



Central Connection

The Salvation Army / USA Central Territory
News and Views from the Midwest

"We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future." Eph. 4:3,4 (NLT)

Volume 42, Number 5

May 2012

BONUS
Youth Development
pullout

The Pathway of Hope

by Maribeth Swanson
Territorial Social Services
Secretary

In response to a challenge to "double our impact" regarding emergency social service assistance, a survey identified that 90 percent of corps are "serving" problems and are not in a position to "solve" root causes. How can we invest intentionally to change our impact when a family comes for a bag of food? Targeting families with children to impact generational poverty, and using some consistent tools for assessment, the desire was to identify how to add this dimension when two-thirds of corps are working with one or fewer

staff doing a multitude of jobs.

The Pathway of Hope program was initiated last October with three demonstration corps: Elkhart and Gary-Merrillville, Ind., and Green Bay, Wis. Each corps represents the breadth of Salvation Army corps and communities served throughout the Central Territory.

The Pathway of Hope approach is built upon consistent process and training innova-



tions, case management best practices, and the use of technology systems available within the territory. Objectives include developing a new approach that has the potential to enable

motivated individuals seeking help with basic needs to move beyond survival (crisis and vulnerability) to increased stability and sufficiency, building hope at each step.

Initial reports from casework staff implementing the Pathway approach are encouraging.

"The Pathway of Hope program has given our staff the opportunity to make deep connections with people," said Nan Pahl, social services

Continued on page 2

Award-winning care for children

by Michael Braver

The Metropolitan Division's Child Care Program has been named territorial winner for excellence in social services this year.

Established in 1979, the program provides a set of comprehensive



services that support children and families in many of Chicago's most underserved and disadvantaged communities. The program operates six Head Start locations, serving a total of 438 children.

Its goals are to promote early childhood development, literacy, well-being and health. Key to achieving these goals is a highly qualified staff with formal training in early childhood education that incorporates best practices based on established quality standards and research.

The Chicago Metropolitan Association for the Education of Young Children singles out the Army's child care program as a model.

"The Salvation Army Child Care Centers are model programs that work tirelessly to serve the children most in need," said Gail Conway, CEO of the association. "We know it is the leadership and the people

of The Salvation Army Child Day Care Centers who make the difference. The Salvation Army serves the youngest and most vulnerable. Every dollar invested truly makes a difference in reducing the likelihood of delinquency, crime and other social ills."

The program also operates the Family Outreach Initiative which provides child care services to 81 homeless families. It offers family support and case management to help them achieve stability and meet the needs of their children. More than 70 percent of the children in these families have develop-



mental delays. Caseworkers make referrals for medical and dental treatment and other services.

The Salvation Army's Teen Parenting program provides comprehensive child care training and case management to 26 teen parents with infants up to six months.

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Serve Vigorously

by Lt. Colonel Richard Vander Weele
Territorial Secretary for Program

In a few weeks my session, "Companions of Christ," will celebrate 35 years of service. While working on our session reunion, I took the opportunity to thumb through our yearbook. Glancing at the old pages, I realized 70 percent of the officers commissioned with me in June 1977 are still active officers, have retired as officers or were promoted to Glory as officers. I also noticed the verse from song #472 from *The Salvation Army Songbook* that I selected for publication under my photo:

*To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill,*

*O may it all my powers engage
To do my master's will!*

As I thought about that verse and what it meant to me in the Spring of 1977, I couldn't help but think about it in context of one of the principles articulated in the vision for the Central Territory cast by our territorial leaders, Commissioners Paul R. and Carol Seiler, "Serve Vigorously."

The first point listed under this principle states, "When we pursue mission rather than satisfy a good feeling, we will serve vigorously. A hallmark of the Army's spirit and role in the universal church is the



priesthood of believers meeting needs without discrimination."

From where I sit, there is no question that in many places, Salvation Army officers, soldiers, adherents and volunteers are serving faithfully and vigorously across the territory. But in other places, our vigor seems to have faltered. This situation causes a bit of a paradox for us Salvationists and our motto "Saved to Serve."

I could cite statistics and share vignettes of good things—and not so good things—about Salvation Army ministry to illustrate this paradox. However, I think a better approach

is to put forth some questions for all of us to consider:

- Am I willing to share my faith with someone within my sphere of influence?
- Am I willing to work alongside a corps employee or volunteer as they serve others?
- Am I studying the Bible and reading materials which help me grow spiritually?
- Am I praying for the people of my community, my country and my world?
- Am I speaking out about injustice in my world?
- Am I filled with the joy of the Lord, His compassion and His love? Is it evident to others?

I still want to serve the present age, to make a difference for Christ with vital, vigorous service. How about you?

Child care

Continued from page 1



The Salvation Army also plays a role in the support and monitoring of other child care providers. Its Enhanced Day Care Home Network recruits and monitors child care providers who are licensed to care for children in home-based child care centers. It also works in partnership with three community-based child care agencies to help

them move toward independent operation and accreditation.

"The Salvation Army's child care programs are located in communities that are academically underserved and disadvantaged," said Leon Denton, children and youth development services director. "This has prompted our staff to work with parents to develop techniques and strategies which increase resiliency even in the most challenging circumstances. Our child care programs also benefit from being able to incorporate the expertise of other Salvation Army experts in social services, mental health, nutrition and outreach."

The programs are an entry point for families to access and learn more about the many programs offered by The Salvation Army. Officers with child care programs in their facilities are asked to provide pastoral care for the families who are enrolled. They are afforded the opportunity to learn more about the services available and the opportunity to worship and serve God if they do not already attend a church. Officers and staff provide needed social services for the families in the child care programs through referrals.

The Pathway of Hope

Continued from page 1

director for Green Bay, Wis.

Nan reported that many clients have indicated it's the first time they've had the opportunity to sit down with someone who really listens to them and helps them identify their individual and family resources versus their deficits. According to Nan, completing the strengths assessment propels clients forward as they begin to identify steps they can take to build stability for their families, economically and socially.

"We've aligned our programs, advisory board functions and approach to outreach. Our mission is clearer and more focused on helping to change lives one family at a time," said Captain Brenda McCoy, Gary-Merrillville corps officer. "I've been enriched as I've had the opportunity to engage with clients who appreciated the time we're taking to listen to their needs and partner with them."

In Elkhart, Ind., Julie Poertner, social services director, indicates that the Pathway of Hope model has received great interest from their many community partners, and it's the answer she's been seeking to help people reach long-term change.

"The Pathway of Hope project has been an opportunity to sit down one-on-one with clients, discover where they are, where they would like to go, and how to move forward. It is working with clients to chart a path forward to increased stability, assisting them in discovering options available and becoming their personal cheerleader. I have felt for a long time that clients' lack of self-esteem due to family circumstances, lack of education, abuse or whatever, is often what holds them back. This program offers the chance to look the client in the eye and say 'You are worth the effort it will take to move beyond where you are, and I believe in you.'"

There are still many challenges ahead in taking what has been learned during the demonstration



Julie Poertner, social services director at the Elkhart, Ind., Corps, reflects with Vanessa and her son, Zacariah, on what they have accomplished together.

phase into full implementation. The goal is to initiate the Pathway of Hope in 30 additional corps this year. The demonstration corps have not only supported good initial steps forward for their clients but are contributing to how we can enhance our capacity to serve with current resources.



