“Heralds of Grace” greet territory

The Chicago Mayfair Community Church, Ill., Corps parking lot teemed with vans, cars and people as Salvationists from across the territory gathered to welcome the “Heralds of Grace” session.

The meeting opened with a warm welcome by Metropolitan Divisional Commander Lt. Colonel Ralph Rakiewicz, who invited the congregation to sing, “We’ve a Story to Tell the Nations.” Afterward he reminded the congregation of the meeting’s purpose: to affirm and celebrate each cadet as they’ve come to be equipped for ministry.

The cadets walked the center aisle to cheers and applause of the crowd and music by the Chicago Staff Band, led by Bandmaster William Himes.

Once the cadets were seated, the lights dimmed for Cadet Steven Dahl’s video testimony. Steven’s unique call to officership came from the witness of a Salvationist on Facebook and Steven’s subsequent perusal of Army theology and ministry. He reminded the congregation how God can use any tool to draw people for His purposes, no matter how different or seemingly insignificant.

In her presentation of the session flag, College for Officer Training (CFO) Principal Major Cherri Hobbs recalled the flag’s significance, naming Cadet Sarah Eddy as the standard bearer.

A CFO ensemble sang a lovely rendition of “Grace Alone,” and Territorial Candidates’ Secretary Colonel Dawn Heatwole commented, “I feel like a proud mother,” before inviting the congregation to sing “Take My Life.”

Throughout the evening the cadets shared summaries of their testimonies by completing the sentence, “God’s grace working in my life results in...” Responses like “a desire to show compassion to others,” and “less of me and more of Christ,” brought affirmations all around.

Cadet Grant Holloway and second-year Cadet Jonathan Tamayo provided comic relief as they donned wigs and sang their own quirky lyrics to Disney’s “A Whole New World,” to promote the CFO Harvest fundraiser.

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USA Southern Territory officers, the Jeffreys have been serving as USA national leaders since November 2010.

Having served at International Headquarters (IHQ) in London, England, as International Secretary for Business Administration and as Chaplain and Secretary for Staff Development from 2005-2008, the Roberts return to IHQ with a wealth of experience and knowledge of the international Army. In addition to serving in the U.S. and at IHQ, the Roberts led the South America East Territory and the Kenya West Territory.

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In her message Commissioner Carol Seiler cited Hebrews 12:15 (NIV): “See to it that no one misses the grace of God...” She pressed the cadets and congregation not to allow the business of officership or life to detract from opportunities to share God’s grace.

“See to it cadets, officers, musicians, soldiers, believers and friends that no one misses God’s grace,” the Commissioner concluded.

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BaconFest whets community’s appetite for Omaha Kroc

A sizzling good time was had at the Omaha, Neb., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center’s first annual Bacon Fest as more than 1,000 people converged on the center’s festival plaza to enjoy bacon tastings, local musicians, a friendly competition and full access to the Kroc Center’s facilities. This signature event raised $80,000 to provide memberships and to support programming.

Nine area restaurant chefs descended on the center with their best bacon recipes in tow for a cook-off. Each general admission ticket came with five bacon samples, which patrons used to vote for their favorite bacon recipe. At the end of the afternoon, winners were announced based on the people’s choice and a panel of judges.

Meanwhile, in the Kids Corral, children donned colorful face paint, zipped around on motorized scooters shaped like exotic animals, and dominated an enormous, kettle-shaped bounce house.

“Since bacon is one of my basic food groups, it was a pleasure to see so many creative ways to serve it,” said Anne Baxter about her Bacon Fest experience. “The event was really fun, with delicious food, music and lots of things to entertain kids.”

Director of Donor Relations John Wehrle said, “There are several bacon festivals around the country. Most are bacon and beer events, but ours is set apart as family-friendly and non-alcoholic.”

Since the Kroc Center sits on the site of a former meat packing plant, Bacon Fest seemed especially apt when considering fundraisers. In the early part of the 20th century, Omaha was the largest stockyard in the world,” said Joanne Bemis, divisional development director. “We wanted to honor the unique traditions of South Omaha and provide an opportunity for exposure, awareness and revenue to benefit programs and sponsorships, our three goals for this event.”

In-kind donations totalled $40,000 from corporate and local sponsors. Sponsorship levels ranged from “Bacon Lover” to “Whole Hog.” Top corporate sponsors included Farmland Bacon, Mutual of Omaha and Village Point Toyota. For every $100 raised, one summer membership, a week of Camp Kroc for a child, or 20 one-day passes could be provided to underserved families.

The weeks prior to Bacon Fest were filled with fan promotions, from social media blitzes to a “flat pig” contest (like Flat Stanley). Perhaps the most popular was “Pardon the Pig,” where eight-year-old Landri Loos presented Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert with a 35-pound pig named Sal to pardon on behalf of Bacon Fest.

“I’m really looking forward to people getting excited about the opportunities at the Kroc Center as a result of this event,” said Major Todd Thielke, senior Kroc Center officer.

Our deepest desired impact of mission work is spiritual, and our greatest resources come to us directly from God’s hand often as a result—although we seldom know it—of faithful prayer.

