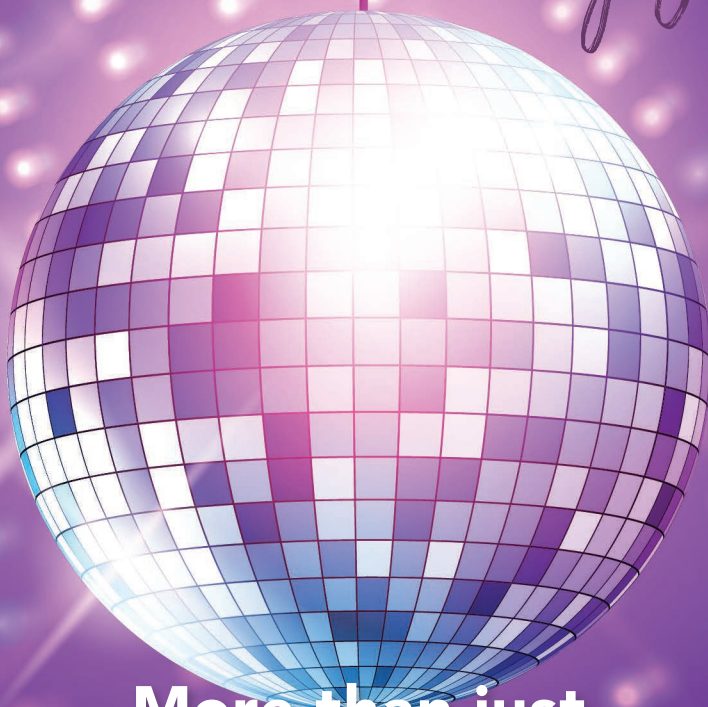


salvos

magazine



More than just a disco party

Celebrating inclusion, diversity
and belonging



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FEATURE

Pathways
to hope,
part IV

FAITH TALK

A real-life
wonder
woman

MY STORY

Great
courage
and faith

“STOP TRYING TO MAKE
EVERYONE HAPPY.
YOU’RE NOT CHOCOLATE.”

- #TOBYMAC





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



The Salvation Army Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet and work and pay our respect to Elders, past, present, and future. We value and include people of all cultures, languages, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and intersex status. We are committed to providing programs that are fully inclusive. We are committed to the safety and well-being of people of all ages, particularly children.

Salvos Magazine

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The making of a superhero

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Disability no barrier to service

Celebrate diversity

Many of us recently watched the Paralympic Games. It was inspiring to see the achievements of the Paralympic athletes, as it was a few weeks before watching the Olympic athletes.

People with and without disabilities all reflect the image of God. We are not really different from each other. We all want to love and be loved, to have good relationships, enjoy life, realise our dreams and have a place to belong.

In this week's *Salvos Magazine*, our feature explores a unique music program that offers just that – a place where diversity is celebrated, and NDIS participants can express themselves through music and dance in a safe, inclusive, fun and caring environment.

In My Story, Tanya shares her journey of courage and faith, and how she refuses to be defined by her disability.

And, as Belinda Davis writes in this week's Faith Talk, we are all uniquely made by God, and each one of us is more wonderful than we might think – including you!

Check out salvosonline.org.au for these stories and more.

Simone Worthing *Editor*

MORE THAN JUST A DANCE PARTY

Providing disco fun and belonging for NDIS participants

By Lerrisse Smith

With its lively and creative approach, the VAMP (Varied Abilities Music Program) Music Disco is not just another dance party. It's a unique participatory disco with interactive percussion, dancing and singing provided for NDIS participants so they can truly shine – and they love it.

"It's kicking on really well at the moment," said Dave Parker, Community Music Activities Coordinator at Mornington Salvos (Vic.).

"Everything that happens on the day is about trying to create a sense of belonging, a sense of fun, a sense of community."

As a talented and experienced musician, singer and teacher, Dave knows firsthand the power of dance and music to unite people from all walks of life and transcend cultural and language barriers. His mission is simple: For everybody to feel free and uninhibited to truly enjoy and express themselves in a safe, inclusive and caring environment.

