

NEWS

New COVID funding for homeless

FAITH TALK

A head held high

MY STORY

Lives turned around in recycling venture

Salvos on the job to support refugees

Asylum seekers helped to get started in their new home



SALVOS

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WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT
BEAUTIFUL THINGS CAN HAPPEN,
EVEN IN TIMES OF CHAOS.

Colleen Allan
Nottingham University, England





The Salvation Army is about giving hope where it's needed most.

What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice

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A helping hand

Against the backdrop of this pandemic, the need to support society's most vulnerable people is even more pressing. These often overlooked groups include, refugees, asylum seekers and those struggling with mental illness.

In this edition we take a look at EPlus Local, a Salvos partnership helping asylum seekers gain paid work as they wait for the outcome of their visa applications.

We also provide glimpses of the Salvos' work in bushfire recovery, homelessness services and prison outreach – work that impacts those with complex and ongoing needs.

Belinda Davis shares her story of how caring for others helps her battle with overwhelming sadness, and Wes and Damien talk about their volunteer work and how it's assisted them work through challenging life circumstances.

The common theme here is helping others. Reaching out to those in need. This is something we can all do, wherever we are, and in whatever way we can.

Simone Worthing
Assistant Editor

EPlus Local on the job to support refugees

Walking
alongside
asylum seekers
as they find
their feet in
Australia

WORDS
SIMONE WORTHING



This photo was taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mary is a single mother who arrived in Australia from Africa after persecution and threats of continued violence. She was living with her two young children in cramped and unsafe conditions and was unable to find work to support her family. Like many other asylum seekers, Mary had limited access to support through government-funded job seeker services.

Through the Salvos EPlus Local program at the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Service in Brunswick, Melbourne, Mary has now completed studies in childcare and aged care, has full-time employment and is securing a better rental property for her family. Mary feels that her life is finally turning around, and she is grateful to the Salvos for their support.

EPlus Local is a holistic initiative between local Salvo churches and centres, the Salvos Employment Plus (EPlus) and the Salvos Diversity and Inclusion team to assist people seeking asylum find paid work and help meet their practical and social needs while they

await the outcome of their visa applications.

In Melbourne, the program runs from both The Salvation Army Asylum Seeker and Refugee Service under Major Karen Elkington, and at the Dandenong Salvos under Captain Fleur Hodge and Major Scott Smallacombe.

The EPlus Local pilot was developed in 2018 at Auburn Salvos, Sydney, in partnership with Employment Plus. The following year, the service supported more than 90 local people, 67 of whom secured meaningful work. It expanded into neighbouring Fairfield Salvos in early 2019.

At Fairfield Salvos, employment consultant Aditi Sharma works with Lieutenants Russell Brown and David Delany and conducts outreach programs at the Campsie and Liverpool Salvos. The program here primarily assists people seeking asylum and extends to refugees and other vulnerable members of the community. There is a focus on providing

holistic care for job seekers, including access to affordable food items, conversational English classes, referral for financial counseling and pastoral care.

“We always provide spiritual support to job seekers who come to Fairfield,” Russell says, “by showing the love of Jesus and by offering to pray for them.”

The EPlus Local initiative was extended to two Victorian locations in July 2019.

SPECIALIST SUPPORT

At each of the two Melbourne locations, EPlus Local employs a part-time Employment Specialist. These consultants have access to the full suite of Employment Plus resources, and leverage their knowledge of the local labour market to assist people into jobs.

“

There is a huge community and humanitarian need for this program, and it aligns so well with the mission of the Salvos.

”

“We are here to support our consultants in the employment space with specialist tools, while Karen and Scott run the day-to-day operations of the program on the ground,” explains Mary Beth Melton, EPlus North East Melbourne Regional Manager.

“There is a huge community and humanitarian

need for this program, and it aligns so well with the mission of The Salvation Army. This is a perfect partnership and we couldn’t be happier to be a part of it.”



ASYLUM SEEKER AND REFUGEE SERVICE

EPlus Local at this multifaceted service is continuing, with all COVID-19 recommendations firmly in place. Against the backdrop of this pandemic, the need to support people seeking asylum is even more pressing.

