An exceptional session commissioned for an extraordinary time

The first virtual commissioning and ordination of officers in the Central Territory not only marked the extraordinary time in which we are living but revealed an exceptional session of focused, resilient and committed new officers who are eager to join others in ministry.

Out the day’s events.

In a video address, General Brian Peddle acknowledged the new officers are being released for ministry into a broken world, not only because of COVID-19 but other issues that plague communities like poverty, abuse, addiction and human trafficking.

“It is into these realities that you step with the glorious message of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of hope for now and eternity,” said the General.

The cadets’ affirmation of faith led by Chief Secretary Colonel Steve Howard also was presented by video.

From their seats appropriately distanced throughout the auditorium, cadets came to the platform, looking sharp in their uniforms and wearing masks, to be ordained as Salvation Army officers by territorial leaders Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey, who recognized their calling, giftedness and God’s empowerment for service and spoke in Spanish when it was the cadets’ first language.

The Benedicts let loose.

Following a beautiful rendition of “I know a Fountain” by the new Territorial Staff Songsters via video, the territorial commander brought a powerful message that challenged the new lieutenants regardless of circumstances to consistently reflect the countercultural Christ whose love is radical, just, inclusive and loving.

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Salvation Army holds prayer vigil and walks against racism in Minneapolis

By Craig Dirkes

Members of the community joined more than 100 officers, soldiers and staff at the Minneapolis Temple, Minn., Corps on June 2, 2020, for a food distribution and prayer meeting, followed by a nearly two-mile walk to decry racism.

Emotions ran high during the walk which ended in front of Cup Foods, the site of George Floyd’s tragic death on May 25 which caused hurt and sorrow, sparked outrage and incited demonstrations in cities across America and throughout the world.

“When I heard that man call for his mother, I heard my own sons,” said a tearful Lt. Colonel Patty Richardson, who at that time led the Northern Division with her husband, Lt. Colonel Leon Neal Richardson. “Mr. Floyd’s death was inhuman. It was senseless, and it goes against everything The Salvation Army stands for. But in all of that hurt, we are a people of prayer and we believe there is a God who can heal.”

Territorial Commander Commissioner Brad Bailey and other members of the Territorial Executive Council came to support the event calling for justice and equality.

“Racism is fundamentally incom- patible with the Christian conviction that all people are made in the image of God,” the territorial commissioner told the crowd. “The Salvation Army believes that the world is enriched by our diversity of cultures and ethnicities and considers each life a gift from God to be cherished, to be nurtured, to be redeemed.”

The walk was led by Major Paula Pyle and Envoy Tonya Carlson carrying a Salvation Army flag adorned with two large white ribbons displaying Floyd’s name. Among signs calling for justice and kindness, several people also held

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**Firsts**

by Colonel Janice Howard
Territorial Secretary for Leader Development

Think back to some of your firsts: your first car, your first kiss, your first filling, your first prayer in public, etc. I remember preaching my first sermon at my home corps in Hamilton, Ohio. The topic was friendship. Like a well-written English composition, it included an introduction, three points (casual friendships, deep friendships and Jesus’ friendship) and a conclusion. I remember it vividly because it was my first sermon. Then there was my first sermon during officer training. As I began to preach, my upper lip stuck to my teeth; my mouth dried out. I desperately needed water but had none. When I’d finished preaching, my brigade officer suggested I use Chapstick on my upper front teeth so my lips could glide. Now, that was a first for me.

During these past several months, there have been many firsts—producing or watching our corps’ first virtual worship service; attending our first virtual business meeting, prayer meeting and Bible study; watching big events like weddings or graduations via Zoom; organizing and distributing large amounts of community meals—and I mean large; creating space in our homes to host school for our children and office space for others; and what about living with our family members 24/7 for weeks?! I know you could add more to the list.

This issue of Central Connection informs us of some firsts for the Central Territory. We have been and continue to be creative because God is creative, and we are formed in His image. This edition will shine a light on some of our creative firsts.

Think about the first-generation church. They were home churches. They grew from personal and spiritual needs, and became effective for the Kingdom and multiplied quickly. Paul visited and sent letters to several of these churches. He dealt with their problems from afar, commending and correcting them. They longed to see Paul face-to-face. They took up collections to help take care of him and his ministry, and they prayed for him. They became communities within communities. Paul desired to stay in contact with them and help them grow, so he visited, wrote letters and sent co-laborers. I wonder what Paul would be doing today.

Moving forward, we will find both permanent and temporary changes taking place in our corps. The question is: What firsts do we need to create and experience in order to build a God-honoring, disciple-making, community-connecting church? Pray, think, discuss and act. Is it possible that we need more firsts in order to reach “Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven”? [Matthew 6:10, NIV]

Show us the way, Lord. Amen.

Commissioning

**Continued from page 1**

transformative. He advocated nothing matters more to God than people hearing, seeing and accepting this message.

A virtual offering with proceeds supporting COVID-19 relief was set to a montage of service during the pandemic accompanied by a recorded performance of Andrew Wainwright’s song Fearless by the Chicago Staff Band.

The intermission featured light-hearted scenes of CFOT life, including a congratulatory parade, recognition of long service and degrees and certificates earned by officers, silver star tributes, greetings from Centralites Commissioners Merle and Dawn Heatwole and Colonel Evie Diaz at International Headquarters and a variety of resource ads. A parade of session flags across the campus by COFT staff and cadets then heralded a highly unique service of appointments.

Salutatorian Lt. Matthew Baileys proclaimed, “It is precisely the diversity that we have that will allow us to reach so many different communities and individuals. God has brought our session together for such a time as this… We are about to come alongside communities, corps and soldiers who are already fighting, who are already sharing the love of God, who are already messengers of the Kingdom.”