Song requests are all-important, with *Bad Romance*, *Ghostbusters*, *YMCA* and *Dancing Queen* among the most requested songs. "They love it," David said. "They will bring their requests on their phones and show them to me."

EVOLUTION OF VAMP

The story of VAMP began several years ago, with Dave behind its inception. He was employed with the education department for most of his professional life, first as a music teacher, before working in the student wellbeing and support program for 29 years.

As facilitator of the Student Representative Council in nearby Rosebud, Dave became involved in the 'Blue Light Disco'. The police ran the disco in the area, plus a 'disability disco' once a year. Dave fully supported the initiative and encouraged children to join the



Drumming is just one of the musical expressions at the disco.

fun. It also gave him “a bit of a taste” of how a disco ran for people with disabilities.

When he retired, Dave was approached to take over a community music access program at Hastings Salvation Army. The program ran for four years, one day a week, before ceasing due to COVID-19. It was then that Dave initiated VAMP Music Disco.

“I have a lot of percussion instruments placed around the room, and four to five guitars with straps so participants can walk around and strum. It doesn’t matter if they know how to play the instruments; they are just having fun. It’s all about the tactile experience,” said Dave.



IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THEY KNOW HOW TO PLAY THE INSTRUMENTS; THEY ARE JUST HAVING FUN.



About 20 to 30 people on the NDIS attend each week. Most of them are regulars. The attendees come with an agency worker who accompanies them for the day.

EVERYONE INCLUDED

Also joining in on the fun is Mornington Salvos officer (pastor), Major Debbie Taylor. She said VAMP was bringing the joy of Jesus to the beautiful people who took part through music and dance in a way they may understand.



Dave Parker and a disco participant enjoy banging on bongos.

With the disco entry costing \$7 to cover running costs, most support workers encourage their clients to have cash in their wallets, transact that payment and receive a receipt to help build their life skills and efficacy in society.

Of key importance for Dave is continuing to provide a fun event where everyone feels accepted, valued, included and respected.

“As a person of faith, I try to create some experience for people who are normally excluded that resembles or could simulate what it might be like to be in the presence of the kingdom of God,” Dave said.

“Because it’s a community where they’re accepted and there’s no exclusion. People are encouraged to participate in whatever way they want. And that’s my theology behind the disco.” ▶

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF MUSIC

Salvos Magazine journalist **LERISSE SMITH** shares a personal reflection on immersing herself in a celebration of inclusivity – **VAMP Music Disco**.

I am a self-confessed disco aficionado.

Cast your eyes upon my playlists or often-viewed YouTube music clips, and you'll find Patrick Hernandez's *Born to Be Alive*, Pseudo Echo's *Funky Town* and Chic's *Le Freak* among my much-loved boppy dance songs from the 1970s and '80s.

My love for all things 'discoey' began young and has never faded. So, with great excitement and anticipation, I headed down to the VAMP Music Disco at Mornington Salvos for a great day out. It didn't disappoint. It was one of the best Tuesdays I've had in a long time, busting some moves with a group of wonderful people who equally loved to move, groove, sing and play instruments in their own special way.



**ATTENDING VAMP WAS
A CELEBRATION OF
INCLUSIVITY AND ... JOY.**



Whether people were in wheelchairs or not it was evident this special space was for everyone to have a memorable time – and they certainly did.

Adding to the vibrancy of the event was a kaleidoscope of flashing lights that danced in time with the pulsating beats, plus an array of microphones, guitars, tambourines, maracas, djembe West African drums and other instruments that offered a tactile experience to excite the senses and elevate the soul.

EVERYONE ACCEPTED

DJ David ensured there was an incredible diversity of music, and with constant requests from the participants streaming in, the energy in the room shifted to a new level of excitement as everyone responded to their much-awaited song.

It was a great testament to Dave Parker's pioneering vision and passion for creating a community where everyone was accepted and encouraged to participate however they wanted, and a shining example to all that a fusion of lights, music and a venue could greatly benefit people on the NDIS.

As I walked out, I couldn't help but feel a deep sense of gratitude. Attending VAMP was a celebration of inclusivity and the joy found in the transformative power of music and dance.



Scan here for more information on the Salvos and caring for people with disabilities.

Five minutes of social justice – Disability discrimination and hardship

Social justice means different things to different people, but it generally includes the idea of a fair and equitable society.