If you don’t already, regularly pray for fellow Salvationists, both those close by and those scattered around the territory and the world. Let us truly be an Army marked by our commitment to encourage and pray for each other and to worship together so our uplifting of each other is rich, deep and consistent. In doing so, we will be contributing mightily to the future God has in mind for each of us.
by Jennifer Minter

I wonder if...” was the theme for this year’s Central Bible Leadership Institute (CBLI) that drew 517 campers to Camp Wonderland. For nine days campers entertained the possibilities of what God can do in their lives, families, corps and communities.

Programming was designed in age-based tracks to best meet campers’ needs which was ideal since ages ranged from 6 months to 80 years!

A superb line-up of guests included Colonels Glen and Eleanor Shepherd, retired officers of the Canada and Bermuda Territory (adult track); Majors Ivan and Jennifer Wild from the Western Territory and Majors David and Beverly Ivany, also from Canada and Bermuda (young adult track); and Sergeants Tom and Raeachel Freeman from the Southern Territory (youth track). Each played an important role in enriching the CBLI experience. Campers participated in daily Bible studies, workshops and praise (led by The Singing Company), feeding their minds and souls. Evenings were filled with entertaining, inspiring and educational speakers and musicians as well, including Sara Groves, Shane Claiborne, Major Ivan Wild, Mike Donohue, Ray McElroy and Bob Stromberg, each cleverly developing the ‘I wonder if...’ theme.

Many families attend CBLI each year, making this camp a tradition for generations. Children were well cared for by loving staff who made each day fun with songs, stories, games and crafts. Of course, there was lots of fun during free time as well for campers of all ages! Camp Wonderland abounds with recreational opportunities like swimming, hiking, rock climbing, soccer, basketball, horseshoes, volleyball and boating. In addition, electives from making crafts to learning about Salvation Army history to antiquing were offered each afternoon. This year featured a family picnic day, directed by Major Carol Wurts, territorial corps mission and adult ministries secretary. During this break from the regular schedule, families could spend even more time together enjoying a petting zoo, games and other activities, a cookout and movie.

As a teenager, however, I strayed from God and made poor choices that carried severe consequences, including an early, unsuccessful marriage.

I was introduced to The Salvation Army through my brother and sister-in-law, Lts. LeOtis and LaTanya Brooks. Captains Dale and Rebecca Simmons, my former corps officers, first noticed God’s call on my life and planted the seed of officership. The seed was watered by Captains Charles and Carol Williams. It feels so good to be a servant of God; I thank Him for the people He’s placed in my life.

Patricia’s corps officers are Captains Charles and Carol Williams.

Patricia Williams
Kansas City, Bellefontaine, Mo., Corps
Kansas and Western Missouri Division

To watch the evening meetings or Colonel Glen Shepherd’s adult Bible study, visit www.salvationarmymedia.org/livestream-archives.html
I remember the first time I attended the National Seminar on Evangelism (NSE) in Glen Eyrie, Colo., with my wife in 1988. The experience was life-changing. As we returned home and got quite involved in evangelism at my corps, I discovered many did not know about NSE or understand what it’s all about.

Reading the account of the Mount of Transfiguration, I’m reminded of the experience the disciples had with Jesus on the mountaintop. Just as Peter, James and John were called onto the mountaintop, NSE begins with soldiers ascending the mountains just outside Colorado Springs on the land owned by the Navigators. Soldiers come from across the country, along with their corps officers, to learn evangelism principles taught through general sessions and small groups, culminating with everyone going into the local communities to share the love of Jesus with those they meet.

The daily schedule begins with worship prior to a Bible study presented to all delegates and staff. This is followed by combined teaching using the curriculum of Pastor Bill Hybels’ Just Walk Across the Room. The principles taught are based on building stronger relationships with people already in your life. These may be through the corps ministries, work, school, family or neighborhood. A foundational concept is to make the most of each encounter.

The highlights for me during the week on the mountaintop included new friendships made with soldiers in all four territories and the opportunity to share with each other in small groups. It’s often easier in this setting to digest and discuss principles than in larger groups.

Just as the disciples desired to remain on the mountaintop with Jesus, we may sometimes choose to stay there. Yet, we are commanded not only to take time to meet with Jesus on the mountain but then to descend and return to the ministry God has placed before us.

Often you can see some apprehension on the faces of those arriving at the airport that first Saturday of NSE, but by the end of the seminar there is excitement as the buses are loaded and soldiers spread out across the nation prepared to practice “walking across the room.”

Already I am praying for the opportunity again next year to ascend the mountain along with soldiers and meet with Jesus. The dates for next year’s seminar are August 2-9, 2014. Begin today talking to your corps officer and praying about your attendance at NSE. I hope to see you on the mountaintop!

Hot off the press!

Lt. Colonel Stephen Banfield and Major Donna Leedom present a collection of first-person accounts, the seminar’s history, 12 pages of photographs and the lessons taught over the years at the National Seminar on Evangelism to help readers share their own stories of new life through God’s grace.

This book will enable corps to undertake evangelism that will produce the desired results of rescuing the perishing, bringing them into corps membership and training them to be disciples.