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Check out our complementary material on the web.
www.usc.salvationarmy.org/getconnected

Resources/Links

Flickr photos of Detroit Bed & Bread 25th anniversary radiothon
Blake Fewell's website and link to his broadcast
Red Shield Tool kit with resources for officers for National Salvation Army Week
Officer Candidate web pages

Clips

Courageous trailer clip

Web exclusives

My most interesting time on air by Blake Fewell
What the Wheelers can do for your corps
Rockford Tabernacle ministers to Burmese tribe
Salvation Army meets health, spiritual needs in Haiti
Warsaw Corps' Rotary relationship
More EDS response from "Leap Year" tornadoes
Peoria Keys to Success Advisory Board effort

Central Connection



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"Leap Year" tornado response

Salvation Army emergency disaster services (EDS) teams across the Midwest responded almost immediately to the devastating effects of two storm systems that spawned numerous tornadoes in five days spanning late February and early March. Within hours EDS mobile feeding units were providing food and hydration, as well as emotional and spiritual care, to survivors and emergency responders in numerous locations.

EDS teams also helped survivors with immediate needs, such as food, clothing, medicine, shelter, bedding and baby products. The next phase of the Army's response included clean-up and emergency financial assistance, as well as other forms of social services.

Dubbed as the "Leap Year" tornadoes, the storms killed 53 people nationwide (24 in the Central Territory) and caused damage estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars.

The National Weather Service



issued 413 tornado warnings across the U.S. with the majority of those warnings occurring east of the Mississippi River. The storms pushed through Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri in the Central Territory, as well as Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North

Carolina, Ohio and Tennessee. Many strong tornadoes, some rated EF-4 with winds of 180 miles per hour, destroyed towns and communities.

One of the hardest hit areas was Harrisburg, Ill. A violent EF-4 tornado killed six people and injured more than 100 as it destroyed more than 200 houses and 25 businesses. Also hit hard was Henryville, Ind., where an EF-4 tornado caused significant damage to the high school, as well as destroying or seriously damaging houses and businesses. EDS teams were deployed to several communities throughout Southern Indiana, where the town of Marysville was nearly completely destroyed.

A second storm in the region produced damaging, baseball-sized hail; then the cold front that triggered the tornadoes left several inches of snow on top of the damage, further hampering recovery efforts.

A less traditional method was used in Southern Indiana to comfort those affected by the tornadoes. The Salvation Army forged a partnership with the HOPE Animal-Assisted Crisis Response organization. Canine/therapist teams brought smiles and joy to the survivors. "It was amazing to see," reported Captain Cynthia Shiels. "People came up to the dogs and gave them hugs. You could see their faces light up and their stress levels begin to go down. Pretty soon they'd open up about their experiences and needs."

Residential and business areas of Branson, Mo., particularly the main street on which many of its hotels and entertainment venues are located, also were severely damaged by the storms, as was the Branson



Corps. The tornado that formed in Gandy, Neb., marked the first time one had developed in the state in the month of February since record keeping began.



Canine/therapist teams brought smiles and joy to the survivors.

The generosity of the public toward Salvation Army relief efforts came through once again. In Indianapolis, Ind., a television and radio station joined forces to promote a downtown, drive-through donation site, and two additional television stations staged telethons. The three events raised more than \$363,000. A St. Louis, Mo., television station hosted a four-hour telethon that raised almost \$5,000 for relief efforts in that state.

Additionally, the Lilly Foundation donated \$100,000 towards the Army's relief work in Southern Indiana and an additional \$30,000 toward an early response emergency vehicle.

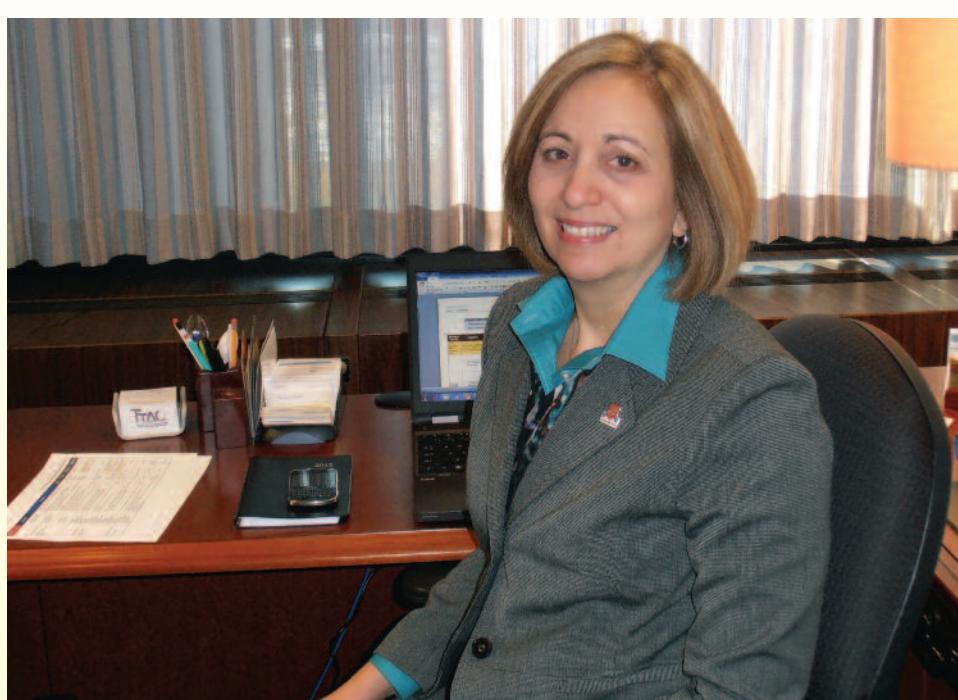


A single purpose: others

Maribeth Velazquez Swanson, the new territorial social services secretary, brings more than 25 years of singularly dedicated experience to the position. In her new capacity, she provides executive-level oversight, direction and leadership for the Army's multifaceted range of social service programs benefitting some of the most vulnerable adults and children in the Midwest.

A Salvationist and child of officers, Maribeth is well steeped in the work of the Army.

She earned her master's of social work degree from the prestigious University of Illinois—Chicago, Jane Addams College of Social Work, with a concentration in administration, policy and organizations. Her undergraduate degree came from Asbury University. She earned the Academy of Certified Social Workers designation (ACSW) and is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) for the State of Illinois. She's currently pursuing a doctorate in leadership for the advancement of learning and service through Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee, Wis.



"My goal in this position is to ensure our programs pursue the most good for others," said Maribeth. "The territorial social services department will continue to access resources, encourage collaboration and provide learning that empowers, energizes and prepares officers, employees, volunteers and

soldiers to serve with excellence, compassion and humility as modeled by Jesus."

Most recently Maribeth was project director for the Army's Pathway of Hope, a strategic initiative supporting families desiring sufficiency. From January to late October 2011, Maribeth served as rehabilitation

services secretary for the Adult Rehabilitation Centers Command. Before that she served in the Metropolitan Division as associate director for family and community services. In 2006, Maribeth took the lead in developing the Army's STOP-IT Initiative Against Human Trafficking, a nationally recognized program providing education, outreach, case management and trauma care for domestic and foreign victims of human trafficking throughout the Chicago metropolitan region.

