New online course to promote spiritual life development

by Major Lesa Davis

THRIVE, a new spiritual life development course for soldiers and officers in the Central Territory, will debut in February with the goal of encouraging and strengthening participants in their spiritual lives and preparing them to do the same for others.

It is in direct response to the territory’s Mission Imperative of “More People, More Like Jesus” and the emphasis on developing the spiritual life of God’s people. The learning modules will address the objectives of empowering prayer, intentional evangelism, compelling discipleship, active holiness and continuous transformation. Participants will explore these areas of spiritual life in an encouraging environment of mutual support and faithful community.

The online course will run from February to October 2020 and incorporate one weekend spiritual retreat. Structured with a cohort model, each nine-month session of THRIVE will be limited to 20 participants. Since space is limited, there is an application and selection process. Registration materials are available this month by visiting salvationarmycentral.org.

Who should consider participating? Any adult soldier or officer who is ready to explore and experience a spiritual deep dive in the company of a committed team of like-minded individuals.

For more information regarding course modules, requirements, fees and schedule, email Lesa.Davis@usc.salvationarmy.org.
Stop the bus!
by Lt. Colonel Renea Smith
Territorial Secretary for Personnel

What I love most about this time of year is the intentional focus on gratitude. There is something so encouraging about sitting with friends and family, often around a table, talking about the blessings we’ve experienced in the last year. Even the most reticent of us is encouraged to share. In those moments, I’m reminded again of God’s amazing love and grace that surrounds us.

God’s grace impacted me even before I was born. My dad, his sister and brother were playing in their front yard when a Salvation Army officer drove by. He stopped the bus, greeted them and went to the front door of their house to talk with my grandmother. When the officer started the engine again, it was with the promise of returning next Sunday morning to take the children to Sunday school.

That encounter changed the trajectory of my dad’s life, and as a result, it changed my life and the lives of my siblings. And we weren’t the only ones impacted by that officer’s choice that day. During my dad’s life as a soldier, officer and now corps sergeant-major, he has prayed with, encouraged, counseled and loved hundreds of adults and children in Jesus’ name.

All of this occurred because an officer I’ll never know was willing to stop and take a chance.

That moment set my dad’s life on a course to experience and embrace God’s grace and salvation which resulted years later in me being able to experience and embrace God’s grace and salvation, too.

Sometimes I wonder where I would be if that officer hadn’t stopped the bus.

We live in a world where people are desperate for grace but ignorant they need it. As we consider where we live and work and the people we encounter each day who are searching for meaning and love, what would it take for us to slow down to share our own story? To reach out to someone who needs hope, who needs grace, who needs Christ?

*All of this is for your benefit. And as God’s grace reaches more and more people, there will be great thanksgiving, and God will receive more and more glory.*" 2 Corinthians 4:15 (NLT)

Cornet. Piano. Pickle bucket?
Opportunities for music abound at Peoria Citadel

Cornet. Piano. Ukulele. Pickle bucket? No matter the instrument or vessel, students from the Peoria Citadel, Ill., Corps and community are learning to make and appreciate music as students in the dynamic Academy of Performance Arts program.

“We saw music as an opportunity to make a greater impact on the youth in our community,” said Major Heath Sells, corps officer.

Over the past two years, music has become an integral part of corps youth programming. With funding from a Thomas Lyle Williams grant, the corps began providing music lessons three times a week as part of their afterschool program. Through the Academy of Performance Arts, more than 50 students from first grade through high school are learning to read and play music from qualified instructors at the corps and a middle school—all for free.

“Our goal is for the music program to be as barrier-free as possible,” said the major. “Many of the families who participate are low-income, so finances can be a barrier. With new donors coming forward, we hope to keep offering lessons free of charge.”

Participants in the music program are reaping the many benefits of learning to play an instrument. In addition to technique and theory, students are gaining confidence and developing leadership skills. Many also report improvement in their motivation, concentration and focus at school and home.

“Our students are really growing. Some are taking on leadership at the corps and playing on the praise team and in the brass band. One of our goals in starting the Academy was to bolster our live music on Sundays, and the Academy has certainly done that,” Major Heath said, referring to the territory’s goal of having Live Music in Worship in Every Corps by 2020 (LM 2020).

At the end of the summer, the Academy of Performance Arts and the Heartland Division came together for a week of intense music instruction and leadership development in a joint music conservatory.

Under the direction of Peter Kim, divisional music and gospel arts director, divisional conservatory students from several corps spent mornings helping Peoria Citadel students and afternoons rehearsing with their own bands.

“Giving more advanced students the opportunity to teach is a natural progression in their development as musicians,” said Peter. “It challenges them to grow into leaders.”

The conservatory culminated in a concert for friends, family and the community to an overwhelmingly positive response.
Kroc Center has grand plan for fine arts

Inspired by the thriving fine arts scene in Grand Rapids, Mich., the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center is offering a three-phase, comprehensive fine arts initiative to help produce the city’s next generation of artists.

