

From the Desk of...Reviewing it all in the West

By Carolyn Knaggs, Commissioner

One of the annual events of the territory is the command review of each division, when the territorial review team speaks with each divisional commander and staff. A painstaking process for the division, it provides the opportunity to take a deep look at the programming accomplishments of the year. We also analyze business administration practices and compliance issues for personnel—both officers and employees. This very thorough process is one that honors God. It is good practice to look back and to remember how God has blessed us and provided for our needs.

After a morning of looking at the strengths and hopes of the Golden State Division at its annual review, the divisional staff escorted us to the Bayview Hunters Point Ministry Center in San Francisco. We entered a recently painted storefront that was transformed into a drop-in location for neighborhood residents. Not all of the residents have a permanent address, but they reside in the community in what means they can work out.

As we walked into this Salvation Army hospitality center, we were greeted by a large tray of cookies and the smell of freshly brewed coffee. At the tables, one woman was checking her email account while two others worked on creating bracelets with beautiful beads provided by the center manager. Everything seemed calm and welcoming. As we talked about the service provided in this ministry center, it became clear that what we saw on the surface is not all that is going on.

We were escorted down the back stairs of the center into a small courtyard where the director could speak freely with us. She told us of the street people who daily stop by looking for a place to rest or a free cup of coffee. She told us stories of women, mistreated by their partners, who find refuge in the solitude of a two-room safe place. She expressed her awareness of the drug dealers and controllers of bad behavior who wreak havoc on the weaker members of the neighborhood. And she told us that she is determined to be a light in the neighborhood in the name of Christ. This woman, Jen, is a bright beam of the lighthouse of hope. She is a woman who is full of grace and love and compassion. She is also a woman who believes that the light of God can change and heal a broken heart.



In all that we discussed—ministry opportunities, financial accountabilities, and the precious personnel who have committed their lives to helping others and preaching the gospel—we were astonished by what we discovered that God is doing among us. We saw that soldiers are being enrolled, people are being discipled, and service given without discrimination.

In light of the wonderful mega-corps community centers that are being built in a few cities of our great territory, I reviewed the deep value of the small storefront operations where love and compassion are the password for entry. I am blessed by the types of service given all over the territory. We need the missionaries who have the great capacity to do macro deeds of kindness in meager surroundings as well as program specialists who operate the mega-centers of service.

We have reviewed the territory and are so pleased to tell you that God is at work through our many ministries and our many missionaries. We have a great Army because we have a great God.