"My leadership capacity has been strongly influenced by my family and extended Army family through Christian teaching, along with awesome examples from Salvation Army history," Maribeth continued. "My social work education and career also have greatly influenced the values I bring to this position. But, it's the basic truths I learned in sunbeams, particularly when I pledged to 'do right,' which has most influenced me."

Maribeth and her husband, Bob (creator of the *Central Connection* "Mustard Seeds" cartoon strip), are parents to two young-adult children and are members of the Oakbrook Terrace, Ill., Corps. Maribeth enjoys biking "rail trails" and cooking.

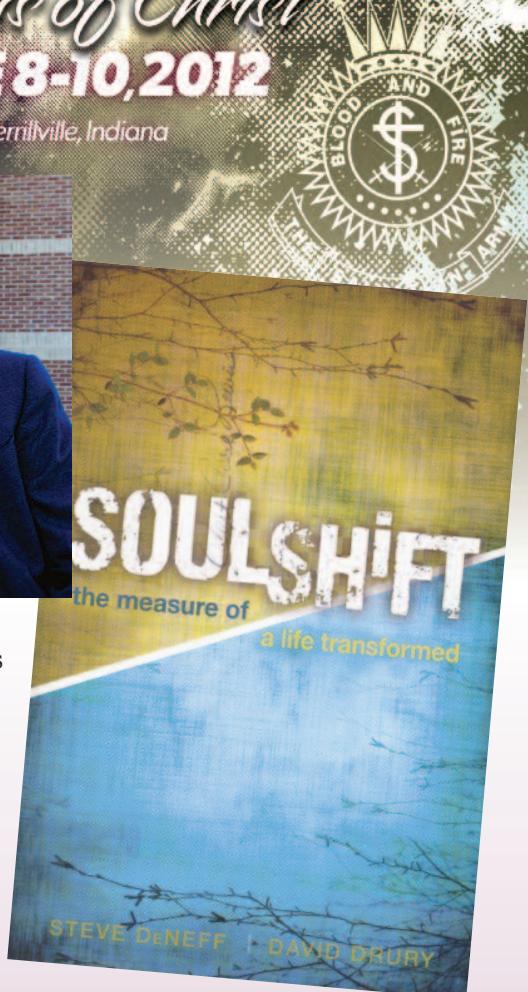


"From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I." —Psalm 61:2

and COMMISSIONING of the Friends of Christ

JUNE 8-10, 2012

Merrillville, Indiana



After Saturday morning's inspiring plenary meeting, you'll want another dose of Steve DeNeff. Fortunately for you, on Saturday afternoon there's a one-hour interactive workshop on *SoulShift*, DeNeff's new book already so popular it's in its third printing!

In this follow-up session, you'll delve deeper into the book's heart of transformation and discipleship. It also will feature a question and answer segment with Steve, his co-author David Drury and Don Cady, Wesleyan Publishing.

Follow the crowd to a designated area in the Resource Connection exhibit hall for this great opportunity that starts at 1:30 p.m.

A book signing will follow.

Experiencing God

Majors Nelson and Deborah De La Vergne, administrators of the South Bend, Ind., Adult Rehabilitation Center (ARC) for almost a year, have already made an impact on the lives of the 65 men who live there. The De La Vergnes are committed not only to the men's regeneration and stabilization; they're also committed to the well being of family members and community people who've chosen to make the center their church home.

Understanding the particular need for a closer walk with God in the rehabilitation process, the De La Vergnes did something special earlier this year for the men at the center. They invited Majors Joseph and Lois Wheeler, territorial evangelists and spiritual formation secretaries, to hold a weekend event.

"We'd known the Wheelers for years and heard how effective their events have been," said Nelson. At first the men were hesitant at the prospect of a full weekend with a spiritual emphasis, but as they got to know the Wheelers and responded to their teaching, they couldn't get enough of it," Nelson continued.

"Experience God" was the theme developed for the South Bend ARC by the Wheelers. (When an event is booked by a corps or institution, the Wheelers discuss with the offi-



Major Nelson De La Vergne congratulates beneficiaries on their progress.

cers or administrators what they hope to see accomplished and have them fill out a comprehensive survey to further facilitate their planning.)

"It's always been our desire to make each meeting different," said Joe. Using traditional and contemporary music (both are skilled performers), the Wheelers use skits, games, dramas and videos to set the tone for and reinforce their powerful messages. As a result, they made a tremendous impression on the South Bend ARC men, who quickly warmed to their personable style.

The Friday night and Saturday morning meetings were just for the beneficiaries and ARC staff. The Wheelers' free time was spent socializing with the men, which accounted for some of their most precious interactions of the weekend. Decision-time responses during these meetings were encouraging, Nelson reported.

"Since then, the men have been reading their Bibles more, and many have started attending Bible studies," Nelson added. "They really want to do what God wants of them. Several have shared the changes in their lives with family and friends!"



Majors Joe and Lois Wheeler prayerfully prepare for each new engagement.

Seeking to be courageous in Nebraska

The popular Christian movie *Courageous* follows the lives of four law enforcement officers and fathers who make a pact following tragedy to step up to family responsibility. Major Abe Tamayo, Hastings, Neb., corps officer, identified with the movie so strongly he created a similar pact for his congregation to sign at the corps.

"My main goal is to have our corps adults be spiritual mentors to youth and to influence the world around them," said Abe. "I want the adults to bond with their spouses and children and to open up to others who might not have that bond with another adult."

Eighteen people in the corps have signed the covenant, and more are interested. Couples without children are encouraged to take on a mentorship role. The adults are tasked with teaching their children or mentees about worship, morality and studying Scripture.



Soldier and Sunday school teacher Betty Brase signs her *Courageous* covenant

"I had just concluded a four-week preaching series on Nehemiah—about building a wall so the temple could be re-erected—when we start-

ed this initiative," said Abe. "We build walls to protect what is holy. Likewise, we need to shield our children, teaching them to be productive workers and live as Christ-followers in a safe environment."

Abe already has seen results. People are getting serious about stepping up, and one couple in particular has taken a little boy under their wing. He sits with his mentors every Sunday service and has been actively participating in worship.

"As a mother whose raised her children and grandson, this signing is the right thing to do," said Betty Brase. "It's safeguarding children."

Abe says he'd like to see this become a community-wide initiative.



Some men from the corps who've signed the pact

Glory through growth

Cadets Esteban and Karen Pommier, appointed in charge of the Warsaw, Ind., Corps last summer, arrived with one purpose in mind: to bring glory to God through growth.

"First, spiritual growth in our soldiers, staff and support groups, then growth in worship and program attendance, social services and community outreach," said Esteban.



Cadet Esteban Pommier addresses the crowd at an appreciation dinner.

"The corps has been going through a 'resurrection' process," he continued. "A couple of years ago, the building was renovated and the financial situation considerably improved, which is now allowing us to focus on corps growth and programming."

The Pommiers have been working on strengthening the corps council, women's auxiliary, advisory board and council (14 people serve on the Kosciusko County Board and seven on a recently begun advisory council in Whitley County, a service extension unit).



Cadet Karen Pommier interacts with women's auxiliary members.

