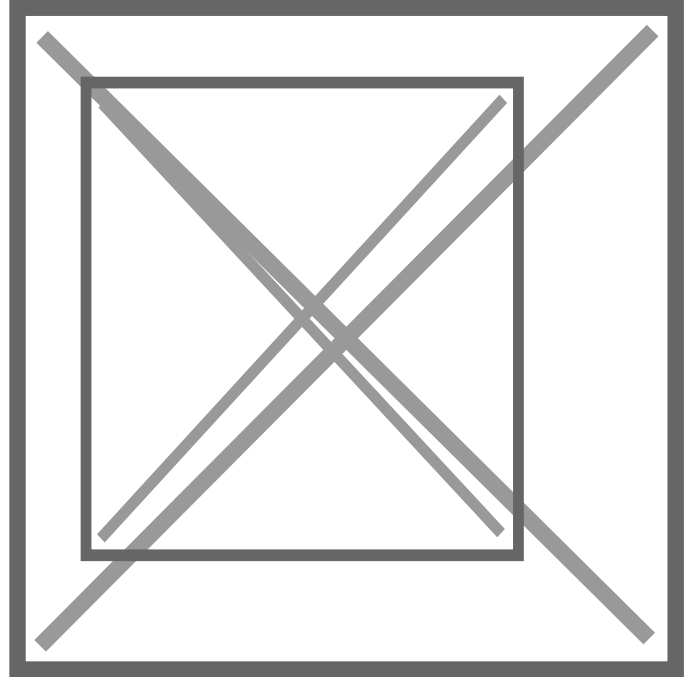


Cold hands, warm hearts—everyone loves the Army’s canteens



PARK CITY HYDRATION station: “The water is deeply appreciated. If you weren’t here, I don’t know what I’d do,” one spectator said.

BY RACHEL RAY –

While chaos unfurled in the world of pairs figure skating judging, Olympic visitors were able to find an oasis of calm at The Salvation Army hydration stations. The water stations were a big hit. Here people could step out of the sensory overload of sights and sounds and accept a cup of water — for free. Here no one was trying to sell them something. Some offered donations, but we kindly informed them that we were not here for that purpose.

The most memorable location was in the Olympics Medals Plaza, where a small heated shed was located next to our tent. It contained a large water source for the enthusiastic ticket holders and volunteers. People were hesitant to drink water in the biting cold that worsened drastically at night. Yet the expression of relief on their faces as they drank the room temperature water was priceless.

Many people were attracted to the hydration stations simply because of the red shields that were on our water igloos. They expressed their gratitude for the Army’s participation at the Olympics and for our work in general. Other volunteers were thankful as well. Their expressions of appreciation led to some great interactions about the work and ministry of The Salvation Army. We shared our faith when we could, and the people at the Olympics “knew we were Christians by our love.”