David's Story

On December 22nd, approximately 800 volunteers will gather in The Oncenter to distribute toys, movie tickets, books, stocking stuffers, food baskets and turkeys to thousands of low-income families in our community. In the weeks leading up to Distribution Day, hundreds of volunteers will help with registering families, sorting food and toys, and preparing for this special day. In addition, dozens of local companies, schools and community groups will support Christmas Bureau by participating in food and toy drives.

Recently, The Salvation Army was contacted by a gentleman named David, who wanted to organize a group of young professionals to volunteer on Distribution Day for the first time. After speaking with our volunteer coordinator, David requested that members of his group serve as "personal shoppers," providing assistance to parents as they pick out gifts for their children at the toy and book stations.

Each year, Christmas Bureau is blessed by hundreds of generous individuals, like David, who reach out to help others at Christmas time. We are doubly blessed by the fact that David chose to share his personal story with us.

In 2009, David found himself at a crossroads. Early in the year, his marriage came to an end and he became the primary caretaker of two young children. He was working in retail management, with a schedule that made it very difficult to be a single parent. While David was contemplating how he was going to make things work for his family, he experienced another blow - his job was eliminated in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis. He became one of the more than 9% of Syracuse area residents who were without a job in a declining labor market.

With a daughter and son to care for, David knew he had to make a plan that would improve his employment options and provide a lifestyle more conducive to being a single parent. He had always been good with numbers, and liked helping people, so he went back to school to become an accountant.

While David was under a lot of stress, he never felt sorry for himself. With a loving family and support from friends, he knew that he was more fortunate than many local families. He had read stories about local shelters running over capacity due to the increasing number of homeless people in our community. David also knew that many of the homeless were children. As a parent, this broke his heart.

With Christmas just around the corner, David faced a dilemma. Every cent he had was going toward his monthly bills and his education, so there was nothing left for even modest gifts for his children. Because he was already leaning on friends and family to make ends meet, he wasn't comfortable asking them to foot the bill for Christmas gifts. Right around Thanksgiving, he was listening to the radio when he heard someone from The Salvation Army speaking about Christmas Bureau Distribution.

Later that evening, David thought, "Could Christmas Bureau be an answer to my prayers?" He knew that if he were alone, he'd be happy with a peanut butter and jelly sandwich for Christmas dinner, but he wanted more for his children. David called The Salvation Army and found out that he was eligible, based on his income, to receive food and gifts. He made plans to attend one of the Christmas Bureau registration days at The Oncenter.

This year, David is making good on that promise. Having successfully transitioned to a new career, he is reaching out to colleagues, sharing his own story, and putting together a volunteer team to help other families provide for their children this Christmas.

From 2009 - 2011, David was one of more than 10,000 parents who was able to provide food and gifts for his children through Christmas Bureau Distribution. Growing up in a middle class family, David never imagined that he would need this type of assistance, but as he moved past his initial discomfort, his life was transformed by the love he received from total strangers. As David experienced a connection to the larger community that he'd never felt before, he realized that the givers were getting as much out of this experience as were the receivers. David made a promise to himself, that when he got back on his feet, he would return to Christmas Bureau and share the generosity that he had been so blessed to have received.

Leaders from the following organizations work together all year long to make sure that no child is left behind at Christmas.

Please join us this season to make the holidays brighter for individuals and families in our community.

How to Help

🌟 Ring bells at our Red Kettles  
(sign up at registertoring.com)

🌟 Sponsor a food or toy drive

🌟 Host a mini Red Kettle in your place of business

🌟 Set up your own online Red Kettle  
(register at onlineredkettle.org/sas)

🌟 Adopt a Salvation Army program

🌟 Conduct an Angel Tree gift campaign

🌟 Support our holiday turkey drive

🌟 Volunteer for Christmas Bureau Distribution Day

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Committed to human dignity, diversity, client empowerment and professional excellence.

Captain John Luby, Executive Director, CNY Region  
Major Gayle Luby, CEO, Onondaga County  
Linda M. Wright, ACSW, Executive Director for Professional and Community Services  
Peter C. Irwin, Director of Advancement, Empire State Division  
Candace Ovid, Director of Development, CNY Region  
Greg Meitus, Corporate and Media Relations Manager

Others is published four times each year and is available online at sasyr.org.  
Your feedback is always welcome. Please direct questions and comments to  
Gregory.Meitus@salvationarmy.org or contact Greg at (315) 430-0749.
“While women weep, as they do now, I’ll fight; while little children go hungry, as they do now, I’ll fight; while men go to prison, in and out, in and out, as they do now, I’ll fight; while there is a drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets, while there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I’ll fight, I’ll fight to the very end!”

- WILLIAM BOOTH, FOUNDER OF THE SALVATION ARMY

In 1912, General William Booth entered the Royal Albert Hall in London to give his last, most notable address. For more than 60 years, he had been a living testament of The Salvation Army’s mission “to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.” As The Salvation Army approaches its 150th Anniversary year in 2015, our mission has never wavered, but the types of services we deliver have evolved to meet the changing needs of those we serve.

In the Syracuse region alone, we offer programs that support newborns to seniors, and all ages in between. When a family comes to our Emergency Homeless Shelter, they not only receive a warm place to sleep and a nutritious meal, but also mental and physical health services, affordable housing assistance and child care solutions. Our Emergency & Practical Assistance department has become a one-stop shop for emergency food assistance, housing support, programs for veterans, and navigating health insurance options. In addition to offering a social day program for hundreds of local seniors, our Senior Services department is stepping up to find ways for local residents to stay out of nursing homes and to continue to live independently.

The genius of William Booth was that he understood the need to serve the whole person, physically, emotionally and spiritually. Over the last 150 years, we have never lost sight of this essential truth, and as we head into our next 150 years, we will continue to deliver a patchwork quilt of programs that work together to meet these needs.

As we celebrate this holiday season, we give thanks for your continued support and for your trust in us to use your resources wisely to meet human needs, in His name, without discrimination. May you feel God’s love as you spend time with your friends and family.

Stay connected to your Salvation Army: sasyr.org
Charitable Giving through Appreciated Securities

Despite recent fluctuations, the stock market is up over ten percent from where it was at this time last year. This may be a very good time to “take stock” of your portfolio and consider a gift of appreciated securities to The Salvation Army. Remember, by doing so, you not only are able to make a tax-deductible gift; you are also able to avoid capital gains that you might otherwise incur. More importantly, you will be able to make a significant gift to your community by helping families in the region during a challenging time of year.

For more information, contact: John P. Gleason, C.F.R.E., CAP® Director of Planned Giving 888-434-1391

The material presented above is not offered as legal or tax advice.

THE SALVATION ARMY

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#GivingTuesday December 2, 2014

Call 479-3669 to donate your time.

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