In Australia, social justice challenges are multifaceted. Some of the issues we face are huge and will take effort to fix, but all of them can be improved.

According to the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, approximately one in five Australians live with disability. A person might have an impairment, but this is only a disability when our society makes it one. That means when our community is organised in such a way that that impairment means a person is not able to participate in society fully. Unjust or prejudicial treatment of individuals based on their impairment or perceived impairment amounts to disability discrimination.

These barriers can also make people with disability more vulnerable to other forms of disadvantage and sometimes, they make people with disability more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

GOT FIVE MINUTES?

Did you know that 3 December is International People with Disability Day? Put it on your calendar, and engage with stories about some of the contributions and achievements of the 4.4 million Australians with disability, both visible and invisible.

WANT TO DIG DEEPER?

Check out theatre productions developed and performed by people with a disability, such as Rebus Theatre (rebustheatre.com) or Options Theatre Company (optiontheatrecompany.org.au).

There are also some videos relating to experiences of disability that have been produced and published by Salvos Studios over the last 12 months, including a video on how the Salvos care for people with disabilities and featuring snapshots of personal stories - see QR code on page 6.

Disability - key statistics July 2024

- 5.5 million Australians (21.4%) had disability, up from 17.7% in 2018.
- 15.0% of people aged 0-64 years had disability, compared with 52.3% of people aged 65 years and over.
- Disability prevalence was similar for males (21.0%) and females (21.8%).
- 7.9% of all Australians had a profound or severe disability.



Scan here for the latest ABS data on disability, ageing and carers.

Pathways to hope

Salvos respond to the challenge of food insecurity

In the fourth and final part of the *Salvos Magazine* series featuring Salvation Army research and the difference its services are making, we explore the issue of food insecurity. The Salvation Army's Research and Outcomes Measurement team conducts research each year to better understand the experiences of the people we serve. The 2023-24 research project examined the financial circumstances, cost-of-living pressures, housing situations, life challenges, and aspects of health and wellbeing of more than 1500 community members who had accessed assistance from our emergency relief services in the past year.

FOOD INSECURITY

The prevalence of food insecurity among households was alarming, with many people forced to skip meals or endure hunger because they could not afford enough food to eat. Some even had to make the difficult choice of foregoing meals to ensure their children or family pets were fed. The impact also extended to many families, with some unable to provide three meals a day for their children, leading to situations where children went to school hungry or without lunch.

Everyday items now cost more. Unfortunately, people on low incomes and with limited resources can no longer afford essential items, with many simply forced to go without. Food insecurity – where people lack reliable access to enough affordable and nutritious food due to a shortage of money or other resources – affects more than one million Australians every month. Last year, more than 3.7 million households ran out of food.

Experiences of financial hardship and cost-of-living pressures are the main contributing factors to food insecurity in Australia.

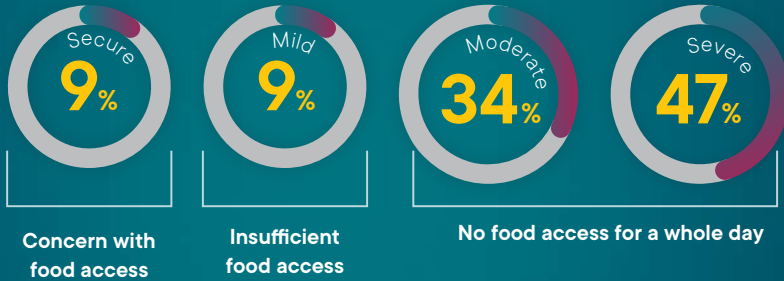
Food insecurity was a widespread issue among survey respondents. Alarmingly, the rate of food insecurity reported in this survey was seven times higher than the national average for Australia.



of respondents experienced some form of food insecurity.



experienced severe food insecurity, going a whole day without eating because of financial difficulties.