“The city has a thriving arts scene; it’s home to a professional ballet company, a symphony orchestra, two major art museums, an art college and a civic theater, but not everyone living here can enjoy these arts,” said Alyson Rodriguez, Kroc Center fine arts supervisor.

“The philosophy behind our push into fine arts not only was to fill the gap left by public schools cutting back on art and music classes but to bridge more of the community into our center and eventually into our corps,” said Captain Bill Brutto, senior Kroc Center officer, who added, “Missionally, this approach aligns perfectly.”

Phase One began three years ago when a nearby elementary school’s art and music teacher went on sick leave. Alyson expanded the students’ fine arts options at the center to include dance and drama; soon a second elementary school began sending students to fill its fine arts gap as well. A collaborative relationship with the Grand Rapids Ballet led to six weeks of learning enough skills for 4th and 5th graders to stage a spring showcase at the center for their families and the community. Students from a concurrent class in bucket percussion also were showcased.

The event coincided with Alyson’s debut of an ingenious community visual-arts project. Three large panels, each marked with four-inch squares, were placed in the lobby for passers-by to add any type of artistic expression before the panels were hung as a mural.

Word spread among Kroc members, corps attendees, local schools and the community. People were spotted working on their squares whenever the center was open. Intercultural and multigenerational relationships sprouted, including a friendship between a young man from Puerto Rico and an older woman from Michigan’s Upper Peninsula who discovered their squares held almost identical landscapes! As the mural took shape, it produced an eye-catching, quilt-like effect. Many people were justly proud when the mural was installed. Also on display are prize-winning works donated to the center by artists participating in the annual Grand Rapids “ArtPrize” Fall Festival, an event that draws more than 1 million spectators each year.

Phase Two of the fine arts initiative expanded classes for additional grade levels at a total of nine elementary, middle and high schools, all within three miles of the center, as well as adding FitKids and swimming lessons. Meanwhile, Captain Bill arranged a scholarship program offering free Kroc Center memberships to students attending at least 75 percent of their school year.

This past summer, the Kroc Center started four, half-day specialty camps in ballet, theater arts, ceramics and ukulele/guitar, in conjunction with its traditional summer day camp program, which also featured a broader fine arts emphasis with a weekly rotation of art, music and dance classes. After the Kroc Center’s praise team came to play for more than 100 day campers, Alyson reported some of the kids said they wanted to be on the team someday. She added these specialty and traditional day camps were designed to feed into the center’s fall schedule for expanded fine arts classes and the start of a singing company.

“Incorporating youth into Sunday worship can swell corps attendance by an extra 100-150 people,” said Captain Bill. “Visitors are asked to provide contact information so they can receive our weekly newsletter. After our pastoral follow up, some families have made the Kroc Center their church home.”

Phase Three, concluded Alyson, is anticipated to begin in two or three years and may include advanced classes with the Grand Rapids Ballet, possibly followed by continued training within the company.

A partnership with the Grand Rapids Ballet trains aspiring dancers in two or three years and may include advanced classes with the Grand Rapids Ballet, possibly followed by continued training within the company.

Students in grades K-12 from nine schools enjoy several fine arts options at the Grand Rapids, Mich., Kroc Center.

THE CHICAGO STAFF BAND
Dr. Harold Burgmayer, bandleader

Don’t miss this year’s Chicago Staff Band Sounds of the Seasons concert featuring Aubrey Logan, a multi-talented jazz artist who has had top 10 albums on iTunes, Billboard and Amazon charts. Her latest album “Where the Sunshine is Expensive” has reached number one on the Contemporary Jazz Charts. A sensational singer and trombonist, she has worked with well-known artists such as the Boston Pops and Josh Groban and has amassed a huge following thanks to her performances with the phenomenon Postmodern Jukebox. She is currently touring with Dave Koz and the Summer Horns.

Saturday, November 30, 2019—7:00 pm
Edman Chapel (Not a function of Wheaton College)
401 E Franklin St, Wheaton, IL 60187

For FREE tickets contact the Music and Creative Arts Ministries Department by calling (630) 294-2134 or visiting chicagostaffband.org or email sbatickets@gmail.com
We welcomed grace
Continued from page 1
Bible and doctrine classes with their cadet hosts. Education is a significant part of the training program, and cadets spend much of their free time reading, writing and studying for their classes. This is coupled with practical ministry opportunities through visits to corps, adult rehabilitation centers and other ministry centers. Though training is a time to be challenged and grow, there are also times for fun. Delegates bonded with others from their division during a live-action CLUE mystery game in historic Booth Manor which, in Salvation Army fashion, featured items such as a red Christmas kettle, timbrel and black high-heeled shoe.

During the worship services on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, Captain Kelly Hanlot and Captain Caleb Senn, Oakbrook Terrace, Ill., corps officers, encouraged delegates to say “yes” to God’s calling on their lives and to be obedient to go wherever He may lead them.