The book costs $9.95 and is available through Resource Connection at 1-800-937-8896 or shop.salvationarmy.org

NSE: what it’s all about

by Major Steve Merritt

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Endless skies, endless thanks

by major nero ruqua

I t was one of those summer days where the sky is as deep as the ocean. There were plenty of them in the heat of Viet Nam. You could get lost in your thoughts staring into that endless blue until the thunking of a bullet hitting the tree next to you jarred you back to reality.

However, this beautiful day was more than four decades later at Camp Echo Grove. The journey to this day began a few months earlier when our divisional commander, Colonel Dennis Strissel—sounding like General William Booth—had said during a finance board to no one in particular, “We need to DO SOME- THING for our veterans and their families to show them how much we appreciate their sac ri fice for our country.”

Major Jimmy Wilson, divisional men’s fellow ship secretary, was assigned to form a com mittee and devise a plan of action. The result was an entire day of fun, fel lowship, food and festiv ities at camp. Veterans organizations were con tacted and active and retired service personnel and their families were invited. The event on this blue-sky, summer Saturday was an attempt at “thank you for your service.”

Divisional headquarters officers, employees and camp staff served the 250 people who came to enjoy boat ing, swimming, hay rides, archery, the paint ball and ropes courses, a picnic lunch, live music, a magic show, 10 bounce houses, and a pig roast with a recogni tion program that concluded with an impressive flag lowering cere mony.

Being a vet myself, I talked the grounds and talked to the many vets eating snacks and enjoying fellowship in the pavilions. At one table sat three vets wearing baseball hats reading, “Viet Nam Vet.”

“Welcome Home,” I said. “I was in Viet Nam in 1968 and ’69. When were you guys there?”

Each told his story. They struck me as so similar I asked, “Do you know each other?” They laughed. “Know each other? We served together in Viet Nam for a year!” Now this was very unusual since we all went over to Viet Nam and returned alone, not like today where an entire unit goes and comes back together. “So, how did the three of you happen to be at our Salvation Army event today?” One of them replied, “I live in Michigan, heard about it and invit ed my buddies from New York and Chicago. We haven’t seen each other for over 40 years and are hav ing a blast here today. Thank you for arranging all this.”

“Wow!” came tumbling out of my mouth. After talking a while longer, I headed back to the registration area. Somewhere along the way I found myself once again staring up into the endless blue sky… you can get lost in your thoughts, you know.

But then I heard my wife’s voice—which I’d longed to hear for such a long time many summers ago. “You just gonna stand there looking at the sky or come over here and help me with registra tion?” And the rustling paper brought me back to the reality of Echo Grove Camp on Military Appreciation Day.

The store not only redefines the thrift store concept but reflects the neighborhood in which it dwells. “We want our neighbors to feel com fortable shopping here,” said Major John Aten, North Side ARC adminis trator. “Of course, it’s more than about supplying goods. We are sup porting our rehabilitative program through this venture, and the new store allows us to raise more money for the mission.”

Indeed, on the day of the grand opening, $94,000 was made. Another $354,000 was made during the week leading up to it with special events that brought in targeted groups like preferred patrons, Salvation Army soldiers and employ ees, friends and followers on Facebook and Twitter, and Chicago VIPS.

“It really raises the bar on everything we’ve been doing,” said Ashley Barnes, Northside ARC social media coordinator who’s worked for The Salvation Army for a lit tle more than a year. “It reminds me of a T.J. Maxx or Marshall’s. If you’re downtown and anywhere close to it, the store is a must-see.”

The 30,000-square foot store is located at 2238 N. Clybourn Ave.
since 1935 Central Music Institute (CMI) has been championing Salvation Army music-making of the highest standards. During this time countless students have entered the gates of Camp Wonderland and returned home 10 days later spiritually and musically enriched. A glance at the awards wall of Wonderland Chapel gives insight into numerous alumni who have gone down in CMI history, a number of whom were in attendance at various times during this year’s camp. They were, no doubt, impressed by what they saw.

Events such as this do not simply happen. They require months of planning. So it was to the credit of Territorial Music and Gospel Arts Secretary William Himes and his team that the camp ran smoothly down to the smallest detail. From first-day auditions, which ran like clockwork, to evening programs, nothing was left to chance.

Out of the cacophony of 235 students and staff involved in the opening day’s try-outs came six bands, two choruses and even a “Glee-M-I” show choir, inspired by the hit television show. Add to this keyboard, composition and arranging, praise band, TV production, Bible, leadership, conducting, brass repair, percussion electives, and a new drama track, and all the ingredients were in place for the most thorough of musical and spiritual education.

Over the years international guests such as John Lam, Dr. Stephen Cobb, Philip Hannevik, Dr. Howard Evans, Leonard Ballantine and Andrew Mackereth have graced the CMI stage. This year was no different as Andrew and Sue Blyth of the United Kingdom Territory were guests. The Blyths’ down-to-earth and unassuming nature endeared them to everyone, and their words and actions demonstrated faith lived to the fullest.

What they brought musically was greatly appreciated as they shared something of their vast experience of Salvation Army music-making. Also bringing an international flavor were a South American contingent from Chile and Argentina.