Other session members who received recognition included Valedictorian Lt. Michael Raes (Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle Preaching Award), Lt. Robert Leach (Colonel Albert Pepper Servant Leadership Award), Lt. Ramon Cebrian (Commissioner Andrew S. Miller Evangelism Award) and Lt. Haylee Winters (Lt. Colonel Kathleen Zehm World Mission Award).

Commissioner Heidi Bailey, territorial leader for leader development, commended the new lieutenants’ response to the global health crisis and current events, saying it showed their character and understanding that mission is greater than buildings, gifts and methods. She encouraged them to live and serve confidently and expectantly.

Alone, as couples or families with children in tow, the lieutenants stepped to the stage to receive their appointments which were cleverly revealed by the Baileys with the use of Google Earth to cheery from their home divisions via Skype and Zoom.

They take their place throughout the territory as corps officers from Fremont, Neb., to Elkhart, Ind., except for Lt. Raes who was appointed Western Michigan and Northern Indiana divisional mission integration officer. Also noteworthy were the appointments of Lts. Kees and Shanelle Debela who were commissioned after only one year of training, two auxiliary captains who received their full rank of captain, and the appointments of Lts. Gonzalo Juaras and Yaquline Galindos from the South America East Territory, who spent their second year of training in Chicago, by their own territorial leaders via Skype.

Despite the circumstances and alterations to the events, a sense of peace and joy permeated the day with a focus clearly on the Messengers’ calling as captured by Lt. Jennifer Norris who concluded, “What is essential is that I am still being ordained as a minister, commissioned as an officer of The Salvation Army and being sent out to preach the gospel and serve humanity in Jesus’ name.”

Commissioner Brad Bailey

Lts. Gunther and Yami Briceno and son Obed

The Winters family headed to Traverse City, Mich. Commissioner Heidi Bailey

Lt. Shari Harwood

Commissioner Brad Bailey

The Winters family headed to Traverse City, Mich.
Central Territory embarks on journey of corps revitalization

But forget all that—it is nothing compared to what I am going to do. For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland. —Isaiah 43:18-19, NLT

L ast June, Major Cassandra DeJesús received a new appointment as corps and community mission secretary with a focus in corps revitalization. With that, she was given the responsibility of creating a corps revitalization model for the territory.

This last year was productive as research was undertaken and strategies were created, which she says are vital since what has worked in the past to stimulate corps growth may not currently work due to factors like changing neighborhoods and cultural norms.

"Rather than trying to revive the past, real renewal comes from rediscovering their mission, reengaging their mission field, and focusing their resources to support the mission," writes William T. Chaney, Jr. in an article titled, "There Is No Such Thing as Church Revitalization."

"We are not changing the message God has called us each to share," she said, "but we do need to look for new ways to reengage the mission field in 2020 and beyond."

There are already corps in our territory using new strategies in order to see "More people, more like Jesus" in their communities. Approaches such as Dinner Church and Messy Church are occurring more frequently as corps officers and lay leaders look for ways to engage and minister to individuals and families in their communities.

Central Territory embarks on journey of corps revitalization

The Corps Revitalization Model that is being created will show a corps how to rediscover its mission through Bible studies, neighborhood prayer walks and feedback from the community as it moves from maintenance to mission.

Corps revitalization will look different in every corps because each community is different. The objective is to find what works in the community, take calculated risks that are bathed in prayer and fulfill the mission for which God has equipped us.

There also will be opportunities for corps officers and lay leaders to create their own Ministry Action Plan as they move forward to reengage with their communities. Coaching will be available for corps officers and their leaders as they work through this process.

"God desires to do something new in our territory," said Major Cassie. "And I believe it is already happening. The question is, do we want to be a part of it?"

Unbreakable through His Love

by Major Nancy Mead

The territory’s first-ever Virtual Hispanic Women’s Retreat, "Unbreakables A Través De Su Amor (Unbreakable through His Love)," took place this May with more than 1,650 women participating.

The event was led by Major Melissa Viquez, Minneapolis Temple, Minn., corps officer, who felt the Lord speak to her heart about reaching out to Hispanic women during the pandemic. She began by calling on her local support team to pray for her vision and then reached out to other Hispanic officers across the U.S. territories and Latin America to assist in the virtual retreat.

Filled with classes intended to refresh mind, body and spirit, the retreat included inspiring music, devotionals, Bible journaling, Zumba, dance, timbrels, coloring, prayer, health and beauty care, testimonies, cooking, calligraphy and more to enrich women’s daily life. Participants were able to select, watch and learn at their own pace and on their own schedule.

God used this new means of outreach and ministry to reach women for His glory. Many shared prayer requests, including one who asked for prayer for a man she knew who had COVID-19, was in a coma and did not have a good prognosis. The women from the retreat began praying, and the next evening he awoke! It was a powerful lesson in how women can support those other even if they can’t be together in person.

Commissioner Heidi Bailey, territorial leader for leader development, concluded the retreat with an inspiring message about God’s unbreakable love based in Psalm 117:2 (NIV): “For great is his Love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.” She challenged the women to take what they have learned during the pandemic and look for ways to use it for the Lord.

Game on!

by Eric Himes

The Central Territorial Youth Department has launched a gaming ministry for members and friends of The Salvation Army. Playing into the phenomenon of Esports, CYN (Central Youth Network) Esports utilizes the popular gaming communication platform Discord to create a place for friendship, community and discipleship.

While this community of Christian gamers has grown, it also welcomes those who don’t believe in God or know about Jesus to interact with Salvationists and hopefully find faith. It features weekly video devotions and an active prayer request community chat.

Gamers can livestream videos of themselves playing games on Twitch, YouTube Gaming and Facebook Gaming. In fact, the youth department launched its first stream of CYN Esports members on Twitch and hosted its first event called Fortnite Friday where the game is designed by youth and a short devotional is shared.