“When asylum seekers come to our service, I conduct a basic intake interview with them, do a visa verification to make sure they have the right to work, and find out what kind of work they would like to do,” says Karen.

“This conversation around work brings them to life! We see who they are, the skills they have and some of the options open to them. Our consultant, Natarla, and her five volunteers, then work with them through the ‘job club’.”

In non-COVID-19 times, Natarla meets with people individually and works with them intensively on their resume, job applications and other employment needs. She and her ▶

team also regularly call local employers to identify relevant job opportunities, introduce participants and advocate on their behalf.

In the past several months, most of this work has been done remotely through emails, phone calls and online appointments.

Many of the program's volunteers, and the businesses that offer jobs to people seeking asylum, are connected to Temple Beth Israel, a progressive Jewish Synagogue in St Kilda that partners with the service to assist those finding a new life in Australia.

The service has also developed a unique partnership with Deakin University's Centre for Refugee Employment, Advocacy, Training and Education (CREATE) that provides a similar service for people with university degrees.

“

Against the backdrop of this pandemic, the need to support people seeking asylum is even more pressing.

”

“They work with the highly-skilled and qualified asylum seekers and offer career clinics and pathways, mentoring, and a range of professional networks and connections,” explains Karen.

“We have referred 30 people into this program – people who come to us hungry and desperate, and who happen to have PhDs and other post-secondary qualifications. At least half have found work through CREATE.

“Natarla, and Shabnam [consultant] in Dandenong, are doing the same thing with all our asylum seekers – helping them tailor their resumes to get initial jobs wherever they can, and then consider future options. We also assist those who have disabilities and women with young children who are separated from violent partners and have never worked before.”

DANDENONG SALVOS

When Shabnam first started with the program, she found that her first challenge was to change the perspective of potential employers.

“Many of the asylum seekers didn't speak English, were single mums, had no transport and no support,” she says “Many employers were reluctant to give them jobs and had certain preconceptions about them.

“I had to convince them that people seeking asylum would be an asset to any company as they wanted to work, would be reliable and were ready to do anything. I also worked with the asylum seekers and, with God's grace and strength, helped prepare them for interviews and how to respond to the needs of each employer. This was successful and we are seeing more of our participants find work.”

In non-COVID-19 circumstances, two local volunteers assist Shabnam with intake assessments, writing resumes and coaching participants in what to expect in a job interview.

Assisting people seeking asylum to enrol in vocational study or courses to open additional employment options is another part of the consultant role. One participant, who completed a free sewing alterations course, is today running her own business and mentoring others.

So far, more than 75 people seeking asylum



Major Karen Elkington conducts intake interviews as the first step in the process of helping asylum seekers find employment.

have found work, including several who lost their jobs during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic and have now sourced alternative work.

EPlus Local also has a partnership with the Monash University 'Fast' program, which helps new university graduates and undergraduates find employment. "One of our candidates, an accountant in his home country, completed a finance brokering course through Monash," shares Shabnam. "He is working in that field today."

Most of the initial roles for those seeking asylum are entry-level positions or seasonal roles, which gives them time to get other qualifications recognised, improve their English, enrol in further study or engage in an additional job search. It also gives them local work experience to include in their resumes.

Scott (Dandenong Salvos) and his team see EPlus Local as a good partnership model for church and social programs. "Programs like this embed specialist services into a church-based site that already offers a range of community relationships and other services," he says. "Everyone benefits."

If your organisation is interested in financially supporting the work of EPlus Local, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Steve Kennedy at steve.kennedy@salvationarmy.org.au to discuss.



Scan here for more on finding employment.

Kindness counts in bushfire recovery

The Salvation Army has been supporting communities impacted by the Black Summer bushfires since they started in 2019, with relief workers continuing to stand alongside affected communities.

Hazel and her partner met the Salvos after bushfires swept through their Cobargo property in south-east NSW earlier this year. They were forced to evacuate with nothing but a bag of clothes, some photographs and important documents. When they returned the following day, everything was gone.