How the Salvos help 2023



Salvos Doorways
Emergency Relief and
Community Services
assisted more than
135,000 people
in need



Salvos Doorways
Emergency Relief and
Community Services
provided nearly **48,000**
food parcels for people
in need



Each week, Salvos
expressions provide
community meals
to more than
4700 people



Each year, Salvos
expressions
provide more than
240,000
community meals
to people in need

The making of a superhero

We are all more wonderful than we think

By Belinda Davis

We are lovers of superheroes in my house, and there are many representations of this phenomenon in the form of Lego figures and branding on everything from t-shirts to underwear. We each seem to have a favourite hero (although a couple are actually villains) and we often debate about these characters.

Long before the movie was made, we would ask "Is Batman greater than Superman?" Superman has powers because he is an alien and not part of this world, whereas Batman relies upon strength and contraptions that have been made as a result of the wealth of his alter ego (spoiler alert!) Bruce Wayne. Who deserves the label 'super' more?

Often superhero origins involve some kind of scientific accident, as in the case of Peter Parker (Spiderman) or Bruce Banner (the Hulk). Sometimes, it is the bestowing of a tool of power onto an ordinary

person – as with Hal Jordan who becomes the Green Lantern when he wears his special ring. Then there are others who come from a different place, and as they live and serve on earth, they demonstrate how superior to us they are.

My favourite hero is Wonder Woman, possibly because I remember watching the show on television as a child, and there are very few examples of women in the superhero realm. An Amazonian princess, she is the epitome of strength and power to me, while looking awesome in her skimpy outfit. I remember playing out my own scenes from Wonder Woman storylines as a kid, and happily believing myself to be fully capable of the amazing things she did.

DIFFERENCES

Reality did tell me, however, that I could never really be Wonder Woman because she was made of different stuff. There



are times when I can feel a little bit like Wonder Woman when I am juggling home life, children, work, study and more.

Then there are other times when I feel like I am trying to show others that I am like Wonder Woman, rather than admit I can't do everything that lies before me. These are the times of highest danger for me as I try to do it all, on my own.

REAL WONDER

The Bible says that I actually have more in common with Wonder Woman than I imagine. Psalm 139 verse 14 tells me that I am "fearfully and wonderfully made" by God. Wonderfully. Full of wonder! What an awesome picture that is.

“

**The Bible says that
I actually have more
in common with Wonder
Woman than I imagine.**

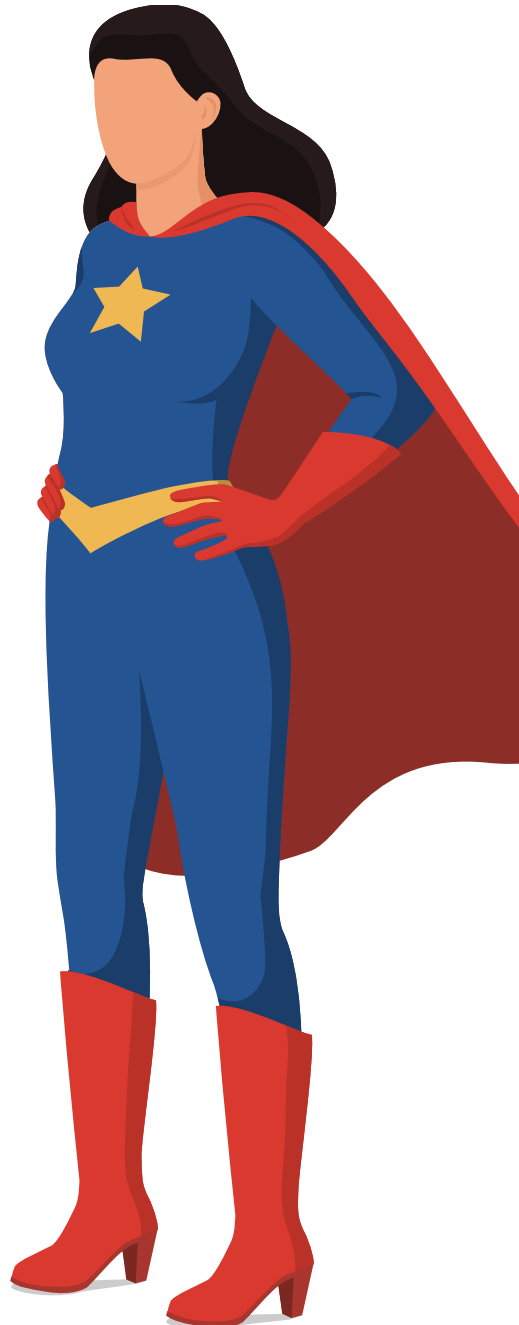
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While I may not have an invisible plane at my disposal or be able to use a golden lasso of truth, because I am one of God's creations I am truly a woman of wonder! A person of wonder – and so are you.