CYN Esports has been an exciting new ministry undertaken while stay-at-home orders and social distancing have been in place. We are grateful that during a scary and stressful time we’ve been able to provide a positive place for people to gather virtually, have fun, support each other and hear the gospel. As a result, we’ve seen genuine friendships and community grow.
Getting to know Lt. Colonels Jonathan and Barbara Rich

From their favorite appointment to their leadership style to their bucket list, here's the scoop on our new territorial program secretaries.

Could you briefly introduce yourselves and in a nutshell what you're all about?

Jon: I’m fifth generation Salvationists. Jon was born in New York City, and I in Chicago. We love big cities, especially those on the water.

Barb: Riding our bikes along Lake Michigan. The last time was over 30 years ago! Jon: Returning to Paris, fitting in our Footsteps of Paul Biblical Education Tour that was cancelled due to Hurricane Harvey, hiking in the Canadian Rockies and along the Rio Grande in Big Bend, Texas. I’d say learning to speak Spanish and French but that’s ridiculous if you’ve ever heard me attempt even a basic accent! My bucket list includes finishing well.

Barb: We’re just commissioned the Messengers of the Kingdom; if you could go back in time what advice would you give yourselves as new lieutenants?

Jon: Seek the welfare/shalom of the city (Jeremiah 29:7). The Salvation Army was birthed in the largest city on earth at the time. The urban centers of our country are where we are most relevant. Embrace John Wesley’s dictum: “The world is my parish.” An officer is a community leader in ways pastors of churches typically will never be. Lean into your unique role in the community and embrace your citywide parish.

Barb: I believe leadership done well involves developing a great team, where trust and truth-telling are expected and celebrated.

Most recently you’ve been leading one of the largest commands in the nation—which should be no surprise, it’s in Texas—what were the challenges and blessings?

Jon: Incredible blessings. The best advisory board in the Army world. Incredible corporate partnerships with the Dallas Cowboys, BNSF Railways, AT&T, Atmos Energy and others. The founding chapter of Eck, the best women’s auxiliary in the nation, great corps officers leading 14 corps and, what I am most proud of, the professional staff leadership team, bar none. The biggest challenge was living up to the high expectations we were rightly held to.

Barb, we find it interesting that you’ve worked both in fundraising and in elementary education. What appealed to you about each and do they have anything in common?

Jon: When I take a donor on a tour of a social service program and tell them of the transformational change in people’s lives, I often choke up. It never gets old. As a teacher, I loved nothing greater than real- aloud times when I had a front row seat to students growing in their skills of observation as a plot or characters developed. I loved helping them develop stronger character and imagination; the best development people do the same for donors.

And, Jon, how has your degree in business, internship on Wall Street and work with Price Waterhouse served your ministry?

Jon: I have two incredible experiences I bring to my second calling to Salvation Army officership. My business background and 13 years as an executive pastor for a church that went from meeting in a school to five campuses today. My business background is relevant no matter where I serve. There is always a budget and the need to be “Doing the Most Good” with every dollar. When I look at a financial statement, it tells me a story and gives me data I need to make good decisions. The experience we had in the “church world” allows us to have an outsider’s eye with an insider’s perspective.

What are you looking forward to most about being back in the Central Territory?

Both: Reuniting with old friends. Digging into ministry alongside committed and passionate Christ-followers whom we’ve called friends for years. He has delivered His people with friends who know us and trust us—a huge blessing. Making new friends and growing deep roots with them.

Would you share with us about your family?

Jon: Our parenting journey required long waits and God’s intervention. I can’t do that from Territory Headquarters without input from the high expectations we were all about. The Salvation Army was birthed in the largest city on earth at the time. The urban centers of our country are where we are most relevant. Embrace John Wesley’s dictum: “The world is my parish.” An officer is a community leader in ways pastors of churches typically will never be. Lean into your unique role in the community and embrace your citywide parish.

Barb: Would you share with us about your family?

Jon: You've all been dreaming of our bucket list. What's on yours?

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Barb: Remember, it’s God’s work, so try not to get in His way. Humble yourself. Become involved in regular Bible study with accountability; it will refresh your soul and give you sustenance for the long haul. Be brave and authentic enough to share what God is doing in your life. You’ll be amazed at the God-ordained conversations that arise.

Barb: Representing Christ to a large and diverse segment of society and being trusted by them, from individuals experiencing homelessness to those whose homes are on the historic register. People need the Lord, and officers often have greater access to a myriad of people because of our organization and uniforms whether at a disaster, a fundraiser or a feeding program.

Jon: I’m passionate about urban ministry and serving those who are marginalized. Gospel-centered service to suffering humanity is at the center of my calling.

Barb: Developing a team to conquer a task. I’m more of a risk-taker than I ever believed possible.

Our parenting journey required long waits and God’s intervention. Along the way, God blessed us with a boy and a girl seven and a half years apart—and a deeper walk with Him. It’s quite an adventure to follow the course God has set for your life.

What is the most rewarding aspect of officiership for you?

Jon: I’m passionate about urban ministry and serving those who are marginalized. Gospel-centered service to suffering humanity is at the center of my calling.

Barb: Remembering, it’s God’s work, so try not to get in His way. Humble yourself. Become involved in regular Bible study with accountability; it will refresh your soul and give you sustenance for the long haul. Be brave and authentic enough to share what God is doing in your life. You’ll be amazed at the God-ordained conversations that arise.

How would describe your philosophy of leadership?

Jon: I love having smarter people than myself on my team. I’m very collaborative and want to make decisions that are reached collaboratively and informed by data. I desperately need a pipeline of reality from field officers. Max Dupree said the first job of a leader is to define reality. I can’t do that from Territorial Headquarters without input from the frontlines.