Commissioner Heidi Bailey and Colonel Janice Howard recently received the additional appointments of Territorial Leader for Leader Development and Territorial Secretary for Leader Development, respectively. These internationally approved roles are in response to Territorial Commander Commissioner Brad Bailey’s request for the ongoing provision of resources and the development of leadership skills and plans with members of the Territorial Executive Council (TEC), as well as validation of Commissioner Heidi and Colonel Janice in these significant territorial leadership roles. TEC is comprised of the members of the Territorial Cabinet, leaders of the 10 divisions, the Adult Rehabilitation Center Command and the College for Officer Training, the Territorial Secretary for Spiritual Life Development and the Territorial Officer Development Secretary.

“Colonel Janice and I are so excited to embark on this new journey together as we continue to come alongside our executive leaders on their specific leadership paths,” said Commissioner Heidi. “We want to go deep, so the influence will be wide in the Central Territory for God’s glory.”

Commissioner Heidi will strategical- ly provide opportunities for TEC members to grow in discipleship, flourish in leadership and engage in mission objectives in their respective appointments, while Colonel Janice will seek to foster the leadership development of and provide resources to the divisional officer development secretaries.

She also will assist Commissioner Heidi in the ongoing leadership development of TEC officers. Working with various departments at Territorial Headquarters, they will ensure all executive officers are functioning with clear expectations, adequate resources, strategic support and leadership development opportunities. They also will develop specific leadership plans for officers identified through the succession planning process with the Personnel Department. Long-term this not only will help ensure excellent leadership options for the territory but aid in filling positions internationally at the request of the General.

“We covet your prayers as the territory embraces these changes, which are a direct response to present, identified needs of our territory, as well as the beginning of addressing leadership issues related to traditional default appointments, gender equity and shared leadership,” said the territorial commander.

New appointments focus on leadership development

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**Social Justice**

**Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.**—Matthew 25:40, NIV

by Colonel Richard Munn, Director, International Social Justice Commission

In the eyes of the public around most of the world, the Salvation Army is best known for its direct help to the poor and hungry. It has also been praised for its dynamic approach to the spiritual needs of “the least of these brothers and sisters.”

For the Salvation Army, ministry and social service are very much intertwined. The holistic gospel is which the Army has been committed since its founding in 1865. It’s a way for you to share the gospel through practical acts of kindness done in Jesus’ name.

The Salvation Army so passionately believes. The spiritual and social aspects of the Christian gospel combine to form an integrated or total ministry. We perceive it artificial and unscriptural to separate the two.

Giving a cup of hot chocolate to a shivering firefighter can be a powerful spiritual experience. Military veterans who received a donut amidst the horrors of warfare testify to the love of God experienced in that simple action.

General Frederick Coutts described this holistic concept of social work and evangelical work: “It is not that these are two distinct entities which could operate one without the other. They are but two activities of the one and the same salvation which is concerned with the total redemption of man:

- both rely upon the same grace
- both have the same end in mind

And as the gospel has joined them together, we do not propose to put them asunder.”

The founding days of The Salvation Army saw rapid and practical responses to the poverty of Victorian England.

“Soup, soap and salvation” became the catchphrase. The consistent and effective social ministry of The Salvation Army eventually changed the tide of public opinion from hostility to admiration.

William Booth’s 1890 book, *In Darkest England, and The Way Out*, is regarded as a landmark publication in the articulation of Salvation Army relief work. It resulted in:

- homes for single mothers
- orphanages for abandoned children
- farm colonies for unemployed men
- the ministry of “Slum Sisters,” quietly working in city ghettos, tending the sick, cleaning the streets and homes and cooking meals.

Upon seeing homeless men sleeping under London Bridge, William Booth instructed his son, Bramwell, “Do something!”

Ever since, Salvationists have felt compelled to respond in practical ways. The essential social program of each Salvation Army unit today is simply to serve suffering humanity. This social outreach is:

- not distinct to evangelism
- not a means of evangelism
- not as manipulation for evangelism later on
- but, social action with evangelism.

General Eva Burrows once recalled an African student who commented on the parable of the Good Samaritan. “In the story you have the robber who does bad, you have the Samaritan who does good, and you have the religious people who do nothing.”

Salvationists are religious people who “do something!”

**National Commander wraps up “Fight for Good Tour” in Chicago**

by Camerin Mattson

Hudson finished a three-city “Fight for Good Tour” in Chicago with visits to the Shield of Hope and Freedom Center. The tour, which also included stops in Los Angeles and Atlanta, highlighted unique ways The Salvation Army is addressing homelessness and specific needs in each community.

The visit commenced with a roundtable at Shield of Hope, the emergency homeless assessment and response center the Army opened in 2018 in partnership with the City of Chicago. Commissioner Hudson discussed the realities of homelessness in Chicago with city officials, Sabrina Kiser, assistant director of social services and public policy coordinator at National Headquarters, leaders and key staff from the Metropolitan Division and Chief Secretary Colonel Steve Howard.