These groups, plus soldiers and staff, strongly support the couple's efforts. Over the last six months, attendance has increased considerably for worship, Sunday school and character-building programs, Esteban reported. An average of 40 people attend worship, 30 come for Sunday school and 25 participate in youth programs. Women's auxiliary attracts 60 in Kosciusko County and 15 in Whitley, while an older adult ministry draws 25.

"We are surrounded by great staff and great communities in the counties we oversee," said Esteban. Ken Locke is the community ministries coordinator for Kosciusko County, while Pat Mossburg is the community ministries specialist in Whitley. They coordinate food and hygiene pantries, rental assistance, budgeting classes, plus Angel Tree, Coats for Kids, shoes for work and back-to-school programs. Community outreach efforts also are held, such as "Light the Way" evenings on preventing child abuse.

Additionally, the Army is now participating in more community events and is well supported by organizations such as the Rotary Club, which has raised more than \$1 million for the Army since 1965.

"We'd like to strengthen social

services by bridging more people into the corps and establishing self-sufficiency programs through education," Esteban added. "But, above any administrative efforts we may engage in, Karen and I are trying to build a culture of prayer in our corps. Jim Cymbala wrote in *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire*, 'God is attracted to weakness. He can't resist those who humbly and honestly admit how desperately they need Him. Our weakness...makes room for His power."

Esteban continued, "We can strive to be the best corps administrators, but if we don't consistently humble ourselves before God, then we're not accomplishing much and won't be able to love like Jesus loved. People are desperately seeking love and community. This is where growth starts to happen!" he concluded.



Ken Locke, community ministries coordinator, registers Angel Tree requests.

Doing unto others

The ministry of The Salvation Army to the ever-growing Southeast Asia population in Rockford, Ill., necessitated the building of an extension to the Rockford Tabernacle Corps. The extra space has allowed the corps to increase its outreach efforts (both evangelistic and social services) to the Laotian, Thai, Burmese and indigenous Karen tribe people who've settled in the Rockford area.

The extension includes a new, 250-seat chapel with an exposed wood-beam ceiling and sophisticated audio/visual capabilities, a large narthex to accommodate fellowship, office and storage spaces. An existing kitchen was enlarged, totally remodeled and modernized.

Captains Bounlouane (Bruce) and Champathong (Betty) Keobounhom, corps officers, preach in Thai, a common language in Laos and Burma (Myanmar), and translation is provided for the Karen language speakers. Sunday morning worship attracts an average 120 people, of whom 60 have become senior soldiers and 11 junior soldiers. The Tabernacle Corps has even sent two people to the College for Officer Training, Lts. Sanhny and Jean Thammavongsa, who are now leading a Laotian congregation at the Madison Genesis, Wis., Corps.

The Rockford Temple Corps



Corps Officers Captains Bounlouane (Bruce) and Champathong (Betty) Keobounhom.

began a Laotian ministry in the late 1990s which blossomed into the 2003 opening of the Rockford Tabernacle Corps. Just as the Temple Corps people reached out to newly arrived Laotians more than a decade ago, the Tabernacle Corps reaches out to newly arrived Burmese and Thai, many of whom are from the persecuted Karen tribe.

With the new extension to the Tabernacle Corps, more refugees can be accepted for assistance, and the corps has been able to revitalize their outreach to children through the community center, reported Major Randall Hellstrom, Winnebago county coordinator. Character-building programs, which had been combined out of necessity with those of the Temple Corps due to the lack of space, have moved back to the Tabernacle Corps,

which also has started its own corps cadet brigade. An after-school program averages 70 youth daily, English classes continue to be offered twice a week, and Saturday men's and women's ministries groups provide strong fellowship and outreach opportunities.



Spread the word!

Ever get questions like...

What does The Salvation Army do? Is The Salvation Army a church?

What happens once the red kettles are put away?

Who benefits from the thrift stores?

Get the word out about our Army's life-changing ministry during the National Salvation Army Week, May 14-20, 2012.



A Day in the Life of a Cadet

Cadet Holly Ehler shares an average day's schedule, her humorous thoughts and spiritual insights during her first year at the College for Officer Training (CFOT) near Chicago's lakeshore.

6:00 a.m. I awaken to the sound of sirens outside my window and my trusty alarm clock. Ah, 6:00, you came too early. Didn't I go to bed a mere four hours ago? That scripture investigation is complete, though, and I have God to thank for it...and, as an added bonus, I think my Greek is improving! Time to get ready, make sure the kids are awake, and head to work details (chores).

6:30 a.m. Details. I'm the flex parent so I get to make my own time (well, provided it has the approval of the supervising officer) to complete the work—and this way I can secure a vacuum before they're all in use! By the end of the half-hour I'll be awake enough to figure out which day it is so I know what classes I have and which uniform is required (tunic or campus).



7:30 a.m. Details done, teens off to school, four-year-old set with breakfast (thanks to my lovely husband). Now it's my time with God. "Lord, help me...cause if today's anything like the others, it's going to require Your strength."

8:45 a.m. I never realized how much could be accomplished in an hour and fifteen minutes. It only took coming to CFOT to learn that! Devotions, breakfast, clean-up, dressed, laptop and class items packed, preschooler fed, cleaned, dressed, and safely deposited in the FCC (Family Care Center). What a blessing the FCC is! Not only do my children love the staff and the new friends they've made, but they also receive spiritual instruction, homework help, and extracurricular activity options. So good to know they're in good hands; now to focus on my school day.





8:50 a.m. Prayers. What a great way to begin the day! Nothing quite compares to the blessing of joining together (both sessions of cadets and staff officers) in a time of worship and prayer. This time spent in chapel (usually on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) serves to focus our hearts and minds on God and our dependence upon Him. No two services are alike, as each is led by a different cadet or officer.

9:30 a.m. Classes. Here's hoping it's not three hours of doctrine! That class makes my brain hurt with its deep theological concepts. But I'm learning something about how to answer questions of faith that will undoubtedly come my way, like when my daughter asks me if Mary is God's wife since Jesus is their son. (I may just send her to Major Paul Fleeman with that one.)



12:30 p.m. Lunch in the cafeteria. Time to decompress around the table with others and perhaps sort through what was just taught in afore-mentioned doctrine class.

2:00 p.m. We're back at it again with more courses until dinner. On the other hand, if it's Tuesday we get study time (PTL!)...and then there's Friday with long details; that's when we break out the mops.



5:00 p.m. Supper (with the option to tote). It's nice to finally sit down with the family and hear about the day—when we can actually convince our teens to sit with us instead of their friends. Often my husband and I discuss what needs to be accomplished in the evening. I remember to thank God, again, that I have Greg as my partner in both life and ministry. (He often tells me he should get some credit for my good grades since he takes care of many family tasks which allows me more time for homework. I would have to agree).

7:00 p.m. Where has the day gone? I must have at least six hours of homework. Do I meet tonight for a group project? I'd better check Lotus Notes.

Bedtime (variable) Did all that really happen today? So much accomplished, yet sometimes I don't know if I'm coming or going. Is this what it's all about, Lord? Work until, exhausted, I fall into bed. Do I have what it takes?