Has any particular appointment resonated with you more than the others? Why?

Jon: We loved being area commanders in Memphis and North Texas because we had an opportunity to lead “one Army on many fronts,” impacting an entire metropolitan area.

Barb: I loved being a territorial candidates’ secretary and having deep, one-on-one conversations that allowed me to get to know people and help them discover what God was calling them to. First and foremost, to be solid, Christ-followers and then to figure out why God wired them as He had.

Jon: I’ve never been a son of a officer. My dad retired in 1987 as Metropolitan divisional leaders but is pleased to be coming home.

Are you happy to make the switch team brisket to deep dish pizza?

Barb: Absolutely! We’ve moved from Kansas City to Memphis to Texas. Our next home really should have been in the Carolinas to finish the BBQ circuit. Oh well, I love deep dish pizza more.

What word of encouragement would you give to soldiers and officers in the Central Territory who’ve been affected by and are ministering to others during the pandemic?

Jon: We will get through this. God is bigger than the crisis, and He has delivered His people through worse times than this. If we trust in Him and surrender to Him, we will be stronger on the other side. In Isaiah 41:10 God tells His people: “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous hand.”

Staying in place for so long, we’ve all been dreaming of our bucket lists. What’s on yours?

Jon: Riding our bikes along Lake Michigan. The last time was over 30 years ago! Barb: Returning to Paris, fitting in our Footsteps of Paul Biblical Education Tour that was cancelled due to Hurricane Harvey, hiking in the Canadian Rockies and along the Rio Grande in Big Bend, Texas. I’d say learning to speak Spanish and French but that’s ridiculous if you’ve ever heard me attempt even a basic accent! My bucket list includes finishing well.
Western Plains Camp replaces Gene Eppley

by Michelle DeRusha

In the year since unprecedented flooding destroyed the Western Division’s iconic Gene Eppley Camp—which would have celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2019— Majors Greg and Lee Ann Thompson, Western divisional leaders, have worked tirelessly to find a new camp location.

Their determination paid off this past winter when the division purchased Camp Goodwill in Southern Sioux City, Neb. Renamed Western Plains Camp, it will serve youth and adults from Nebraska, South Dakota and western Iowa.

“From the moment we first stepped foot on the grounds, this place felt like home,” said Major Lee Ann. “We couldn’t ask for more. It is a gorgeous piece of land, and we are thrilled and honored to continue Camp Goodwill’s legacy of providing camping opportunities to children, teens and adults.”

Operated by Goodwill of the Great Plains for the past 88 years, the camp sits on 112 wooded acres and features a dining hall, a professional-grade kitchen; a state-of-the-art community building; nine bunkhouses; lake access for swimming, canoeing and fishing; a zero-entry pool; picnic shelters; an amphitheater and many other amenities. Goodwill of the Great Plains President and CEO John Hantla handed the keys over to the Thompsons at a ceremony in January at the camp.

“We are excited to see the future of this camp unfold under The Salvation Army’s ownership and leadership,” he said. “One of our main goals was to ensure that the camp’s new owner would honor the spirit and direction that the camp had always taken in serving the community, and we are thrilled to know it’s going to be in good hands.”

“Camping ministry is a big part of The Salvation Army,” said Major Lee Ann. “To have a place where people can come and feel comfortable in this kind of beautiful setting is very important to us. This type of setting makes many feel God’s presence in an even stronger way than other settings.”

Summer camps were originally scheduled to open in June but have been cancelled this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The silver lining is that the delayed opening will allow the Western Division to make improvements to the camp, including updating the cabins with new bathrooms and adding a recreation hall, chapel and a boathouse on the grounds.

“I’m disappointed we can’t open the camp this summer, but I’m excited about the updates, which will make the camp better than ever,” said Major Lee Ann. “I can already see kids swimming and fishing off the dock. We have kids who don’t know the freedom of running around outdoors without fear. They don’t know what a big wooded area looks like or what real fresh air smells like. I can’t wait for them to experience this.”

Western Division purchases new camp in the wake of devastating 2019 flood

by Doug Donahoo

Though summer camps have been cancelled, Western Division has developed two new tools for divisions, corps or families to use to connect with nature and its Creator.

Camp In A Box is a versatile resource check-full of lessons and activities that can be completed in small groups as communities lessen social distancing restrictions. Each of the five stand-alone programs looks at different part of creation and how God is evident in each.

“Camp In A Box is intentionally open-ended,” said Jerrie. “Divisions and corps can decide what they need and use it however it works for them.”

The programs follow the same format, making Camp in a Box ideal for a weekend day camp, once-weekly special event, monthly messy church, supplement to vacation Bible school, or even a youth night activity when programs resume in the fall. Included in each program are a Bible lesson, group activity, experiments, crafts, hands-on learning and a cooking segment.

“We can recreate some of the elements of camp through using Camp in a Box,” said Jerrie. “But what we can’t replace is the relationships. I hope this material will bring people together when they are able to resume programming.”

A second resource from the youth department is called Family Camp-In which encourages families to pop up a tent in their backyard or build a blanket fort in their living room and celebrate favorite camp traditions.

The Family Camp-In resource packet includes crafts, recipes for outdoor cooking, games, devotionals, songs and more for families looking for ideas and support.

“The goal is to encourage families to do something together that’s not on a computer or in front of the TV,” said Jerrie.

To encourage participation, the Chippewa National Forest has allowed The Salvation Army to share their Junior Park Ranger program. They have shared some fun prizes that a few lucky families who participate can win, and kids completing that program will receive an embroidered badge they can display in their homes or pin to their backpack or jacket.

Visit centralyouthevent.com to learn more and download the materials.

Camp transformed for new service

by Doug Donahoo

Church groups canceled reservations. Summer camp was called off. Suddenly, The Salvation Army in Kansas City, Mo., found itself with a lot of space available at Three Trails Camp at a time when it was desperately needed.