“The fire came [towards us] at 11 at night, and by 4am the next morning the fire was here, and we had to evacuate,” she said. “Three-quarters of this shire was burnt. All of our property gone ... everything, all of our animals. Everything.”

Hazel’s story is a familiar one in this small Bega Valley Shire town.

Since early January, Hazel and her partner have been waiting to rebuild. Like so many other affected families and individuals, they received government and charitable grants, including a ‘loss of residence’ financial grant from the Salvos. This assistance is helping them get back on their feet.

The Salvation Army Bushfire Recovery Team is continuing to deliver mid- to long-term support, which is especially needed now that bushfire-impacted communities are also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. “It’s been a double-whammy,” said Hazel.

Though the pandemic has created further



The team’s mobile vehicle visiting a property at Peak View, south-east NSW. **Inset:** One-on-one consultations are held inside the Salvos’ mobile recovery vehicle.

hardship and inconvenience for the Cobargo community, it has not halted the efforts of the Salvos team, which has been dealing with 50 to 60 grant applications a day.

The Salvos team has also recently gone ‘mobile’, driving donated vehicles to regional and rural areas impacted by the bushfires.

Hazel and her partner hope to be in their new home soon and are thankful for the long-haul support they have received from both the government and organisations like the Salvos. “Every bit of help we have gotten has come from everyone’s kindness,” she said. “It blows our minds.” – **Grace Michael**



Scan here for more on disasters and emergencies.

Coat tree helps provide winter warmth

Even on Queensland's Gold Coast, it gets cold during winter! So, this year, the Salvos started a 'coat tree' there, hanging warm coats and jackets on a tree in a park for those experiencing homelessness or going through tough times. If someone needs a warm coat, they can go to the tree to find one. If someone has a spare coat or wants to donate one, they can hang it on a coat tree for a person in need.

Kevin Lawler, a member of Gold Coast Salvos, is also a volunteer at Southport Courthouse. He helped get the coat tree started, just near the courthouse. Now, the Salvos and members of the community keep the tree supplied.

Different organisations and communities around the country have also set up coat



Volunteer Kevin Lawler makes sure the coat tree is well stocked.

trees to help those experiencing homelessness keep warm this winter.

Ten-year-old Oliver Edwards, from Hobart, Tasmania, came up with the coat tree idea in winter 2018. He called it 'Free on a Tree'.

Salvos welcome COVID funding for homeless

The Victorian Government announced a new \$150 million From Homelessness to a Home package late last month.

The funding includes an extension of hotel crisis accommodation until at least April next year and provides much-needed investment to help the Salvos and other organisations break the cycle of homelessness for thousands of Victorians.

"The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in a unique situation for all Victorians, including the homeless, and it will continue to be an issue for many months to come," said Major Jenny Begent, the Salvos Head of Social Mission.

"The ability to extend the current hotel response will enable The Salvation Army to

ensure homeless people have a roof over their heads and receive the support they need.

"Ongoing support, at all levels, is essential to ensure that these Victorians don't return to homelessness."

Since March, The Salvation Army has helped more than 3700 people across Victoria with housing establishment funding, including emergency accommodation, and more than 600 people with private rental support.



Scan here for more on homelessness.

A head held high

How focusing on helping others can be a key to overcoming sadness and despair

WORDS

MAJOR BELINDA DAVIS

These past few weeks have been particularly trying for me as I have wrestled with some mental health challenges. I have been overwhelmed with feelings of sadness, helplessness and despair. These feelings strike without warning and can last anywhere from an hour to an entire day.

Recently, I had my worst day so far. I was feeling bleak and lost, to the point of tears. I pushed myself to work on activities that have, in the past, brought equilibrium to my mindset, but they had limited impact.

I began to feel that nothing would lift me out of this black cloud. Hope-less was the best description of this situation.

And then my daughter asked if I could help her with something.

Hannah decided a few weeks ago that she would like to make a skirt. She had made one before with my help, and we had been working on this new project on and off for a couple of weeks. We had already sewn in pleats, pockets, a zip and a waistband.