When William Booth first set out to form his Army, it is unlikely he could have imagined the unique ways in which it has since spread the gospel. One such opportunity was 200-plus Salvationists marching and playing the national anthem at a Milwaukee Brewers baseball game. In front of some 35,000 fans and aired on national television, the CMI massed band and color guard represented The Salvation Army in glowing terms. One delegate even described it as the best day of his life.

In dramatic contrast to the roaring fans was the 10 minutes of silence each day called “Sealed Orders.” Based in Philippians 3:7-17, the theme “Get a Grip” directed these meditations. Linda Himes, CMI chaplain, brought each day’s emphasis to a fine point as she delved further into God’s Word at the end of the evening programs. Later, sealed orders often inspired devotions by cabin counselors that became special times for many campers.

Evening programs included too many highlights to mention, but each band and chorus received ample time to demonstrate what they had achieved. Winners of the brass, vocal, percussion, guitar and piano solo competitions also were featured.
One standout was the visit of the Southeast Michigan Adult Rehabilitation Center (ARC) Singers and their band, Justified. This highly polished gospel/jazz ensemble presented an exhilarating, God-honoring concert. Their dramatic stories of substance abuse and how God’s grace turned their lives around were inspirational!

An ice-breaker sports rally, “Praise Unplugged,” “CMI’s Got Talent,” and a faculty and friends concert completed the evening program lineup. On the final Saturday morning, E lectfest provided the opportunity for elective classes, including men’s chorus, women’s chorus, piano, handbells, drama, percussion studies, drama and dance, and several instrument technique ensembles, to demonstrate what they had learned.

Following Saturday’s final flag lowering, the Awards Festival featured a performance by each band and chorus interspersed with a plethora of coveted awards and scholarships (see box.) A near-capacity audience enjoyed this feast of music presented over by Colonels Merle and Dawn Heatwole.

Bandmaster Himes announced the establishment of an Instrument Repair Resources Fund in memory of Major Walt Winters, who was promoted to Glory in June 2012. Through the generosity of the Winters family and friends, it provided instrument repair kits this year to the South American delegates who also studied in Bill Scarlett’s instrument repair class. Following a tribute to the unique and effective ministry of Major Winters, the bandmaster presented four repair kits to Santiago Lopez and Samuel Ivanchuk from South America East and Alberto Ferreira and Lennart Sanchez from South America West.

There was no more fitting way to draw CMI to a close than the final Sunday morning service which included encouraging testimonies by Andrew and Susan Blyth, as well as a humorous and thought-provoking presentation by the drama track. In her sermon Colonel Dawn Heatwole challenged campers to stand firm and keep a grip on their faith as they re-entered the world.

As the students and staff sang the benediction, “Total Praise,” the lyrics of promise were impressed on their hearts: “Lord, I will lift my eyes to the hills, knowing my help is coming from you. Your peace you give me in times of the storm. You are the source of my strength. You are the strength of my life. I lift my hands in total praise to You.”

There’s no question, those who experienced CMI returned home better equipped and with a firmer grip on their faith.
Forty-nine find faith in Christ!

Hispanic ministry’s growth. An answer from God, they were excited to reach out to the Hispanic community and sought places of service and leadership.

Worship attendance can be irregular but most meetings have at least 50 people; events attract even more people.

The worship meeting features Scripture readings, a message and testimonies accompanied by a newly formed praise and worship team and often by a Filipino hula praise dance team. Bible studies meet in homes throughout the week. The Alips also conduct culturally significant events like house blessings and birthday celebrations.

The fellowship has grown rapidly through word of mouth. Additionally, Romy and Evelyn engage in neighborhood evangelism, introducing themselves to Filipinos at Asian grocery stores and inviting them to meetings. “Then we visit them in their homes,” said Romy.

The Alips, retired officers from the Philippines, met Colonel Dennis Strissel, divisional commander, several years ago when he was the Ghana territorial commander and they were serving in the Liberia Command.

Years later when the colonel saw the Alips’ names on a list of retired officers living in the Central, he asked them to consider moving from Chicago, Ill., to start a ministry in Detroit.

“Romy was enrolled as a student studying architecture. He found it in the downpour. With all the businesses closed, he sought shelter in the only building open: a Salvation Army corps—with a salvation meeting in progress!”

Romy sat in a back pew, heard the gospel for the first time and accepted Jesus into his heart.

Born the seventh of 13 children in a Roman Catholic family in the Philippines, Romy began questioning church practices as a university student studying architecture. Trying to fill his empty heart, he searched for truth in Christian cults, then Hindu meditation. Romy finally asked God to show him the truth. He found it in the downpour.

A year after finding the Army and God, Romy was enrolled as a soldier. He worked as an architectural draftsman until God called him to officership at 27. At the training college he met a kind, thoughtful second-year cadet who soon became his wife.

Evelyn had entered training at age 20. The eldest of nine children, she met the Army as a child during an outreach in her community. She accepted Jesus at 18 during a divisional youth council and responded to God’s call to officership. She was commissioned in 1997 and served as an assistant corps officer.