They talked about the need for shelters that allow families to stay together, like the Shield of Hope does, as well as the importance of partnerships to tackle the complex issues of homelessness. “There’s a level of trust between the city and the Army,” said Commissioner Barry Swanson, who currently leads the Metropolitan Division with his wife, Commissioner Sue Swanson. “This is a very important partnership.” Alisa Rodriguez, deputy commissioner of homelessness programs, heartily agreed, adding the city regularly gathers partners, including The Salvation Army, to discuss and learn from each other. Her colleague Jonathan Ernst, managing deputy commissioner, praised the breadth of the Army’s programs. “Of 360 agencies we partner with, only a handful cover all the areas we do; The Salvation Army is one of those.”

The party toured the Shield of Hope, which served more than 4,300 people in its first year, then walked to the Freedom Center which houses three key programs: Pathway Forward, a federally funded halfway house; Harbor Light, a substance abuse treatment program; and a corps community center, including a food pantry, afterschool programs and base for a canteen that makes 25 stops to feed people throughout Chicago every day.

Continued on page 12

**I’ll Fight Day is a Salvation Army youth servant evangelism day that will take place all across the world on Saturday, December 7, 2019. It’s a way for you to share the gospel through practical acts of kindness done in Jesus’ name.**

Commissioners Barry Swanson and David Hudson participate in a roundtable about homelessness and other issues in Chicago at the Shield of Hope.
Reflecting on Our Blessings

At this time of year when our country celebrates Thanksgiving, it’s only natural to turn our thoughts with intentionality to our blessings. This year we surveyed a sampling of soldiers and officers in the territory to find out what they’re most grateful for. May their responses encourage you to count your own blessings and give thanks not only now but in all seasons.

Our family

by Alexandria Gauthier

God has given my husband, Sam, and me so much to be thankful for. Our greatest blessings are our children. Doctors told us we might never be able to conceive. The road was long, but God has been faithful. Our son is nearly three.

In April, we were elated to find out we were expecting another baby, but only a few weeks later, we had a miscarriage. It was devasting. In our pain and sadness, we cried out to the Lord. Only one month later, God blessed us with another miracle. Our baby is due in January and is growing perfectly!

We don’t always understand why God allows things to happen. In my family, God used the trials of infertility and miscarriage to bring us closer to Him. He gave us peace when our world was shaken and comfort throughout the journey. We are so thankful—a and every day—for His timing, provision, plan and overwhelming love for us.

New ministries

by Peter Kim

As many seasons in my life have passed, there have been ups and downs, happiness and sadness, births and deaths, joys and pains both emotionally and physically. Through it all, I have learned to be grateful.

When the Lord called me into fulltime music ministry in 2006 I was hesitant. It was a huge lifestyle adjustment but trust in God carried me through. Looking back, following that calling was the best decision I ever made. God has led me to places and things beyond my wildest imagination.

In 2018, God led me on another journey to become the music and gospel arts director for the Heartland Division. It was not an easy transition, but I knew it was right. It is exciting to seek and find new talents and meet people God has placed here. I believe that the music ministry in the Heartland Division will be used and utilized mightily for His glory and for His Kingdom. I know with confidence, “I can do everything through him who gives me strength.” (Philippians 4:13, NLT)

Each new season

“For everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1, NKJV)

by Brett Tolcher

Looking back on the past 12 months, there have been many changes and many opportunities for which we’re grateful. As time ticks by, we see the picture God is painting and how He uses each experience to shape us.

This year, Kelly and I have had some significant changes in our lives. Within my family, I saw the passing of my grandparents, William Himes, Sr. and the birth of our nephew, William Tolcher. In July, Kelly and I were married! We have started to figure out how to do life together as husband and wife.

Between our relationship, jobs, families, friends and commitment to our corps, Norridge Citadel, we are reminded continually of the many blessings God has given us.

Our territory

by Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey

Gratitude is like faith; it is a muscle. The more we use it, the stronger it grows. As your territorial leaders, our gratitude is strengthened every day as we look around the Central Territory. God is speaking and challenging our territory through the new Mission Imperative, and Salvationists are listening and responding.

We are grateful for:

• an increased sensitivity to God’s call to Salvation Army officership…24 new cadets and an overflowing house at the 730 Candidates’ Weekend at the College for Officer Training

• a notable inclusiveness in ministry and worship…the Body of Christ encouraging one another through creative expressions of the gospel

• a renewed intentionality to reach outside our corps and share the message that there is always room for one more at our Salvation Army tables.

We are grateful for you today. What are you grateful for?
God's provision
by Majors Victor and Tina Staslic

We serve a gracious God. This year there have been many changes for us as we traveled from Moldova to serve at the Des Plaines, Ill., Corps, but we know where God wants us to be.

God has called us to serve Him in many capacities. For a time, we joined The Salvation Army when we were students at university. Since our commissioning in 2002 we have served in 10 appointments, all in different regions. In each new appointment we had to adjust to ministering in different cultures and several languages, but we were willing and God used us.

We are very grateful God has placed people here to welcome and encourage us as we get used to living in the U.S. Many American officers already have become friends, and we reconnected recently with a couple in Michigan who were our mentors years ago in Moldova. God continues to provide what we need in order to fulfill His call on our lives each day.