While I am not an expert, I have completed a number of sewing projects over the years and, together, Hannah and I had so far been able to navigate the assembly of this skirt.

When she asked if I could assist her, it was



PHOTO BY OLESIA BUYAR ON UNSPLASH

the absolute last thing I felt like doing. I just wanted to sit and wallow in the overwhelming negativity I was feeling, believing that was the limit of my capacity for the day.

But my maternal instinct kicked in and I opted to sit with her and offer what assistance I could. Then something amazing happened. For the first time all day, I found



myself feeling lighter and brighter. We laughed and enjoyed the opportunity to create, if only for 45 minutes.

The contrast between what I had been feeling and what was now going on for me was significant. I wanted to know why. I took the time to reflect, assess what had happened, and I believe I landed on the answer.

By choosing to help Hannah, I was given the opportunity to take my focus away from my own situation. My perspective shifted to the needs of another and it made a significant impact on my mental health.

One of my favourite verses in the Bible came to mind, Psalm 3 verse 3, which speaks of God being the one who “lifts my head high”. This mental picture spoke to my contrast of feelings. Taking my eyes off feelings of helplessness and discovering that I could be helpful to another person was enough to lift my spirits, even if only for a short while. It was enough to recognise that there is hope, even if I can’t quite grasp it fully yet.

God has the capacity to shift my perspective, but just as with my decision to help Hannah, I need to make the choice to engage with the possibility that he wants to help me experience something broader. It was way too easy to stay put in my negative emotions, which are familiar and present, rather than put in perceived effort, which may or may not bring any reward.

I know I am not quite out of the woods yet, but I feel I have found one of the keys that could help me keep moving forward. Helping others can help me “lift my head” and enjoy the blessings that God wants for me.

May you be blessed, too.

Belinda Davis is a Salvation Army officer (pastor) in Victoria.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Lives turned around in bike recycling venture

Wes and Damien find new purpose in helping others

WORDS

DARRYL WHITECROSS AND SIMONE WORTHING

Salvos Re-cycle Bikes in Brisbane – where bikes are being given a second chance at life on the road – is also bringing new life and hope to several volunteers who are working through their own personal journeys.

Wes, 57, and Damien, 45, are two of those volunteers who are rediscovering a purpose in life through the innovative Salvation Army program.

“Working on recycling the bikes is helping me in my rehabilitation, after having spent several years in jail,” says Wes. “With my aircraft

engineering background, I am now the ‘principal mechanic’ at the bike recycling centre. I’m also aiming to be reconciled with my family soon in regional Victoria, and hopefully take what we do here at the centre down there.

“I’m working through a couple of issues first – and now we have the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions – but I want to be closer to my children to reaffirm my position as a father and, in turn, step up to being a hands-on grandfather.

“After being released from prison in 2017, the



Andy Steele (right) has encouraged Wes (left) and Damien (centre) in bike restoration, and rebuilding their lives.

Salvos Streetlevel Mission in Brisbane came into my life through a friend who suggested I look up a guy called Andy Steele there [Andy is the coordinator of Salvos Re-cycle Bikes].



Wes was part of the recent opening of Salvos Re-cycle Bikes.

"I did, but it wasn't long before I was incarcerated again. During this time Andy [who does volunteer prison outreach], told me about the bike program and said I was welcome to come and have a look when I got out.

"At that stage, Salvos Re-cycle Bikes was just beginning. While in jail I had acquired a welding certificate. I also have a lot of knowledge in the engineering trade and made some suggestions to Andy about putting some windows and doors in the shipping containers for when the bike shop opened there.

"After I got out we started to manufacture parts to put in the doors, workbenches, air compressors and window frames. We cut sections out of the container, welded window and door frames, and put in windows and doors, workbenches to work and air-con.

"My life was changing to the extreme – physically, emotionally and spiritually. I now feel good about myself because I'm helping others, I have met people who are genuine and I have friends who understand and care.

"At my age, too, this work is ideal for me. It gets me out of the house, gives me

responsibility and I can speak to people. I have suffered from mental health issues so this helps me cope; takes my mind away from things.