You wrap Your loving arms around me and calm my fears and insecurities. "My child," You say, "I am training you to do My work and never promised it would be easy. I am teaching you how to trust Me for every task. Have I failed You?" No, never my Lord. "Then take heart, for I am pleased by your obedience. You are developing humility, trust, perseverance, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

I am speechless, in awe of His work in me. I am persuaded, once again, that I'd trade everything this world has to offer, and even endure the discomforts of cadetship, to serve Him and lead others into such a sweet fellowship.

Radiothon celebrates 25 years

Metropolitan Detroit celebrated its 25th annual Bed & Bread Radiothon to fight hunger and homelessness with celebrity guest appearances and exciting new events. More than \$1.7 million was raised, adding to the nearly \$25 million from past years.

One unique aspect of this year's event was the Tweetathon. The entire week of the radiothon, Ford Motor Company Fund pledged to donate \$3 for each tweet up to \$25,000.

This was the second year of partnership with News/Talk 760 WJR including on-air personalities Paul W. Smith, Mitch Albom, Frank Beckmann and others. In honor of the 25th anniversary, recently retired radio legend Dick Purtan returned to co-host portions of the broadcast. Since listeners called in to reach a \$50,000 challenge posed by WJR's Frank Beckmann, Dick agreed to shave off his iconic mustache.

Highlights of the 16-hour event featured guest appearances by Tim Allen, Kid Rock and Bill Cosby. It also included a special call-in from Detroit-native National Commander Commissioner William A. Roberts. In the 4:00 p.m. hour Tim Allen donated \$15,000. In recognition of the milestone, Garden Fresh Gourmet and its owners, Jack and Annette Aronson and John



Eastern Michigan Divisional Commander Colonel Dennis Strissel lends his support on the phones.

Latella, donated a total of \$100,000.

To kick off the celebration and to raise awareness of the Bed & Bread program, the Army hosted the inaugural "Shield on the Field Celebrity Classic" softball game last fall.



Celebrities gathered to play softball to kick off the celebration.

SHARING OUR SUCCESSES



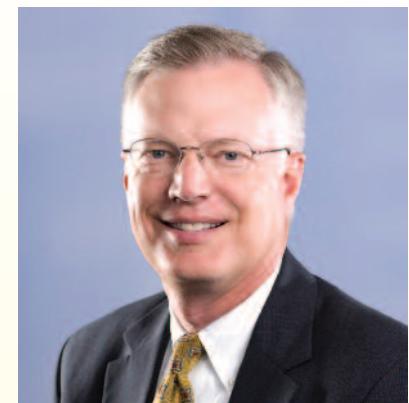
Staying connected

by Craig Young
Immediate Past Chair
Peoria Tri-County Advisory Board

As the immediate past chairman of the Peoria Tri-County Advisory Board in the Heartland Division, I have been blessed to witness firsthand the impact a successful advisory board can have on the Salvation Army's ministry. Our board is not perfect, but we truly make a difference. Our success in large part is based on our close connection to many others involved in The Salvation Army's ministry.

Our first connection is with Salvation Army officers and staff. Divisional commanders, then Major Merle Heatwole, Major Charles Smith, and now Major Evie Diaz, have been tremendous at reaching out to the advisory board to make sure our service is both effective and meaningful. In addition, these officers have been confident enough in their positions to allow the advisory board to work very closely with Salvation Army staff. We have an excellent development department led by Jim Sullivan who provides key staff support for our board. This creates a stable structure which remains a constant in our community, even as officers come and go. This connection will be improved as Major Diaz is embarking on a strategic planning process to more effectively link the advisory board with officers and staff.

Another important connection is with our women's auxiliary. We have one of the best auxiliaries in the nation and work closely with them. Most projects undertaken by



our advisory board are in some degree connected with the tremendous volunteers in our auxiliary.

Our advisory board members also are connected with each other. We are careful to do a good orientation with all new board members. As a result our newer members quickly become some of our most active members. Also, we have developed a program titled "Keys to Success" which outlines seven easy tasks each advisory board member can perform to impact our fundraising efforts. Although simple, this program makes us accountable to each other and has doubled the financial success of our board's efforts during the Christmas season.

Lastly, and most importantly, our advisory board members stay connected with those we serve through numerous volunteer opportunities and efforts to pray by name for those in need. Our divisional commanders have been good at keeping our focus on Christ and those we serve in His name. We are thankful for all these connections and the blessings they bring us as a board and individually as we serve in the ministry of The Salvation Army.



Saturday, June 9, 2012
MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

5k Run/Walk

\$6 Registration*

7am Start

*Registration includes a t-shirt and an optional opportunity to raise funds for World Services. More information and a downloadable copy

of the pledge form is available on the registration website. Open to all ages and fit levels. Register TODAY!

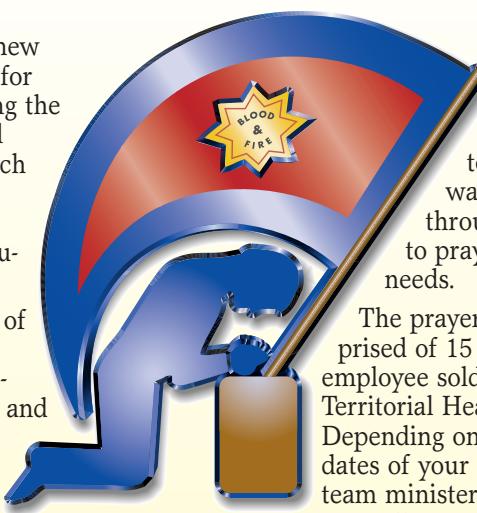
Register Online:
www.usc.salvationarmy.org/commissioning
or see your Corps Officer.

New prayer team resource!

There's a new resource for scheduling the territorial prayer team, which was formed last year, to come to your corps, institution or division.

The possibility of tapping into the prayer team's services, workshops and seminars is now at your fingertips. Just visit the territorial website (usc.salvationarmy.org) to request them for your corps' special meetings or retreats, pilgrimage, officers' or youth councils, or other programs.

You can customize their participation to fit your needs from two



dozen topics ranging from learning biblical models of prayer to holding prayer walks, from praying through grief and loss to praying for financial needs.

The prayer team is comprised of 15 officers and employee soldiers at Central Territorial Headquarters. Depending on the topics and dates of your event, the size of team ministering at your location will vary.

According to Lt. Colonel Dorothy Smith, territorial ambassador for prayer, the team was created to educate and encourage Salvationists in the Midwest to experience the life-changing power of prayer. Don't miss out.



A God of second chances

by Danielle Eickenhorst

God always comes through for me," said Mackendy Charles, a Haitian, who gives thanks for his sight first and foremost to God, then to doctors and Salvation Army personnel who have twice come to his aid.

In 2006 Charles, then 21, approached Envoys Steve and Ketsia Diaz, while he attended the Army's Secondary School in Port-au-Prince. His eyes had been badly damaged from a childhood bout of tuberculosis. Gray, cloudy and badly scarred, they caused him great pain.

"My mom had spent all of her money helping me, and we were out of options. So I approached Envoy Steve for help," he said.

Steve arranged for Mackendy to see a specialist, who informed him the surgery and treatment required was not possible in Haiti, and, without a double corneal transplant, he would soon lose his sight. Mackendy would have to go to the U.S. to receive proper care.