After his commissioning a year later, Romy was appointed as officer-in-charge of a newly reopened corps, then served as an assistant corps officer. They married in 1979 and together served in four corps, the training college and divisional and territorial headquarters appointments in the Philippines. In their last decade of active officership, they served at the Indonesia Territorial Headquarters and Liberia Command Headquarters.

Retiring in 2009, the Alips moved to Chicago, Ill., two years later and now live in Farmington Hills, Mich., where they oversee a new Filipino ministry.

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Searching for Truth

When Captains Jesus and Kelli Trejo were appointed to the Minneapolis Temple, a keen evangelist for temple corps, they envisioned the addition of a divisional Hispanic retreat to the Northern Division’s multicultural and camping ministries.

“We believed it would be an effective tool in reaching the Hispanic community in the Twin Cities," said Jesus. The Trejos began working with the culturally ministries coordinator, answering an invitation to attend the Temple Corps who were excited about the prospect of a Hispanic retreat to the Northern Division. The corps’ vision was a consistent Hispanic representation in the congregation on Sundays, the fellowship’s leaders serving as important tools in reaching the Hispanic community.

The fellowship has grown rapidly through word of mouth. Additionally, Romy and Evelyn engage in neighborhood evangelism, introducing themselves to Filipinos at Asian grocery stores and inviting them to meetings. “Then we visit them in their homes," said Romy.

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Prayer and popcorn

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Capturing Hungarian hearts

by Major Darlene Morgan
Assistant Regional Officer, Hungary Region

The Hungary Region, part of the Switzerland, Austria and Hungary Territory and Partner in Mission with the USA Central Territory, was blessed by the exuberant ministry of a young adult summer mission team (SMT) for the second year. Here are some highlights of the SMT’s ministry in Hungary this summer.

The team of six young women met almost the whole of The Salvation Army in Hungary only days after their arrival! With their musical abilities, they augmented the small band at the commissioning and ordination of the region’s two newest officers in Debrecen, the east part of Hungary.

Then they traveled to Gyöngyös to lead the corps’ day camp. Well prepared daily, the team creatively presented the gospel, taught songs, crafts, dance and games, and played, laughed and talked with the children. Most importantly, they loved them! It shone through their patience with children who had various challenges or simply when teaching tricky crafts! Despite the language barrier, the team’s love and openness—with the help of translation—enabled them to build relationships quickly, so that the children bid them a tearful farewell at the end of the week.

The team had a similarly powerful impact at children’s day camps at the Rákoscsaba and Józsefváros corps in Budapest. In the words of one little boy, "I’ve never been to such a great camp in all my life!"

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We have been touched by God through the ministry of the SMT and are grateful for this life-changing opportunity made possible by the USA Central Territory. God bless you! Isten kedvez meg!

God connects His people

In the bustling metropolis of New York City sits Grace Street café. It’s an oasis, not just from the frenetic city but of Christian community and awareness of world missions. The circumstances and connections through which the café came to be are a testimony to God’s perfect timing.

It began a little over a year ago. Salvationist Keri Shay, who teaches kindergarten and organizes English ministry at Calvary Church and School in Seoul, Korea, is also a talented photographer whose portfolio teems with poignant portraits from around the world. One day at church her pastor introduced her to Ben, a Korean-American who was looking to open a café and give some of the profits to God’s work worldwide. They shared a vision to connect people through art, and developed the small band at the commissioning and ordination of the region’s two newest officers in Debrecen, the east part of Hungary.

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"When our second Pathway of Hope client came to us, she had no confidence as a mom or a person," said Lt. Casandra Grey, Oswosso Citadel, Mich., corps officer. "She felt she wasn’t worth anything or anyone’s time."

Mary had lived through more than domestic abuse before fleeing with her children with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Despite going nowhere to turn, she found The Salvation Army.

Through the Pathway of Hope approach, Lt. Sean and Casandra Grey and caseworker Aimee DeLong are empowering Mary to learn to provide for her family. Through this approach clients work toward changing their lives—with the assistance of a Salvation Army caseworker—by setting goals and taking on responsibilities.

“It’s been a miracle case,” said Aimee. “Within the first month she committed goals one and two [an apartment and car]. Financial stability is the third, and we’re working on it. She wants to support her children and herself.”

Mary’s vehicle came from a donor who’d heard about Pathway of Hope at a community event and, providentially, had called The Salvation Army within just weeks of Mary’s arrival. He left Mary the title, keys and an encouraging note under the mat of the car with a full tank of gas.

“You should have seen the smile on this woman’s face,” recalled Casandra. “That smile to me was like a rainbow. It signifies hope.”

Shortly thereafter, Mary found an apartment and now is pursuing her GED. She said none of this would have been possible if it weren’t for Casandra and Aimee, but she was ready and took the necessary steps to change her situation.

Through Pathway of Hope families like Mary’s have access to other community services and the full range of corps programs, including worship services and spiritual guidance. Mary meets regularly with Casandra to read scripture and pray together. Casandra and Aimee consistently encourage Mary with phone calls, letters and visits.

“The lady I see coming into my office is stronger, more independent and she smiles,” said Casandra. “Her family is experiencing joy, and for the first time, there is laughter in her house.”