Though most people in the city had a home in which to quarantine, there was a question of what to do for homeless individuals who contracted the coronavirus.

“While the community was quick to identify a location for quarantining individuals waiting on test results, there was a lack of a location where they live in the Kansas City metro and surrounding area,” said Joyce Schau, Kansas and Western Missouri divisional social services director.

The Salvation Army provided the space, the Homeless Coalition facilitated the infrastructure, hiring and supervising staff. Jackson County, where the camp is located, has been working with them. The coalition made the 40 beds available to any patient in need of a place to recuperate, no matter where they live in the Kansas City metro and surrounding area.

Each room presents a home-like atmosphere, complete with clean sheets, towels, storage and soft lighting. Camp staff cook meals in the dining hall kitchen for delivery to Booth Lodge, where isolation center staff make final deliveries to rooms.

The Isolation Center officially opened for occupancy on May 14, a testament to The Salvation Army joining forces with multiple local agencies to provide a desperately needed resource in the midst of a crisis.
Heartwarmers from America’s Heartland

In the vein of John Krasinski's YouTube sensation, "Some Good News," we share some of the feel-good stories of people's kindness, generosity and service across the Midwest that have inspired us.

**Thinking big in Hannibal, Mo.**

*by Magan Hall*

While most 13-year-old boys are obsessed with screen time, playing sports or their score on Fornight, Robert Wealer is focused on joining The Salvation Army in "Doing the Most Good." He’s been collecting canned goods and monetary donations since he was just 6 for its Hannibal, Mo., food pantry. He’s collected over 30,000 food items and raised $6,100 in the last six years!

So earlier this year when Robert asked his donors via Facebook for help to restock the food pantry during the COVID-19 crisis, they didn’t hesitate. After several weeks, he presented The Salvation Army with a check for $2,122.97.

"People are struggling because they are getting cut off from their jobs, so they have to depend on places like The Salvation Army to help with their basic needs," said Robert.

"What’s truly inspirational about Robert is that the food drive was a self-initiated project. He saw a need as a young boy and wanted to do his part to help, but it wasn’t just a one-and-done effort. He’s made it an annual mission," said Matt Schmidt, Quincy, Ill., Area Command assistant development director. "He has the ability to bring an entire community together to support his efforts, and he should be proud to know he’s helped put food on the table for hundreds of families in his community over the years."

"Some people think that if people only donate a little then it isn’t worth giving, but if everybody gave a little, then it would be plenty," said Robert. "Start somewhere and, no matter what you collect or make, it is better than what you would have if you would not have done it. From there, build up support and raise your goals."

"Wise words from a young man who already has spent half of his life giving to those in need."

**A caring canteen caravan**

*by Samantha Hyde*

COVID-19 has changed many things, including how The Salvation Army is able to interact with its most loyal donors. This spring, the Indiana Division's development team came up with a new way to stay connected with donors in central Indiana.

The idea sprouted from phone calls staff were making to check on donors quarantined at home. Many fell into high-risk categories, unable to see family or participate in the active, social lifestyles they normally enjoyed. While the phone calls were welcomed, the team felt it could do more.

Jo Ann Remender, Indiana divisional director of development, was inspired by the "Hope is Greater than Fear" theme used nationally as part of The Salvation Army's COVID-19 disaster response. She ordered small bags and t-shirts with the logo and worked with staff to make care packages for donors in the Indianapolis area. The bags were filled with items like chocolate chip cookies, coffee, devotional books, prayer request cards and photos of The Salvation Army serving across Indiana.

"We called our donors to ask if we could stop by and make a social, safe visit from the yard," Jo Ann said. "We took the EDS canteen on days it was not being used and drove a little car of cars behind it." Honking horns and waving signs, the "Caring Canteen Caravan" visited donors in neighborhoods and retirement communities across the city. Elated donors and their neighbors waved from their porches and balconies as the bags and well wishes were delivered.

For many, it was the first glimpse of the outside world they’d seen in weeks. When the team pulled up to the home of Bill and Liz Murphy, long-time Salvation Army supporters, the visit was especially welcomed. They had just recovered from COVID-19 and were thankful for both the company and prayers.

“These visits helped to deepen our relationships with our donors, because we care about them as people, as our friends,” added Jo Ann. Her office is filled with thank you notes and letters of gratitude, even as the team plans its next round of visits.

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**The fulfillment of giving back**

*by Camerin Mattson*

In the past few months the Joliet, Ill., Corps food pantry has served more people than ever. There are several reasons for the spike—families out of work due to the coronavirus, bare shelves at grocery stores, and word getting out about how The Salvation Army can help.

“We’re seeing families that have never needed assistance before,” said Major Wendy Fauldez, corps officer. “We have learned a lot about surrendering to God and trusting in His provision as the need has increased.”

Serving more than 300 families a week is a challenge, not only in terms of having enough food and household items to go around, but in the amount of work it takes to gather, sort and package donations for distribution. They are managed, however, thanks to an inspiring team of volunteers, including two men who were in need themselves not long ago.

Novel Woods came to the Joliet Corps through the courts. “I needed to get my act together and change my life,” Novel said of his life two years ago. At the time, he was a recovering drug addict and in trouble with the law.

He’s since graduated from a drug program and reconnected with his family, changes he largely credits to being involved at the corps. “This is the most wonderful place I’ve ever been,” Novel said. “Serving here, I feel like I’m giving back to the people who gave to me.”

Eight months ago when Myles Redmond walked through the doors of the corps he was homeless. “I was in a bad situation,” Myles said. “And they embraced me.”

Grateful for their warm assistance, he knew he wanted to give back, too. Myles filled out an application to volunteer and has been a fixture at the corps ever since.