My life
by Major Diane Harper

How can I not give thanks and have a grateful heart? God has been so good to me. His love and my life are undeserved gifts from our Heavenly Father.

I was born to parents who had not planned for me, but at 11:57 p.m. on December 31 in 1953, I arrived, not healthy—but a fighter. For three years, I lived unnamed in the hospital.

It was a rough start, but I have been blessed with an amazing life. Even to this year, I still am not pain free, but I am blessed. I’m so thankful for the chance to live, love and serve in retirement while I wait the call from my Heavenly Father, prayering to find my name written in the Lamb’s book of life.

My calling
by Lt. Shanell Johnson

The journey leading to my calling is one full of unexpected twists and turns. If someone had asked me six years ago, I would have said that God was not calling me to be an officer, and I might have even added that He wouldn’t.

I was called long before I was ready to listen, so God slowly molded me. He gave me experiences that prepared me for tasks I didn’t know I would need to do, and He placed people in my life who would encourage, mentor and support me.

When I still struggled to fully let go, He pulled me to my feet, leaving me with no doubt. It was my burning bush moment because it gave me the courage to step out in faith that my Father would continue to be with me.

As a newly commissioned lieutenant, the journey to officership has ended, and my journey as an officer has begun. Already it has been both challenging and rewarding, and I cannot wait to see what else the Lord has planned.

God’s faithfulness
by Majors Greg and Lee Ann Thompson

The phrase “God is good” came into sharp focus for us this year. Each of the three states comprising our Western Division was affected by significant flooding in the spring. With just one day’s notice the entire division of officers, soldiers, friends, board members and volunteers came together not only to combat the floods but to respond to the needs of people whose lives had been devastated.

When we consider all that took place, we can’t help but be thankful for God’s goodness and faithfulness. He instilled a sense of mission and calling in our officers to help them work tirelessly day and night, to feed people without a place to eat, restore people’s homes and bring Christ’s love to those who suffered most. God imparted His care into the hearts of community after community as leaders and home owners came together to care for each other. He filled the hearts of neighbors and friends with a love for others that resulted in an enormous outpouring of funds and materials that helped us in “Doing the Most Good” for the most people.

God is faithful! He comes alongside us, provides for our needs and strengthens our ability to serve others.

Joy in service
by Cadet Shannon Cabrera

This year I had the opportunity to spend a fourth summer serving on a territorial Summer Mission Team (SMT). The joy of being part of this type of ministry is that I now have friends and family in Mexico, Costa Rica, Spain, Portugal, the Bahamas and throughout the Midwest.

To experience what God is doing through The Salvation Army around the world is truly a gift. From leading vacation Bible school, music camps and youth programs to giving food to the homeless, I have experienced so much joy in serving God in many different ways. I am immensely grateful to God for allowing SMT to be a part of my story and can’t wait to see how those experiences come into play while I’m at the College for Officer Training and one day as an officer.

My life has changed more every year I’ve served on SMT, as a friend, a leader and a follower of Christ. This year I am thankful for the freedom to serve and worship God, specifically through SMT and for all my former teams, leaders, hosts and lifelong friends.
Taking the Tetonshome
Second all-Salvationist wilderness session inspires and resources
by Jerrie Miller

According to early American naturalist John Muir, “In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.” This proved true for 36 Salvation Army leaders and staff from the four U.S. territories who attended the American Wilderness Leadership School (AWLS) near Jackson, Wyo. The eight-day intensive, sponsored by Safari Club International, provided the opportunity to reconnect with nature, learn new skills, study the American model of wildlife conservation, and grow spiritually and personally.

AWLS participants learned to effectively use an outdoor setting as an educational backdrop while participating in fun, exciting activities like fly-fishing, a water ratting trip and fire ecology taught by enthusiastic instructors who are experts in their fields. Guest speakers like Harlan Kredt, a high school science teacher who has spent nearly 50 summers as a Yellowstone park ranger, inspired them to become more aware of the connections in nature and to make good use of natural resources and the opportunities surrounding us.

Classroom studies that allowed participants to become certified as NASP archery instructors and Project WILD educators were balanced with educational field trips to the National Elk Refuge, Teton National Park, oil fields and wildlife migration areas at Pinedale, Wyo. Asked what surprised him most about the AWLS experience, Echo Grove Camp Director Matthew Coakley said, “How the simple reintroduction of 14 wolves impacted the entire Yellowstone ecosystem.” For Lt. Sarah Eddy, Canton, Ill., corps officer, it was harder to narrow down. “I think for me it was the fire ecology and information about fire management. The reality is fire is a natural process in the forest. In order to have a healthy forest, we need the natural fires.”

Others were surprised by how much they learned or the supply of resources they were able to take back for their ministries. “I see the value of the outdoors more because of my time at AWLS, and it is more important to me that our youth experience the outdoors and grow to love it,” shared Dylan LaCanne from the Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Divisional Youth Department. “It will impact the choices I make and what I prioritize in my ministry.”

