas-season donations. That money funds services like youth camps, prison ministries, veterans programs, feeding hungry kids and providing housing for homeless people.

Those donations seemed fated to extinction, though, as people increasingly pay for groceries and everything else with cards and digital wallets like Apple Pay. It's becoming easier and easier to say, "Sorry, I don't have change," and walk by.

But now comes DipJar to the rescue. This new card reader can be placed onto a tip jar or, as it turns out, Salvation Army red kettles.

You just swipe your card through it. The DipJars can be pre-set to accept a specific amount of money each time a card is swiped through, like a dollar.

Right now, DipJar is being used by the Salvation Army in Colorado and California. But, if it's successful, you may just see Salvation Army's bell ringers swiping your card, rather than asking for change. That's great, as it'll likely result in more donations