Both men volunteer daily at the corps, a role that’s taken on new significance with the coronavirus outbreak. They assist with picking up donations, packing boxes, food pantry distribution on Monday afternoons and delivering necessities throughout the week to shut-ins.

“These are wonderful guys,” concluded Linda Trevino, volunteer coordinator. “I never have to ask them to do things. They see the need before I can ask. Their help means the world to me.”
D uring National Nurses Week in May, the Western Division launched a campaign across Nebraska, South Dakota and western Iowa called “Heart for Our Heroes” to honor and salute doctors, nurses and other health care staff working on the frontlines of the pandemic. Officers and staff in Omaha, Neb., provided hundreds of sack lunches to health care staff at seven area hospitals. The meals were prepared by local restaurants and were underwritten by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska. Meanwhile, units across the three-state area provided lunches at hospitals in their respective communities.

“We want to say ‘thank you’ to health care professionals across the three states we serve who are working around the clock amid the pandemic,” said Major Greg Thompson, Western divisional commander. “These lunches are one small way to show our gratitude and support, and we’re thankful to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska for helping to make this initiative possible here in Omaha.”

“Making sure people are cared for is our top priority during this public health crisis,” said Steve Grandfield, chief executive officer at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska. “We are proud to join The Salvation Army in providing meals to the health care workers who are on the frontlines, spending time away from themselves and giving so much of themselves to care for patients in our communities.”

Her involvement with The Salvation Army was what some might call serendipitous. Living in the same neighborhood as Captains Caleb and Stephanie Senn, Oakbrook Terrace, Ill., corps officers, she mistakenly ended up on their doorstep with her dad when they were trying to deliver a package. Immediately recognizing her from the neighborhood’s Facebook page, Captain Stephanie was delighted and said, “Actually I was going to contact you.”

She told the Tylers about the corps’ Rescue Food Program, how the need had skyrocketed and people were asking for masks but the corps had none to give. She wondered if Olivia might be interested in distributing her masks at their daily drive-through pantry.

Later that week Olivia visited the corps and handed out 250 free face masks along with the food being distributed. She has already donated several hundred masks to other area shelters and has applied to become a nonprofit organization called Olivia Dru Cares (Dru is her middle name).

“Keep believing, and keep being kind,” Olivia encouraged others. “All people can help. Even people who might be younger than me.”

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Walking to 100
by Dan Furry

ough he’s turning 100 this summer, Mickey Nelson still has things he wants to check off his bucket list.

All his life, he’s lived in Clarks Grove, Minn., just north of Albert Lea, in the house in which he was born in 1920. Mickey has accomplished a lot during this life, including military service during World War II and owning a successful bus business for 58 years, as well as a sand and gravel company.

He has become a fixture in Clarks Grove, often seen walking down Main Street, past the hardware store and the post office and The Salvation Army clothing donation box. Just about everybody in town knows Mickey and waves while he’s out walking.

But something has bothered Mickey as of late: the COVID-19 pandemic and the suffering it has inflicted on his neighbors. He has seen the effect on families whose jobs have been furloughed or eliminated, many of whom have no savings to fall back on. Statistics show 700,000 Minnesotans and North Dakotans filed for unemployment since the start of the pandemic, roughly 20 percent of the workforce. As many as 40 percent have never visited a food shelf, but now find themselves relying on them to help feed their families.

“I know that people are struggling, either from the illness or a job loss from all the businesses shutting down,” Mickey said recently. “I just thought there was something I could do to help.”

Mickey and his daughters came up with a “bucket list” idea to help these neighbors—inspired by a centenarian Englishman who walked 100 laps. But instead of laps, Mickey will walk 100 miles by the end of this summer through the streets of Clarks Grove. He’s calling it, “Walking to 100,” not only because he will walk 100 miles but also because he turns 100 this summer.

Mickey hopes people will donate money to support his effort to help others and has selected The Salvation Army in the Northern Division, which serves Minnesota and North Dakota, to use the money he raises to provide ongoing relief from the pandemic.

Living large on less
by Craig Dirkes

Elaine Foote-Blum could have spent her $1,200 government stimulus check on plenty of things. Instead, she donated the money to The Salvation Army.

Elaine is a widow and retired pastor who lives in Pine River, Minn. She attends and volunteers at the Brainerd Lakes, Minn., Corps, led by Captains Jeff and Joyce Curran, where she has seen firsthand how The Salvation Army has been providing food and support for countless people in need during the crisis.

“Coronavirus is a matter of life and death for some people,” Elaine said. “I can’t be a nurse, and I can’t be a pastor. But donating is something I can do.”

Not too long ago, Elaine had no money to donate to anyone. She’d struggled with debt her entire life, but in 2015 she took control of her finances with help from budgeting programs and support groups. “Because of that, I had no savings. I was in so much debt that I couldn’t even afford to pay my taxes... God, in His perfect timing, got me to this point where I could let go of $1,200,” said Elaine, who hopes that by sharing her story others will be inspired to give freely.

Standing in front of her food shelf, Elaine Foote-Blum stands with Craig Dirkes.

Kindness multiplied
by Cathleen Himes

Olivia Tyler is just 7 and already she is on a mission to help others. When the State of Illinois mandated face masks be worn in public due to the pandemic, she started selling washable masks and, with each one that was sold, donating one for someone in need.

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Pray for the new lieutenants as they step into their first appointments as officers and share the message of hope found in Christ’s love.

Messengers of the Kingdom

Lts. Katy and Wayne Benedict
Corps Officers
Elkhart, Ind.

Lts. Darby and Joshua Bowyer
Corps Officers
Hammond-Munster, Ind.

Lts. Gunther Alexis Briceno Sanchez and Frances Yamilex Ramos Pino
Corps Officers
Kansas City Westport Temple, Mo.