Jonelle Bailey, territorial Kroc mission engagement manager, enjoyed the outdoor survival class and stream ecology and learning how to use those in easy and understandable activities. “This training helped to tie together a love of nature, God’s grace and how we can share and educate others, not just the youth,” she said. “There is a variety of information that was provided that can be applied to innumerable programs.”

For David Mowers from the Kansas and Western Missouri Divisional Youth Department, AWLS was an intensely personal experience. “My family went through a house fire back in March, and it has been hard to begin to put things back together. As we stood on the mountainside looking at the scar left from the 2016 Granite Canyon wildfire, I was reminded of God’s faithfulness to bring life from the ashes—literally. We learned about pine trees that can only reproduce when there is a fire. Their cones will not open until then. I now know God provides for the ecosystem after a fire, and life grows from the ashes. I believe God is doing something similar in my life. Things are different since the fire, but I know God is bringing forth new life.”

While most participants were excited to put their new knowledge to use in corps programs, divisional camps or after-school programs, AWLS left Major Jim Carl, Wichita City commander, pondering how to put the experience to use. “My dream would be to create an opportunity at our camp to capitalize on the outdoor education for youth and adults, perhaps some sort of TSA Outdoors learning center.”

All agreed it was a valuable experience, and they would encourage others to attend. In the words of Major Jim, “I would encourage them not to miss this great opportunity, then beg them to take me back!”

The next AWLS session is scheduled for August 26-September 2, 2020. For information, email usc.youth@usc.salvationarmy.org
Salto of the earth

One couldn't ask for a better metaphor than “salt of the earth” to describe both the people and geography of Hutchinson, Kan., which has one of the world’s largest underground salt formations. The purest portion is being mined 650 feet underground since 1887. Seven years later, mirroring Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:13a (“You are the salt of earth…”), The Salvation Army began its work in the town.

Hutchinson Corps Officers Major Paul and Captain DJ James celebrated the corps’ 125-year milestone at its annual “Portraits of Hope” fundraising dinner followed by a Homecoming Sunday. Although they’d been there for less than two months, the Jameses held the same pride as the congregation, advisory board and community for The Salvation Army’s ministry to the people of Reno County. Among the celebrants were two centenarians, Major Lurline Dustin and Helen Parker.

The Jameses believe meeting needs and establishing relationships are vital to Kingdom building, discipleship and corps growth in Hutchinson. As part of its social services, the corps utilizes Pathway of Hope (one graduate, Tara, shared her story at the dinner) and establishing relationships are vital for The Salvation Army’s ministry to the people of Reno County. Among the celebrants were two centenarians, Major Lurline Dustin and Helen Parker.

The Jameses are happy to see the building increasingly being used as a community center. “With people constantly streaming in and out, they’re learning what else the corps offers and are finding a place where they can belong,” said Captain DJ.

The corps holds weekly Club 3:16 meetings for youth grades K-12 and music classes in brass, piano and ukulele. Free martial arts classes are offered twice a week and open gym is held once a week after school for youth and one evening a week for adults. A future dream is partnering with the city’s dark district to provide a much-needed playground for children and families in the corps’ neighborhood.

Women’s ministries meets weekly during the day, and an evening group meets once a month, as does men’s. Captain DJ said the men and women were a tremendous help in staging the corps’ 125th anniversary celebration, as was the advisory board which the captain described as spectacular.

“Board members were very supportive and active in obtaining sponsorships from local businesses, plus advertising and spreading excitement about the dinner, which was attended by 175 people and raised $11,450,” Captain DJ continued. Guests viewed a presentation on the history of the Army in Hutchinson and services provided over the years followed by a look at the much broader array of needs being met today.

The Netherlands is calling

When you think of the Netherlands, images of tulips, wooden shoes and cheese probably come to mind. It was the same for Dr. Maribeth Swanson, Central territorial social services secretary, until her view was greatly expanded this summer while presenting at The Salvation Army’s Realization of Outcomes and Impact Reporting Conference in the Netherlands. She was invited to share what the Central Territory has learned from its implementation of the Pathway of Hope initiative and other social service models that support an integrated ministry approach, as well as the gains the territory has made in impact measurement.

Approximately 40 social service program directors and administrators, as well as key staff from finance and technology departments, gathered to lay the groundwork for assessing and developing their course of action. In a follow-up session with the Netherlands, Czech Republic and Slovakia Territory’s administrative and information technology teams, Maribeth shared the Central Territory’s Salvation Army Information Management System (SIMS), demonstrating its client documentation tools and reporting functions. Government entities, foundations and donors increasingly are asking for organizations to document their short-term and long-term social impact on their identified community or programs. Not unique to the U.S., this challenge is being faced by The Salvation Army in many developed countries.