*Name changed

Promise kept brings joy

by Ginger Yoak

We had just received bad news. A dear friend was very ill. How long had it been since my husband, Jim, and I had enjoyed a good laugh? Now, I had to set the alarm for an early start tomorrow. That didn’t make us happy either.

But we had promised to volunteer with The Salvation Army in St. Charles, Mo., at the Target to help children get ready for school. Target had provided gift cards for children whose family incomes could not include the extra expense of school supplies. With each gift card, children could select supplies requested by the school and then clothing.

We escorted Ricky, a middle school student, who was shifts, for a moment we met. His laughter was contagious. He laughed, and we joined him as we found bargain after bargain. When Ricky discovered a red shirt to match the red baseball cap he so dearly wanted, we celebrated with a “hug five.” At the end of the shopping trip, Ricky was grateful, happy and ready for the first day of school. As for Jim and me, well we were ready to enjoy the rest of the day, still smiling and laughing.

Miraculous will to serve

by Craig Dirkes

It sounds corny, but the reason I do this is because there are so many people out there who need help, and I’m able to do it.” That’s the refreshing, matter-of-fact philosophy of Jill Arndt, who was named the 2013 Volunteer of the Year in the Central Territory.

Jill has spent nearly 20 years helping others in the Cambridge, Minn., area (Northern Division), starting with a school supply drive that provides 350 full backpacks to children in need every fall.

“We started with 25 backpacks. Now it’s so big we need 25 volunteers!” said Jill, 65, who retired from the social services field in 2009.

For the past 14 years, Jill has been in charge of providing Salvation Army food boxes to hundreds of families on Thanksgiving and Easter. What’s more, she spent many of those years raising chickens and donating the eggs to local food pantries. She also makes and donates quilts to people in need.

She’s a Salvation Army disaster relief volunteer, too. “I remember working directly with the families of the 35W bridge collapse and being so humbled,” Jill said. “Here were these people going through all this tragedy, coming up to me just to say thanks.”

Jill has managed to do all of this despite suffering from a host of medical issues. In 2003, she suffered two strokes and had to learn to walk again. In 2008, she was diagnosed with melanoma on her neck and jaw. In 2008, she stopped breathing due to pulmonary fibrosis and was put on life support.

What might have stopped others only slowed Jill. “I remember when Jill first got melanoma, a bell ringer didn’t show up for a shift at a local store. Jill went inside, purchased two yards of polar fleece, wrapped her neck and jaw, and rang for two hours, recalled Jan Karasch, Southeastern Minnesota service extension representative.
### November Prayer Calendar

**My Prayer List**

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<th>Bible Reading</th>
<th>Pray for The Salvation Army</th>
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<td>Ecclesiastes 3-4</td>
<td>Milwaukee, Wis., ARC*</td>
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<td>2 Saturday</td>
<td>Zephaniah 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Sunday</td>
<td>Acts 11-12</td>
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<td>James 4-5</td>
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<td>Acts 13-14</td>
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<td>11 Monday</td>
<td>1 Peter 1-3</td>
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<td>Deuteronomy 4-6</td>
<td>Metropolitan DHS**</td>
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<td>13 Wednesday</td>
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<td>Zechariah 1-7</td>
<td>Minoapolis, Minn., ARC*</td>
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<td>17 Sunday</td>
<td>Acts 15-16</td>
<td>Hillsdale, Mich., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Monday</td>
<td>1 Peter 4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 Tuesday</td>
<td>Deuteronomy 7-9</td>
<td>Indianapolis Fountain Square, Ind., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 Wednesday</td>
<td>Ezra 8-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 Thursday</td>
<td>Psalms 134-136</td>
<td>Thank God for the blessings He gives</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 Friday</td>
<td>Ecclesiastes 9-10</td>
<td>Crystal Lake, Ill., Corps</td>
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<td>23 Saturday</td>
<td>Zechariah 8-14</td>
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<td>24 Sunday</td>
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<td>25 Monday</td>
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<td>26 Tuesday</td>
<td>Deuteronomy 10-12</td>
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<td>27 Wednesday</td>
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<td>28 Thursday</td>
<td>Psalms 137-139</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 Friday</td>
<td>Ecclesiastes 11-12</td>
<td>Kankakee, Ill., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 Saturday</td>
<td>Malachi 1-4</td>
<td>Christmas kettle campaigns</td>
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**Pray for The Salvation Army**

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- Flint Citadel, Mich., Corps
- Madison Genesis, Wis., Corps
- Galesburg, Ill., Corps
- Indianapolis Eagle-Creek, Ind., Corps
- Kansas City Citadel, Kan., Corps
- Oconomowoc Temple Laramie, W., Corps
- St. Louis, Mo., Booth Manor
- Caribbean Territory™
- Hibbing, Minn., Corps
- Kalamazoo, Mich., Corps
- Metropolitan DHS**
- Jackson, Mich., Corps
- Madison Temple, Wis., Corps
- Major Michelle & Captain Dru Oliver (Australia)
- Minoapolis, Minn., ARC*
- Hillsdale, Mich., Corps
- Iowa City, Iowa, Corps
- Indianapolis Fountain Square, Ind., Corps
- Kansas City Northland, Mo., Corps
- Thank God for the blessings He gives
- Crystal Lake, Ill., Corps
- Jacksonville, Ill., Corps
- International Falls, Minn., Corps
- Lincoln, Neb., Corps
- Kalamazoo, Mich., Corps
- Montevideo, Wis., Corps
- Livingston County, Mich., Corps
- Kankakee, Ill., Corps
- Christmas kettle campaigns

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**Special students make star volunteers**

**by Ashley Kuenstler**

I don’t think a lot of people know how strong I am,” said 19-year-old Ryan as he lifted a cardboard box full of canned goods over his head. “I’m pretty sure I am the strongest person here.”