Lts. Rames Enrique Cebrian Cebrian and Elisaine Sanchez Garcez
Assistant Corps Officers
Minneapolis Central, Minn.

Lts. Kanesa and Shanell Debela
Corps Officers
Decatur, Ill.

Lt. Karen Felton
Corps Officer
Chicago Midwest, Ill.

Lt. Sheri Harned
Assistant Corps Officer
Harbor Light Center, Minneapolis, Minn.

Lts. Robert and Stephanie Leach
Corps Officers
Livingston County, Mich.

Lts. Amber and Rodney Morin, Jr.
Corps Officers
Fremont, Neb.

Lts. Jennifer and Marty Norris
Corps Officers
Joplin, Mo.
With responsibility for Carthage, Mo.

Lt. Michael Raes
Mission Integration Officer
Western Michigan/ Northern Indiana Divisional Headquarters

Lts. Christian and Justice Smith
Corps Officers
Ottawa, Ill.

Lts. Haylee and Matthew Winters
Corps Officers
Traverse City, Mich.

Lts. Cherie and Nate Woodard
Corps Officers
Olathe, Kan.
Pioneers in Thailand

Although the Salvation Army’s fledgling work in Thailand is yet to be officially registered, the pioneer team, including Central Territory officers Major Lance and Betty Keobounhom, has been playing a part in the coronavirus response in the northern city of Chiang Mai.

The Salvation Army responded to a call from the city’s governor to provide meal assistance to a center which cares for individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19. Salvation Army officers and staff also provided support to frontline workers, including the distribution of face shields to three hospitals and a police station. Food parcel distribution to vulnerable communities has been undertaken too, ensuring a supply of dry food, hand sanitizer and bottled water.

Stationed in Thailand since March 2019, the Keobounhoms have been working as research and development officers in an exploratory ministry under the purview of the Singapore, Malaysia and Myanmar Territory.

American citizens, the majors are originally from Laos where they met in an English language class but did not see each other again until each had escaped the communists. The majors were living in a refugee camp in Thailand with 70,000 other people. There, Bruce, who was a Buddhist monk, accepted Christ as his Savior. Becoming a Christian, he felt called to share his hope and joy with others.

After the Keobounhoms immigrated to the United States, Bruce became an ordained part-time Nazarene pastor in Nashville, Tenn., but he dreamed of serving the Lord full-time. Believing that The Salvation Army was a good fit, he contacted them about beginning a Laotian ministry. While the Army did not have funds to pay him, it could provide a location. That was enough. The Keobounhoms began the new ministry as lay leaders and the next year became auxiliary captains. By 2001 they had helped establish three Laotian corps in the nation.

They were appointed in 2003 to lead the new Rockford Tabernacle, Ill., Corps to minister to the city’s growing Laotian population. During their 11-year tenure, the corps grew dramatically in members and faith. In 2014, the Keobounhoms were appointed to lead another Laotian ministry, the Genesis Corps in Madison, Wis., where they served until being appointed last year to Thailand, fulfilling a call God placed on their hearts more than a decade ago.

COVID-19 relief information from an IHQ release.

Carrs headed to Caribbean

Major Valerie and Captain Jeff Carr will take appointments on Aug. 15, in the Jamaican East Division as divisional program secretary and divisional business administration secretary, respectively. The Carrs and their son had been slated to join the South America East Territory in Argentina earlier this year but have been reassigned to the Caribbean Territory. This will be the Carrs’ second appointment overseas. Their first was in Spain.

Steadfastly serving in Spain and Portugal

Captain Luis and Raisi Zambrano with volunteers in Tenerife

Deadly Central Territory officers Lt. Colonels Phil and Sheila Davison, the Spain and Portugal Command has steadfastly carried out the Army’s mission in these two countries hard-hit by the pandemic this year.

In Portugal, The Salvation Army increased its already prolific assistance on many fronts. For instance, the night shelter in Xalbregas expanded to a 24-hour operation. The Lar Marinel Nursing Care and Home Care Services provided meal delivery service not only to homes in Sintra but also in Porto. The Eventide Home in Sintra gave tablets and computers to residents so they could keep in touch with their families and helped them deal with emotions by obtain-
Metropolitan Division prays for justice

by Camerin Mattson

Salvation Army officers, soldiers, staff and friends gathered at eight prayer meetings around the Metropolitan Division on June 2, 2020, in response to the killing of George Floyd, subsequent demonstrations for justice, and looting that seized many cities.

“We all wanted to express care and felt that one means of mobilizing was to join with others in grieving, repenting, listening, and praying,” said Commissioner Sue Swanson, who initiated the gatherings.

Lt. Karen Felton (then a cadet) who helped lead the prayer meeting at the Chicago Midwest Corps Community Center, said, “We prayed for healing, for reconciliation, for peace, for ears to listen and hearts to receive. We prayed for forgiveness, and we prayed protection over the neighborhood.”

In Joliet, Major Wendy Faundez said several people in their neighborhood saw the prayer meeting and joined them, including a black man whose mother had been shot the night before. After they prayed for her recovery, they prayed to receive Christ.

“We feel a stirring for continued prayer walks in our community,” Major Wendy said. “This is just the beginning.”

Enrollment livestreamed

While the pandemic prevented community worship in person at corps throughout the territory, it didn’t stop Larry Woods from being enrolled. This May he became the first senior soldier whose enrollment was livestreamed from the Minneapolis Parkview, Minn., Corps, led by Majors Robert and Paula Pyle and supported virtually by soldiers at home.