Steve reached out to friends in the U.S.—Dr. Kevin Shoultz and Dr. Joseph Kiernan, an anesthesiologist and an ophthalmic surgeon, who agreed to perform Mackendy's transplant free of charge, even getting the hospital to write off any fees. Afterward, his vision improved dramatically, going from a six-inch field of vision to more than six feet in the first day!

"I couldn't see before," he said. "It had gotten so bad that I couldn't read on my own. I was so happy to be able to read again."

In 2010, a catastrophic 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti.

"I was really worried," said Mackendy. "I lost my home. I lost my glasses. I lost my medicine. I couldn't get to my doctor. My eyes kept getting worse, and I thought I would lose my sight again."

As his vision worsened, Mackendy reached out again to the Dizes who had been transferred in 2009 to St. Louis, Mo., to lead the St. Louis Temple, Mo., Corps. The doctors, hospital and Salvation



Mackendy Charles (center) with Envoy Ketsia Diaz with son Kyle, friend John Aho, and Envoy Steve Diaz.

Army rose to the occasion, this time with the assistance of the South Side Lion's Club in St. Louis, which paid for travel costs and associated fees.

Michael Santangelo, president of the South Side Lion's Club, recalled when Steve first approached his fellow members for help. "It was a no brainer," he said. "This is what we do. We deliver help when we can and are especially motivated by protecting and providing sight."

Steve reconnected Mackendy with his doctors, who found scarring, blood vessel damage and cataract growth. On October 19, 2011, Mackendy underwent surgery to remove cataracts and scar tissue and to replace one cornea. Following this procedure, he stayed

with the Dizes at their home until January when he returned to Haiti.

Mackendy is now back in Port-au-Prince living in a tent with his mother in the internally displaced persons camp next to the Army's Delmas 2 Street compound which includes a school, church and clinic.

Though he's had a bit of irritation in his right eye, he says his vision is better. He's enjoying his university studies in theology and is excited to graduate in July. He still travels and studies, with the help of his cousin. Recently he was appointed director of Sunday schools for his church. He is very thankful for all the opportunities he's been given through the kindness of others but recognizes God is the one who has made the way.

Blessings in Haiti

Captain Dr. Felix and Major Violet Ezech, administrators of the Bethel Clinic in Fond-des-Negres, Haiti, have experienced many blessings over the past couple of years. Violet has spent the majority of her officership serving in the Caribbean Territory. Together the Ezechs have served in this mountainous region of southern Haiti since 2001.

A special treat for the couple last year was Felix's homeland furlough after six years to see his family in Nigeria (by way of Switzerland)! Violet journeyed with him as far as Switzerland, where they sought out and encouraged four of the clinic's previous administrators. A particularly meaningful time was spent with Major Emmi Zimmerman, who'd served for 30 years in Fond-des-Negres and built up the clinic from a small dispensary behind the corps building to a well-recognized health center in southern Haiti.

A blessing for the Ezech family came toward the end of 2010 when Violet's brother and sister-in-law, Majors Robert and Rae Doliber, were appointed to serve on the Haiti reconstruction and development team in Port-au-Prince after a massive earthquake destroyed



Captain Dr. Felix and Major Violet Ezech visit with Major Emmi Zimmerman in Switzerland.

much of the city and surrounding region in early 2010.

"We've had several opportunities to get together, and last December they shared their daughter's visit with us," said Violet. "It was great to see the cousins—our niece Rachel and son Matthew—get to know each other!"

Violet added Matthew is now in the fourth grade and making good progress in reading and writing in three languages: French, English and Creole! A junior soldier, he's very active in Bible studies and singing at the Fond-des-Negres Corps.

Also in 2011, after many years of praying for help in computerizing the clinic's bookkeeping system, Violet was thrilled when Major Sandy Hartley, Eastern Michigan divisional finance officer, came to Haiti to address this.

"Sandy's patience and persistence were just what we needed in reviewing our current practices, adjusting and realigning them," Violet concluded.



Captain Dr. Felix Ezech (r) takes Majors Bob and Rae Doliber and daughter Rachel on a tour of Bethel Clinic.

Salvation Army granted church status in Hungary

Salvationists in Hungary are celebrating and thanking God for answered prayer after the country's parliament granted The Salvation Army legal recognition as a church. New legislation, which came into effect January 1, 2012, had cut the number of officially registered churches from 300 to only 14.

The Salvation Army was not among this number, despite having worked in Hungary from 1924 to 1950 and again since 1990. An amendment made to the legislation on February 27, 2012, named The Salvation Army as one of a further 17 organizations to be granted church status. Sixty-five groups were unsuccessful in their applications.

A delighted Captain Andrew Morgan, regional officer for Hungary, explained: "For The Salvation Army this means that our ministries continue unimpeded. We continue to enjoy privileges as a recognized church in areas of taxation, government funding of our social services, and funding of clerical activities such as teaching of

Christianity to young people. The confirmation of our church status also opens the way for further expansion of our ministry and services with the full backing of the state and—in some areas—with commensurate state funding."

The captain believes that "the heightened media exposure and parliament's affirmation of The Salvation Army's legitimate status as a church will further endear us to the people and open greater opportunities to present the gospel of Jesus Christ."

The officers, soldiers, adherents and friends of The Salvation Army in Hungary wish to thank all who brought this issue before the Lord in prayer.

Captain Morgan asks for continued prayer for The Salvation Army in Hungary, particularly for "wisdom and guidance in decision making and allocation of resources" so that the current momentum will lead to the further expansion of God's Kingdom.

From an International News Release

Editor's note: Hungary is one of our current Partners in Mission.

Newly accepted candidates

Rachel Moe

**Rockford Temple, Ill., Corps
Metropolitan Division**



I was saved when I was seven and started coming to The Salvation Army with my family when I was 10. I began praying about God's plan for my life in January 2010 after someone said to me, "You would make a great

officer." In just a few days, God began revealing to me that officer-

ship was the best plan for my life.

The story of Gideon played a special role in confirming my calling. Gideon was mentioned in sermons or devotionals at least once a week that January. I believe God was telling me to trust Him through Gideon's example of surrendering to God's will. Yet, I continued to be surprised by these references several times a month leading up to March 12, 2010, when I surrendered to God and accepted the call He's placed on my life.

Rachel's corps officers are Majors Randy and Kathleen Hellstrom.



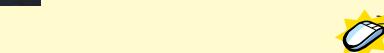
Samantha Nolan

**Milwaukee Citadel, Wis., Corps
Wisconsin and Upper Michigan
Division**

I grew up in St. Louis, Mo. My whole world changed in August 1997 when at age 10 this "momma's girl" became motherless. I found myself blaming God at night and refusing to acknowledge His existence by day. Things got worse when the Division of Family Services (DFS) was called because my dad was working a lot, and we were at home by ourselves.

DFS worked with The Salvation Army to pick us up from school. Three people—Connie, Debbie and Cort—were committed to seeing us through and that led to my salvation and calling. Cornet lessons from Chris Jaudes, Sr., and his wife, Bonnie, led me to attend worship meetings, and in 2001 I got saved at the Midland Divisional Youth Councils. My call to officership came the following year at youth councils. I know God has called me to a life of service, bringing His truth to hurting people just like many godly people did for me.