Ryan’s strength is put to good use at the St. Charles, Mo., Corps, where he and fellow special-needs students volunteer once a month.

A year ago the students from Francis Howell High School started volunteering with The Salvation Army. They mainly help with the corps’ food pantry by sorting cans, reading labels to make sure goods are not expired, and marking them for distribution. They also help keep the chapel clean by washing windows and cleaning pews.

Adam, 18, said the work doesn’t bother him; he actually enjoys it. “I like coming here because I think we really help,” he said. “We just do little things, but I think it makes a difference.”

Special education teacher Tracy Graham said the monthly visits not only provide invaluable life and work experience but give the children a sense of self-worth.

“The kids really love coming here to help, and they’re always excited when the day finally arrives,” she said. “They enjoy getting the opportunity to show people what they’re capable of, as well as giving back to their community.”

Bradon, 15, agreed. “People think we can’t do a lot, but we can,” he said. “I like working here and helping people who need food. I feel good about doing that.”

Captain Laura Key, corps officer, said the partnership has been enjoyable for her as well. “There’s a young boy named Jacob who insists you wave goodbye to him after every visit,” she said. “It’s a great feeling to see how genuinely happy that makes him. It never fails to brighten my day.”

Tracy said the students don’t look at their time with The Salvation Army as just work; they see it as spending time with their friends. “You’re really not coming just to work,” she said. “They think of the people at The Salvation Army as their friends. The Salvation Army has been great to these kids. They know they’re always welcome here.”

---

***Mustard Seeds***

**This is my first time in a real grown-up church meeting...**

**Wow! I hope you enjoy it.**

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**When do they ring the bell for recess?**

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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!
Chapel ready for future

The Salvation Army’s historic limestone chapel on the corner of Rogers and Kirkwood in Bloomington, Ind., recently underwent an extensive renovation. This summer the public was invited to a re-dedication and tour of the building. Having been in Bloomington since 1907, the Army has served the community from this building since 1928.

“The interior renovation and improvements of our historical chapel building has poised us to be able to serve our community in the name of Christ for years to come,” said Lt. Sharyn Tennyson, Bloomington corps officer. “We are honored to be trusted with the resources that allowed us to make these improvements and are committed to continue to serve with integrity.”

The renovation allowed for an interior pathway to the lower level children’s library and computer lab and to the second level without walking through the chapel or having to go outside to another entrance. It extended the foyer that connected the chapel building with the community center, giving two interior entrance points to the chapel building. The door in the center of the platform was enclosed, and the interior was completely remodeled. Pews were replaced with chairs that can be configured for worship and other programs, like training sessions or community meetings. Worship averages 35 a week, with some new families and young adults recently joining.

The historic chapel is adjacent to three other Salvation Army buildings, including a child development center, community center and thrift store. The Army is especially recognized for its social services in the community, ranging from rent and utility assistance to emergency disaster services and quarterly job fairs. In June the corps launched the Pathway of Hope.

Among the core programs, sunbeams and girl guards are growing. An open gym program, led by Indiana University students working toward recreation management degrees, is thriving. According to the lieutenant, the corps is planning a new community center program focusing on middle and high school students to fill a void in the community.

Retired but serving still

Major Mary-Lou Branson, recently retired as assistant corps officer from the Indianapolis Eagle Creek, Ind., corps, met the Army as a child in Southern California after her mother received a War Cry. As a young woman, Mary-Lou accepted an attractive job offer from a former boss and moved from California to Minnesota. She connected with other Salvationists; some had West Coast friends. When a position opened at the corps, Mary-Lou enjoyed her new job but knew God had called her to officership years earlier. At a sunbeam camp, little Mary-Lou had decided she wanted to be just like her leader, a young woman officer.

Mary-Lou was ordained and commissioned with the “He, She, or Hope” session in 1983. As a lieutenant she served in corps in Minnesota and Michigan. After stepping out of service for a few years, she returned as an envoy, holding assistant corps administrator positions in Indiana, Nebraska and Iowa until she was reinstated as a lieutenant in 1999. She continued to serve in corps in Nebraska and Indiana until her retirement.

Over the years, Mary-Lou particularly enjoyed social services.

An abundant life!

Preparation for old age should begin no later than one’s teens. A life which is empty of purpose until 65 will not suddenly become filled on retirement.—Dwight L. Moody

by Captain Scott Striszel

Majors Roger and Joy Ross certainly have not lived an empty life without purpose. Their ministry and passion have been exemplary, touching many lives for Christ. It’s no wonder more than 230 officers, families and friends, including representatives from every corps appointment, joined together this summer to celebrate their retirement.