Larry is active in men’s ministries, Bible studies, prayer meetings and more. Since the pandemic began, he and many others have been participating by Zoom. He began attending the corps in February after moving into the neighborhood and stopping by the corps’ weekday hot lunch program for meals, which he now picks up curb-side. He knew about The Salvation Army from working previously for an adult rehabilitation center.
First officers from Training in Spanish program commissioned

With the commissioning of the Messengers of the Kingdom, the Central Territory marked a milestone: the first four officers from the Training in Spanish program at the College for Officer Training (CFOT). The program, which was just introduced with this session, is proving successful in helping Spanish-speaking Salvationists fulfill their calling to officership. The first officers to be commissioned through it are Lt. Ely and Ramon Cebrian, and Lts. Gunther and Yami Briceno.

According to Major Karen Johnson, then Spanish training director, the program utilizes a multifaceted approach in providing support, education and resources in Spanish while helping the cadets learn English so they will be prepared for their work as officers. Each quarter over the last two years, the progress of each cadet was reviewed and supports adjusted with his or her commissioning in view.

“Having cadets who have limited English skills has required us to rethink how we share information and to realize the challenges extend to every area of cadet life from classes to the campus environment,” said the major. “Working with cadets from other countries not only involves providing adequate language support but also a sensitivity to the cultural challenges that they face.”

She noted that support and education have extended beyond formal lessons plans and CFOT staff officers who are officially involved in the Spanish language training program to the entire CFOT community lending loving support.

“Being at the CFOT has been a wonderful spiritual experience,” said Lt. Gunther. “If someone has the call to be an officer, I think they should come here and enjoy what God has in this place, not only because of the training you receive but because you discover yourself. Everything you do at the CFOT will mark you forever. It will be a unique and personal experience, where you will discover the purpose of God’s call in your life.”

The September territorial prayer calendar is reflected in the weekly prayer guides sent to your corps. See your officer for a copy.

Go to www.salarmymc.org. If you follow the prayer calendar during the year, you will have read through the Bible!

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My Prayer List

My Prayer List

Day       Bible Reading       Pray for The Salvation Army
1 Saturday Psalms 90-92       Des Moines Citadel, Iowa, Corps
2 Sunday Proverbs 14-15        Green Bay, Wis., Corps
3 Monday Ezekiel 43-48         Philippines Territory
4 Tuesday John 1-2             Flint, Mich., ARC*
5 Wednesday 1 Thessalonians 4-6 Clinton, Iowa, Corps
6 Thursday Leviticus 25-27     New Lieutenant’s in their first appointments
7 Friday 1 Chronicles 1-4      Mozambique Territory
8 Saturday Psalms 93-95        Chicago Lawn, IL, Corps
9 Sunday Proverbs 16           Carthage, Mo., Corps
10 Monday Daniel 1-6           Duluth, Minn., Corps
11 Tuesday John 3-4            Des Moines Temple, Iowa, Corps
12 Wednesday 2 Thessalonians    College for Officer Training staff
13 Thursday Numbers 1-3        New Esports ministry
14 Friday 1 Chronicles 5-9     Elkhart, Ind., Corps
15 Saturday Psalms 96-98       Green Bay, Wis., Kroc Center
16 Sunday Proverbs 17-18       Canada and Bermuda Territory
17 Monday Daniel 7-12          Fort Wayne, Ind., ARC*
18 Tuesday John 5-6            Detro’it, Mich., Corps
19 Wednesday 1 Timothy 1-3      Danville, Ill., Corps
20 Thursday Numbers 4-6        Major’s Bruce and Betty Kebourthorn in Thailand
21 Friday 1 Chronicles 10-14    Hahnson, Kan., Corps
22 Saturday Psalms 99-101      Chicago Mayfield Community Church, IL, Corps
23 Sunday Proverbs 19          United Kingdom with The Republic of Ireland
24 Monday Hosea 1-7            Fairmount, Minn., Corps
25 Tuesday John 7-9            The International Rapid Response Team
26 Wednesday 1 Timothy 4-6     Goshen, Ind., Corps
28 Thursday Numbers 7-9        Hancock, Mich., Corps
29 Friday 1 Chronicles 15-19   Hispanic Women’s Ministries in Northern Division
30 Saturday Psalms 102-104     LT. Colonels Jonathan and Barbara Rich
31 Sunday Proverbs 20-21       Middle East Region

The Salvation Army

Remote Open Air Meeting

---Mustard Seeds---

Photo by Andrew Grey

Lts. Gunther and Yami Briceno and son, Obad, with Colonels Janice and Steve Howard
Everyone is picking it in. It’s wonderful to see."

Major Robert Viquez, Metropolitan Division Commander, is proud of the way his community responded to recent tragedies.

“There is more good than bad here.” said the major. “The negative stuff doesn’t last. That counts is the whole community pulling together to make Minneapolis greater.”

Promoted to Glory

Mrs. Colonel Annette Johnson

Mrs. Colonel Annette Johnson was promoted to Glory on April 29, 2020. She is fondly remembered by the people of Salvation Army who worked with her and mentored her throughout her life.

Annette was commissioned in 1951 with the “Ambassadors” session. After serving in two corps appointments, she married Edward Johnson. They served together for more than 40 years in various corps, divisional and territorial appointments in two territories. Notably, in 1966 Annette became the first married veteran corps officer from the Central Territory to attend the International College for Officers in London, England.

1974 the Johnsons were transferred to Southern Territorial Headquaters. They served in the Southern Territory for 14 years in various territorial headquarters in Atlanta, Ga., and leading the Maryland and West Virginia Division, and held cabinet position in both the Eastern and Central Territories. They were transferred back to the Central Territory in 1988, and Annette served as a volunteer home leader secretary until the Johnsons retired in 1993. After retirement she continued to be involved in women’s ministries at the Marietta and Atlanta Temple, Ga., and Corps.

Annette is survived by her husband Ed to whom she was married for 67 years; children, Steven, Barbara, and David; grandchildren and many other family and friends.

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