"The life I used to live before I did this was completely different. I've got the taste of this new way. I can't go backwards."

Damien's path to the bike recycling centre was also through some challenging personal circumstances.

"I had some court issues and had completed the rehab program at Moonyah [The Salvation Army drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in Brisbane].

"As part of this I had met Paul Brittenden through God's Sports Arena [a Salvos church in Brisbane that reaches out to the homeless and people doing it tough]. Paul is involved in Salvos Re-cycle Bikes too.

"I talked to Paul about what I wanted to do [and] bikes had come up in conversation. Paul told Andy that I was 'a bloke who likes to ride and fix bikes', and the partnership rolled on from there.

"The program gives me a sense of purpose; some direction. It's a passion. I would like to get more involved and hopefully turn it into some sort of employment.

"I like giving back to the Salvos. They have done a lot for me ... they have saved my life. I was heavily involved in drugs [so] without these guys, who knows where I would be?"



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Lemon delicious pudding

PHOTO BY TITIPHUM KOONJANTUEK ON UNSPLASH



Ingredients

60g butter or margarine, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar, 3 eggs, separated, 60g self-raising flour, grated rind and juice of a large lemon, 1 cup milk

Method

Cream butter, sugar and egg yolks.

Add sifted flour, lemon rind and juice. Mix slightly.

Add milk slowly, stirring well.

Beat egg whites until stiff and fold into mixture.

Pour into greased pie dish.

Bake in moderate oven for around 30 minutes.

Serve while warm.

Have a laugh

How many times can you subtract 10 from 100?

Once. The next time you would be subtracting 10 from 90.

Did you hear about the claustrophobic astronaut?

He just needed a little space.



What did the bald man say when he received a comb as a present?

Thanks, I'll never part with it.

What rhymes with orange?

No, it doesn't.

Bible byte

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Ephesians chapter 4, verse 32

5				7	1	3	
	2		9			4	
							8
			3			5	
			4	8		6	
			2			3	
	6	2		4			
8		1	3				2
4		9	7			6	

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tum-Tum

On which page of this week's *Salvos Magazine* is Tum-Tum hiding?

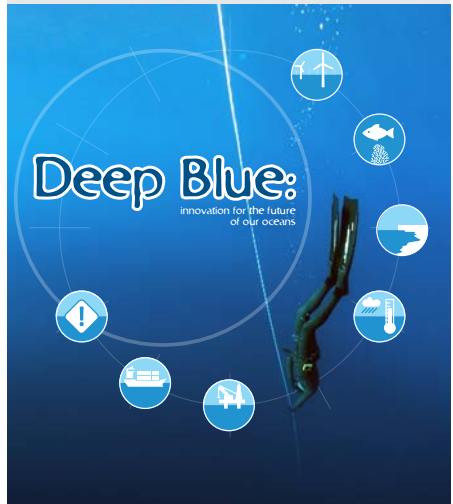


Tum-Tum: is hiding in the coat tree on page 9.

- Answers: 1. August 15-23
 2. Australia's annual celebration of science and technology 3. False (Pacific Ocean) 4. Isaac Asimov 5. God (Genesis chapter 1, verse 1)

4	3	9	6	2	1	2	6	5
8	5	1	3	9	6	7	4	2
7	6	2	5	4	8	3	9	1
6	1	5	2	7	3	8	9	4
2	7	3	4	6	5	1	8	7
9	8	4	6	3	1	2	5	7
3	7	4	2	5	6	9	1	8
1	2	8	9	5	2	1	3	9
5	4	6	8	2	7	1	3	9

Quick quiz



1. When is National Science Week 2020?
2. What is National Science Week?
3. The Atlantic Ocean is the biggest ocean on Earth. True or false?
4. What science fiction writer wrote the three laws of robotics?
5. Who does the Bible say created the heavens and earth?

Did you know?

- Less than five per cent of the planet's oceans have been explored.
- The majority of life on earth is aquatic.
- The world's longest mountain chain is underwater.

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