Roger was introduced to the Army at a Christmas party for underprivileged children and was later enrolled as a senior soldier by General Frederick Coutts in 1965. Joy is the daughter of Majors Don and Harriet Olson. Roger and Joy met at a Salvation Army camp. He was a skinny lifeguard, she a cute waitress. What began as a summer romance turned into a marriage spanning 45 years. They have been blessed with three married children: Paul (Jami), Jennifer (Larry) Manzella, and Ben (Wendy) and seven grandchildren.

During the retirement service Paul and Jennifer sang a duet and all the grandchildren presented a musical number. Other highlights included a proclamation from Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker declaring “Majors Roger & Joy Ross Day,” a tape dedicated by Green Bay Packer Hall of Famer LeRoy Butler, and many tributes about the tremendous difference they’ve made. Commissioners Harold and Betty Hinson presented the retirement certificates.

Roger and Joy were commissioned as officers in 1971 with the “Victorious” session. They were corps officers at Chicago Irving Park, Ill.; Janesville, Milwaukee West and Citadel, and Wausau, Wis., and Escanaba and Warren, Mich. They also held appointments as divisional secretary and women’s ministry secretary in Kansas and Western Missouri; divisional youth secretaries in the Western and the Kansas and Western Missouri divisions; administrators of the Grand Rapids, Mich., Bay and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center; Roger was county coordinator in Lake County, Ind., while Joy was corps officer in Hammond/Munster.

Since 2011 Roger has served as Milwaukee County commander and Joy as Wisconsin and Upper Michigan divisional women’s ministry secretary. They are giving post-retirement service in those positions through January, at which time they will take up residence in Spring Hill, Fla.

A glimpse at GRACE

by Major Jennifer Woodard

Generations of grace

I praise the Lord for my two sets of grandparents who came to know the Lord through The Salvation Army. My parents also accepted Christ as young people and raised me in an environment of love and truth where I came to know and love the Lord with all my heart.

Restoration

Life in this fallen world means we are touched by circumstances of others, our own and even the natural world. In Christ though my heart is restored, over and over, I am grateful for the 20/20 vision that time and experience provide as I trust in the power and keeping of Christ to heal and restore me to abundant life!

Accountability

I praise God for putting people in my life who care enough to keep me accountable. I understand increasingly that as believers striving to honor God we need each other, and this is how He designed it. I pray for continued courage and love to be more and more interdependent with my brothers and sisters in Christ so we can be spiritually strong, faithful and blessed in the Lord.

Calling

I sensed God’s purpose for me as a young person of 12. I was amazed and delighted then, and I still delight in the knowledge He has chosen me to be His ambassador. I have fallen in love with speaking God’s truth into the hearts of others. I continue to learn what it means to serve Him faithfully, be in relationship with those He loves, and develop my gifts to God’s glory and for serving others.

Eternal life

The redemption of my soul by my Redeemer, Jesus Christ, cannot be compared with any other treasure. He bought me with His own lifeblood. This love is too wonderful for me, and yet I embrace it with joy. With confidence and hope, I revel in this unifying love for me! There is nothing else if not for the solid ground of eternal life through the gift of God.

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by Captain Scott Striszel

Majors Roger and Joy Ross certainly have not lived an empty life without purpose. Their ministry and passion have been exemplary, touching many lives for Christ. It’s no wonder more than 230 officers, families and friends, including representatives from every corps appointment, joined together this summer to celebrate their retirement.

Roger was introduced to the Army at a Christmas party for underprivileged children and was later enrolled as a senior soldier by General Frederick Coutts in 1965. Joy is the daughter of Majors Don and Harriet Olson. Roger and Joy met at a Salvation Army camp. He was a skinny lifeguard, she a cute waitress. What began as a summer romance turned into a marriage spanning 45 years. They have been blessed with three married children: Paul (Jami), Jennifer (Larry) Manzella, and Ben (Wendy) and seven grandchildren.

During the retirement service Paul and Jennifer sang a duet and all the grandchildren presented a musical number. Other highlights included a proclamation from Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker declaring “Majors Roger & Joy Ross Day,” a tape dedicated by Green Bay Packer Hall of Famer LeRoy Butler, and many tributes about the tremendous difference they’ve made. Commissioners Harold and Betty Hinson presented the retirement certificates.

Roger and Joy were commissioned as officers in 1971 with the “Victorious” session. They were corps officers at Chicago Irving Park, Ill.; Janesville, Milwaukee West and Citadel, and Wausau, Wis., and Escanaba and Warren, Mich. They also held appointments as divisional secretary and women’s ministry secretary in Kansas and Western Missouri; divisional youth secretaries in the Western and the Kansas and Western Missouri divisions; administrators of the Grand Rapids, Mich., Bay and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center; Roger was county coordinator in Lake County, Ind., while Joy was corps officer in Hammond/Munster.

Since 2011 Roger has served as Milwaukee County commander and Joy as Wisconsin and Upper Michigan divisional women’s ministry secretary. They are giving post-retirement service in those positions through January, at which time they will take up residence in Spring Hill, Fla.