“It was a privilege to be a presenter for this master class in impact measurement. Yet, there is a measurement. We can’t codify everything we do. For instance, measurement cannot capture the essence of what makes our lives and organizations worthwhile. It comes down to the love, relationships and community that we build across all facets of The Salvation Army,” said Maribeth. “I think the Netherlands officers, soldiers and employees are off to a good start in affirming their motto, ‘Together We’re One,’ which supports the Army’s mission and message.”

Helen Parker, one of two 100-year olds attending the Hutchinson Corps, with Major Paul James, corps officer.

2019 Advent Worship Series

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• Advent wreath readings, dramas, children’s moments and sample sermons
• A Christmas Eve Service • Nursing home visit program
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Pathway of Hope Awards

Congratulations to the latest corps earning Achievement and Outstanding Awards in Pathway of Hope.

Achievement Awards
Holland, Mich., Corps
Dearborn Heights, Mich., Corps
Marinette, Wis., Corps
Waterloo-Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Corps

Outstanding Awards
Ottawa, Ill., Corps
Terre Haute, Ind., Corps

Dr. Maribeth Swanson with Captain Harm Slomp, territorial social services secretary for the Netherlands, Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Hutchinson, Kan., Corps Officers Major Paul and Captain DJ James (c), with former corps leaders Majors John and Judith McCarthy (l) and Majors Mike and Judy Mills.
More than we could have imagined

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.—Ephesians 3:20, NIV

by Lisa Jordan

In the fall of 1993, Chris Shay, then Oakbrook Terrace, Ill., Corps (OBT) youth ministries coordinator, received a fax from Scott Hurula, then territorial young adult ministries director, on behalf of Captains Wayne and Debbie Bungay, Freeport, Grand Bahamas corps officers who were looking for corps willing to help transition their one-week residential camp for underprivileged children to a three-week day camp experience the next summer. Only

OBT is that by age 18 all our young people are saved, discipled Salvationists, ready to take their place in the Body of Christ. Bible teaching, leadership training, service, many programs and experiences go into their spiritual formation. But one area we’d not been able to explore was a mission trip. The Bahamas was perfect! At the time, airfare was low, a passport wasn’t required and there was no language barrier.

We started seeking approvals, and before we knew it planning and fundraising were underway. The mission trip would soon be a reality. We decided to use vacation Bible school materials for the mornings filled with Bible lessons, crafts and recreation; each afternoon we took the kids on field trips. At the end of the week we would hold a response time for each camper to consider his or her relationship with Jesus. We brought all the necessary supplies for the day camp and also prepared for open-air, Sunday school and holiness meetings.

This annual trip has grown to include not only teenagers and leaders but other adults from OBT. Over the past 25 years much has changed, but much has stayed the same. Our goal and weekly structure remains. Other aspects have been different every time and keep us fully trusting the Lord and not our own experience—bus trips on narrow roads to bring kids from outlying areas, precious home league meetings, lively youth group gatherings, evangelistic campaigns, hurricane preparation and recovery, new building dedication, community care visitation, painting projects, reunions with past campers as adults contributing in their community, funerals of Bahamian teens taken by violence or disease, second-generation campers and so much more.

In all, 158 different individuals from OBT have served on teams, bringing joy to children in need in the Bahamas. With my team-mate, Valerie, I led the red group which consisted of five beautiful, inquisitive 7- and 8-year-old girls. The week was filled with laughter, prayer and life-changing moments.

During “prayer journaling” one girl asked for my help with spelling. Afterward, she gave me her finished product as a gift. It said, “I love God. God made me. God made you. God could make a treehouse.” Initially, I giggled over the sweet sentiment in crayon, but over the next few days I couldn’t get one phrase out of my mind: God could make a treehouse. It may seem silly, but I find comfort in remembering God’s love and glory in ways we could never have imagined when that fax came through.

God could make a treehouse

by Emily Densmore

This summer I helped lead a day camp for children in the Bahamas. With my team-mate, Valerie, I led the red group which consisted of five beautiful, inquisitive 7- and 8-year-old girls. The week was filled with laughter, prayer and life-changing moments.

During “prayer journaling” one girl asked for my help with spelling. Afterward, she gave me her finished product as a gift. It said, “I love God. God made me. God could make a treehouse.” Initially, I giggled over the sweet sentiment in crayon, but over the next few days I couldn’t get one phrase out of my mind: God could make a treehouse. It may seem silly, but I believe the Lord placed it on my heart.

This year I’ve been working through hard changes in my family and myself. There have been times where I’ve been angry with God; it is hard to understand how pain and difficult situations can fit into his plan for my life. Sometimes I have called my leaders sobbing and asked how He could let such hurt happen.

But God is faithful. I believe He brought me to the Bahamas not only to share the gospel but so I could receive these words from a precious 7-year-old girl: God could make a treehouse. The Lord can use the broken wood and sturdy foundation of my life to create something beautiful. He has placed individuals in my life at the perfect time and has brought words to my head and His Word to my heart. I didn’t realize it, but He had been preparing me to face hardships.