Samantha's corps officers are Majors Gary and Donna Van Hoesen.



Cadet summer assignments

The Proclaimers of the Resurrection will serve in the following locations this summer.

Cadets

Rachel Aren

Bill & Taylor Brutto

Betsy Clark

Jared & Tonia Collins

Enrique & Chrissie Coreano

Lennard Cossey

Jeff & Joyce Curran

Jaclyn Davisson

Shawn DeBaar

Steve DeLacy

Greg & Holly Ehler

Mike & Kelly Hanton

Corey (Nikki) Hughes

Chris Karlin

Brenna Logan

Brienne Louthan

Tim & Julie Perkins

Norman & Denesia Polusca

Kenyon Sivels

Christopher White

Sean & Christina Wise

Alejandro & Carolina Yanez

A.J. Zachery

Corps

Wichita Citadel, Kan.

Hammond-Munster, Ind.

Logansport, Ind.

Omaha, Neb., Kroc Center

Dearborn Heights Citadel, Mich.

Dane County, Madison, Wis.

Oak Creek Centennial, Wis.

Grand Rapids, Mich., Kroc Center

Albert Lea, Minn.

Harbor Light Village, Kansas City, Kan.

Lakewood Temple, Minn.

Peoria Citadel & City Social Services, Ill.

Chicago Englewood, Ill.

Moline Heritage Temple, Ill.

Quincy, Ill., Kroc Center

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Royal Oak, Mich.

Rockford Temple, Ill.

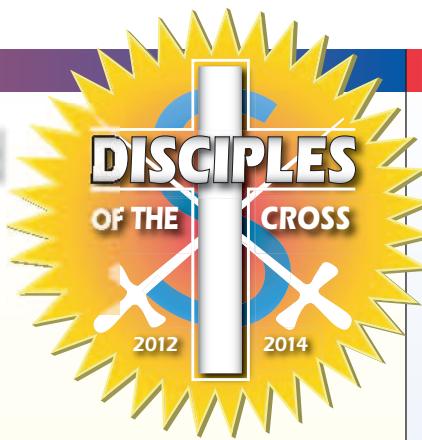
Rochester, Minn.

Watertown, S.D.

Warren, Mich.

Green Bay, Wis., Kroc Center

Kansas City Bellefontaine, Mo.



Shedding light on air

Blake Fewell, Moody Bible Institute sophomore and Rockford Temple, Ill., soldier, produces his own online biblical and theological radio talk show for the Moody student body and beyond.

His program is called Hebrews 4:12, after the verse that says, "For the Word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword..." It airs every Friday during the school year from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. and covers everything from controversial theological topics to current news events. He's occasionally joined by a special guest, but typically Blake is prepared to do most of the talking as questions come in by text, Twitter or Facebook.

Blake considers his radio show to be part of his journey toward officership. He felt the call on his life at age 12, and it's been his end-goal ever since. He considers getting a bachelor's degree to be part of that plan. Although Moody holds some different theological views than the Army, Blake believes it's giving him the biblical education he needs.

"Going to Moody was a theology shock for me at first," said Blake. "I spent a lot of nights internally



debating what I believed, and I learned not to take things at face value. I did the research myself and found that the teachings in The Salvation Army line up with the conclusions of my own biblical research."

This bodes him well as he facilitates the communication of these differences on the air. "Campus radio is a good way to communicate theological differences, and why I hold to the ones I've chosen," Blake said.

There are a couple of ways to access the radio program. Blake recommends going to his website www.hebrews412.com, where an audio feed or a live video stream is available.



In step with the Bible



Chief of the Staff Commissioner Barry C. Swanson (r) prays during Captains Joaquin and Gabriela Rangel's wedding vows renewal conducted by Lt. Colonel Dorothy Smith (l).

The 2012 Biblical Education Tour took 100 pilgrims to Israel earlier this year.

Long, busy days under the tutelage of expert tour guides ensured the three bus loads of travelers, primarily officers with some soldiers and Army employees, went to bed each night exhausted but with heads full of exciting new insights and knowledge.

Highlights included seeing a city gate in Tel Dan dating back to Abraham's time; viewing regions where Samson, Isaiah and David walked; floating in the Dead Sea; worshiping on the Mount of Beatitudes; praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem; enjoying a dou-

ble rainbow over the Sea of Galilee before the day turned sunny for the boat ride, and 25th anniversary wedding vows renewal conducted on the boat by Lt. Colonel Dorothy Smith, secretary of the officer resource and development (ORD) department, for Captains Joaquin and Gabriela Rangel.

Some days brought inclement weather, preventing visits to sites that could be perilous in wet, snowy conditions. "But as we traveled along the roads, we saw streams of rushing water, which is almost unheard of in Israel!" said Major Cheryl Bailey, ORD resource coordinator, who worked with Lt. Colonel Dorothy Smith in planning the trip.

Central Music Institute- Still the place to be!

August 9-19, 2012

Special Guests John and Jane Lam



Canadian Salvationists John and Jane Lam are passionate music educators, and during the summer months they enjoy teaching at Salvation Army music camps across Canada, including the National Music Camp at Jackson's Point, and now CMI!

John has enjoyed his career teaching instrumental music in both elementary and secondary schools for the Thames Valley District School Board. He is presently the

music department head at Westminster Secondary School in London, Ont. John also is a bass trombonist and has been the Canadian Staff bandmaster since 2008.

Jane has an active instrumental and vocal music program at Woodland Heights, an elementary feeder school program to John's school. She has been the songster leader at the London Citadel Corps since 2008 and has been a member of this corps' band since 2000.

Heartland's harmony

by Rich Drager

The Chicago Staff Band (CSB) helped youth throughout the Heartland Division play beautiful music one Saturday earlier this year at a divisional music day held in Peoria, Ill. The CSB, led by Bandmaster William Himes, spent the day working with students and leaders, culminating in a public performance at Grace Presbyterian Church that evening.

Over 850 people, including some 150 youth from the Heartland Division, enjoyed the Chicago Staff Band concert, complete with a joint performance with the Prairie Wind Ensemble.

Heartland Divisional Commander Major Evie Diaz told the musicians, youth and crowd, "Thank you so much for an incredible weekend of music, and especially all the teamwork to make this day a reality."

Highlights included a special lunch concert with members of the CSB and a vocal performance from the Heartland Youth. Young people from Heartland's 24 corps spent the day working on music, singing, dancing and timbrel performances.



Envoy Mike Fuqua from Champaign, Ill., works with students in guitar class.