A treehouse may not look like the tree from which it was made, but that’s because it has been transformed into something new. I’ve learned that although it may be difficult, change is okay. My future may feel uncertain, but I find comfort in knowing God is certain in everything He does. I love God. God made me. God made you. God could make a treehouse.
Next year promises to be full of exceptional opportunities for growth and service. If you’re a Salvationist, 18 or older, looking to make a difference in the world, consider being part of a Global Mission Team (GMT).

**Winter Global Mission Team**
Location: South America East Territory
Dates: One week within the range of January 18-28, 2020
Cost: Personal contribution of $1,000
Details: Assist with construction project and program ministry

**Winter Global Mission Team**
Location: Bluefields, Jamaica; Caribbean Territory
Dates: February 29-March 8, 2020
Cost: Personal contribution of $750
Details: Assist with construction project and program ministry

**Spring Global Mission Team**
Location: Bangladesh
Dates: April 13-24, 2020
Cost: Personal contribution of $1,000
Details: Team members will learn about the OTHERS program, refugee ministry and initiatives in Bangladesh and assist with programs and light construction project.

**Summer Olympics Global Mission Team**
Location: Japan
Dates: July 22-August 5, 2020
Cost: Personal contribution of $1,000
Details: Evangelism and service opportunities during the 2020 Tokyo Olympics

*Given these specialized opportunities team members must meet specific requirements.

For more information, updates and an application, visit centralmissions.org

Go to www.salarmycentral.org
If you follow the prayer calendar during the year, you will have read through the Bible!
New center a place of hope in disasters

by Sam Amick and Kathy Anderson

The Heartland Division has opened a new emergency disaster services (EDS) command center in Pekin, Ill., thanks to the generosity of the Leman Auto Group. Centrally located in the division, The Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services Sam Leman Center provides easy access to three major highways which will allow EDS teams to respond quickly and efficiently to emergencies and disasters. The building offers upgraded infrastructure, technology and training facilities.

In addition to hosting the divisional EDS team, the downtown Illinois center will serve as the central hub for all EDS volunteers in the division to be trained and to meet before and after disaster assignments to share information. Videoconferencing capabilities will be added so that volunteers who are not able to attend can still be trained.

New classes geared toward disaster preparedness for the general public and community groups are being added. The EDS team will partner with local meteorologists and emergency professionals to lead these classes throughout the year.

The new facility also houses the division’s SATERN (Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network) Communications Center, which features a communications room and a separate training area for SATERN volunteers and emergency responders who need access to communication networks during a disaster. New CB radios and receivers for all corps in the division and the EDS command center, purchased through a grant from Firehouse Subs, will enhance communications for disaster relief. Back-up power capability during power outages, the center enhances The Salvation Army’s partnerships with other emergency services throughout the region.

Lastly, the new EDS command center has raised The Salvation Army’s visibility in the Pekin community which affords the opportunity to more broadly tell our story and how we partner with the communities we serve.

Always prepared

J ust days after intense disaster response practice, the Bilk, Burnett and St. Croix County Service Unit found itself deployed to feed and hydrate the Salvation Army in a different way. Duana Bremer, service unit’s social services director, said the team was able to quickly and efficiently respond to the large-scale operation.

“Our Facebook page went from a few followers to more than 1,000 with over 29,000 responses to posts and pictures as we increased community support,” said Duana Benny Benedict, territorial disaster resources coordinator, concluded, “It always amazes me how we train for disaster responses, and then God comes in to let us know our training was not in vain.”

Promoted to Glory

**Major Georgia Anderson**

Major Georgia Ann Anderson, 82, was promoted to Glory peacefully on August 22, 2019.

Georgia was a person who loved God enthusiastically, loved her family abundantly and loved others with compassion and grace. She touched numerous lives as she consistently pointed others to God with her faithful reflection of Jesus Christ.


Georgia is survived by her sister Bea Cox, daughter Major Nancy [Jack] Holloway, son Captain Mark [Jennifer] VanMeter, and grandchildren First Sergeant Brian Holloway of the United States Marine Corps, Lieutenant Grant [Jaclyn] Holloway, and Bailei and Brekyn VanMeter. She was preceded in death by her husband, John, and her sons William Paul and Timothy Scott VanMeter.

Fight for Good Tour

Continued from page 5

Majors Merrill and Nancy Powers, Freedom Center directors, gave a tour during which the group heard from staff members and people who’ve been helped, including Nathan, who has been in a penitentiary four times but has found sobriety and a better life with help from the Army. “They want the best for you,” he said.

Commissioner Hudson praised the “credible, comprehensive programs” at the Freedom Center. “It would be easier to list the things they don’t do,” he said.

Lastly, the group visited a canteen stop, where staff and volunteers distributed lunch as well as Narcan, a medication used to treat an opioid overdose. After chatting with clients and volunteers, the national commander declared the work, “Phenomenal. I’m beyond words.”

Dunbar expressed their appreciation to The Salvation Army at a Wisconsin National Guard awards ceremony, it was exciting news for this small community.

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Wisconsin State Governor Tony Evers, Duana Bremer and Major General Don Dunbar