--Mustard Seeds--



The Salvation Army

PRAYER CENTRAL

USA Central Territory

June Prayer Calendar

<i>My Prayer List</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Bible Reading</i>	<i>Pray for The Salvation Army</i>
	1 Friday	Jeremiah 47-52	Adrian, Mich., Corps
	2 Saturday	Luke 7-8	Chicago Central, Ill., ARC*
	3 Sunday	Galatians 1-3	Lt. Colonels Brad & Heidi Bailey (England)
	4 Monday	Exodus 37-40	Bloomington, Ill., Corps
	5 Tuesday	1 Kings 5-9	Anderson, Ind., Corps
	6 Wednesday	Psalms 66-68	Arkansas City, Kan., Corps
	7 Thursday	Proverbs 2-3	Aurora, Ill., Corps
	8 Friday	Lamentations	Territorial Spiritual Life Summit
	9 Saturday	Luke 9-10	Alton, Ill., Corps
	10 Sunday	Galatians 4-6	Commissioning of "Friends of Christ" Session
	11 Monday	Leviticus 1-3	Albert Lea, Minn., Corps
	12 Tuesday	1 Kings 10-13	Aberdeen, S.D., Corps
	13 Wednesday	Psalms 69-71	Alma, Mich., Corps
	14 Thursday	Proverbs 4	Beloit, Wis., Corps
	15 Friday	Ezekiel 1-6	Eastern Michigan DHQ**
	16 Saturday	Luke 11-12	Alpena, Mich., Corps
	17 Sunday	Ephesians 1-3	Burlington, Iowa, Corps
	18 Monday	Leviticus 4-6	Summer camping season
	19 Tuesday	1 Kings 14-18	Bedford, Ind., Corps
	20 Wednesday	Psalms 72-74	Dodge City, Kan., Corps
	21 Thursday	Proverbs 5-6	Belvidere, Ill., Corps
	22 Friday	Ezekiel 7-12	Kenya East Territory PIM
	23 Saturday	Luke 13-14	Arnold, Mo., Corps
	24 Sunday	Ephesians 4-6	Austin, Minn., Corps
	25 Monday	Leviticus 7-9	Beatrice, Neb., Corps
	26 Tuesday	1 Kings 19-22	Battle Creek, Mich., Corps
	27 Wednesday	Psalms 75-77	Chicago North Side, Ill., ARC
	28 Thursday	Proverbs 7	Summer Mission Teams
	29 Friday	Ezekiel 13-18	Ann Arbor, Mich., Corps
	30 Saturday	Luke 15-16	Canton, Ill., Corps

* = Adult Rehabilitation Center
** = Divisional Headquarters
PIM = Partners in Mission

Go to www.prayercentralusa.org for prayer updates.

If you follow the prayer calendar in the next year, you will have read through the Bible!



Around the Territory



NORRIDGE, ILL.—The Norridge Citadel, Ill., Corps Youth Band (NCYB), ages 10-18, traveled to Ohio earlier this year to minister in the Southwest Ohio/Northeast Kentucky (SWONEKY) Division. According to Marty Thomas, NCYB leader, it was the first youth band trip in nearly 17 years and the young people were greatly encouraged by how their band connection led to almost instant friendships. On Saturday the NCYB combined forces with the SWONEKY Youth Band for rehearsals at camp to prepare three joint items for a concert later that night that also featured several numbers by each band, a vocal ensemble, dance group, and piano and instrumental soloists. Sunday morning the NCYB led worship at the Middletown, Ohio, Corps, where Norridge Corps Officer Major Steve Yoder brought the message.

GRAND HAVEN, MICH.—The corps recently enrolled five senior and two junior soldiers as part of the new divisional emphasis "One More for Jesus." According to Corps Officers Captains Jay and Sally Davis, the corps growth is the result of a very welcoming congregation.

This community of faith has experienced new people coming and soldiers transferring from other locations.

Congratulations to new senior soldiers Dorothy Prior, Kaleigh Wise, Karen Rio, Jeanetta Van Slyke and Nacy Van Slyke and to junior soldiers Jacob Leszinske and Ty Covert (pictured with the Davises).



ST. LOUIS (MAPLEWOOD), MO.—Ellery Cole was enrolled recently as a junior soldier by Lt. Colonel Richard Amick, territorial secretary for business administration; seven senior soldiers are slated to be enrolled later this spring. Ellery started attending the corps when soldiers who lived down the street from him talked to his mother, Colleen, about the youth programs. Colleen decided to visit, and she and her son quickly became involved in many aspects of the corps.

Corps Officers Majors Kris and Mary Ann Wood have noticed a trend. "It's the people of this corps and the services offered here that bring others into Maplewood," said Kris. "Our corps people are welcoming, praying and committed. It's because of them we're growing."

Memorial Day Service

In honor of those who have gone before us, the Central Territory will hold its traditional memorial service in The Salvation Army section of Glen Oak Cemetery this month.

Please join us in remembrance.

**Sunday, May 20
3:00 p.m.**

**Glen Oak Cemetery
4301 W. Roosevelt Rd.
Hillside, IL 60162
(708) 344-5600**



CHICAGO, IL.—In preparation for its opening next month, the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center recently commissioned 17 local officers! The positions of leadership and service range from young people's sergeant-major to greeters.

"We are so thankful that God is raising up leaders as we prepare to move into our new building. It is important that our soldiers and adherents see their part in leadership and that they are being used to build God's Kingdom through their gifts and talents," said Majors Dave and Darlene Harvey, senior Kroc Center officer and Kroc Center officer for congregational life. The Harveys are pictured above at left with some of their newly commissioned local officers.

The Chicago Kroc Center will hold its official grand opening and dedication on June 16-17, 2012.

perspectives

So great a cloud of witnesses

by Major Russ Sjogren

I stood on the cemetery's lush lawn in silence as the names were called out. In tandem, the celebrants read the names, slowly and one-by-one, of those who had died that year in service to God and mankind. After each, my mind cried out, "Here." They were accounted for, still with us in the struggle. "Erickson." Here. "Dahl." Here. "Sederberg." Here. And then the name that jolted me, that of my twin brother who had died just two months before: "Sjogren."

I thought back to our childhood and how in grade school when our teacher got sick, a substitute was called in. Sometimes she was an experienced pro, wise to every trick. Cunning like a fox, she'd seen it all; been there, done that. She knew she'd be tested, and she was ready. You couldn't rattle her. At other times, we got a green horn fresh out of college, unsure of herself. We'd seize the day. Being mischievous fifth graders, Randy and I knew we could confuse and confound her.

We might not be able to drive her screaming from the classroom, but we could certainly delay class work. And so we started as she commenced calling the roll. Class book in hand, she'd read the names out loud: "Anderson." "Here." "Bjornson." "Here." "Simpson." "Here." "Jacobson." "Here." And on it went. Twenty-six names called; 26 students identified as present. But when she counted heads, there were only 22. She'd read the list again. Twenty-six names called; 26 "here" responses. She counted heads. Only 22. Smirks surfaced. Referencing the seating chart, she found four vacant chairs, and it dawned on her. Raucous Randy and rowdy Russ had her going for a while. Four children were absent, present neither in body nor spirit.

But that day in the cemetery, when the names of those promoted



to Glory were read, I knew they were "Here." They were present and accounted for, still with us in the struggle, in the faith, in the Lord. It was the communion of the saints.

Hebrews 11:1-13 affirms the legacy of the witnesses of the faith. Reading the entire chapter, you see detailed names and their contributions to the ministry, along with a record of their trials, victories and, most importantly, their defeats. The author apologizes for the lack of time and space to relate more about their exploits. Then he comes to the clinching conclusion: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith...." (Hebrews 12:1-2, NIV, 1984)

This great cloud of witnesses compels us to fight. Revealed in them were God's goodness, mercy and grace through hard and harried times. They exemplified that with God all things are possible. So, like them, let us be good and faithful soldiers. Let us fight on!