Major Belinda Davis is a Salvation Army officer (pastor) serving on the lands of the Kurna Nation, Adelaide. She blogs at a-blessed-life.com



Scan here for more stories of hope.



Disability no barrier to service

Tanya's story of courage and faith

Tanya's foster mother, Ivy Sutton, tells how Tanya came into her care from foster care when she was eight. It was very difficult to place Tanya into an Indigenous family because of her degree of disability. As Ivy had been a nurse, and had worked in the Kimberleys with Aboriginal people, she was given permission to adopt Tanya.

Ivy recalls how, on Tanya's first Sunday at church, Tanya turned and said to Ivy's sister, "Auntie Marge, I know the person I have been talking to, or who has been talking to me all the time when things were not good. It was Jesus, I know who he is." She had that personal experience of him, one-to-one.

TANYA TELLS HER STORY

My disability is a physical one with vision impairment, but I never let my disability get in my way.

When I went to primary school, I was told I would amount to nothing. When I hit year 12, I was told the exact same thing. But when I hit university, that was a challenge because someone said, "You are black, you are in a wheelchair and you are a woman."

I thought about that, and doing the three degrees I have done, I had to fight with every educational department to get the support I needed. No one did my exams for me. I did them. No one sat in lectures with me. No one did my assessments for me. I did them, but I had to fight to do them. I hate that

people assume things that I'm not, and it's nothing to do with who I am.

My faith has put me in a place where I have had to lean on myself, but also lean on people that love me. My faith is on me all the time. It's in my action, it's in my daily life, it's in everything I do.

“

Just because I am in a wheelchair doesn't mean that I cannot serve anybody.

”

THE CHOICE TO SERVE

One of my favourite Bible verses is Joshua chapter 24, verse 15: "As for me and my house, I will serve the Lord." The reason those words are so important to me is because they are my building blocks of my life.

Just because I am in a wheelchair doesn't mean that I cannot serve anybody. A lot of people do not see me working behind the scenes, but I come alongside people and say, "Are you okay this week?" or "Is there anything you need?" Then I can go and do it.

If they ask me to do something I know I can't do without help, I bring them with me. But if I can, I do it by myself. I can cook for someone, which I have done.



Tanya and her foster mother, Ivy, have been together since Tanya was eight.

I don't do what I do to get recognition but because people appreciate what I do.

“

I am just me. I am just here doing God's work.

”

GOD HAS A PLAN

Otherwise, I am just me. I am just here doing God's work, and I understand why he put me where he did, to teach people how to treat a person.

I will not hold anything against anybody for their reactions to me. Their reactions only happen because they're not sure how to react to me in public.

To the people that know me, I'm just an ordinary person. We all have talents that we can use, but we all should be on an equal playing field because you have the talent to do what you can do, and I have too.

I'm the same girl, but I'm doing it differently.

There are a lot of people who have influenced me to be the person I am today and have helped me grow in my faith. I've grown up to where I am now, but God still has a plan. And whether I accept or reject that is my decision.



Scan here to watch Tanya's video.

Choc-energy balls



Ingredients

2 cups mixed toasted nuts; 1 cup rolled oats; ½ cup dried apricots, chopped; ½ cup sultanas; ¼ cup pumpkin seeds (pepitas); ¼ cup cocoa; ¼ cup honey; 1 tsp cinnamon; 1 cup desiccated coconut; 1 tbspc. cocoa, extra

Method

- Place nuts and oats in a food processor and crumb.
- Add dried fruits and chop.
- Add the pumpkin seeds, cocoa, honey and cinnamon. Process to combine or mix by hand.
- Roll tablespoonsful of mixture into balls.
- Combine coconut and extra cocoa. Roll each ball in the coconut mixture to coat, place on a tray and then refrigerate until firm.
- Store in an airtight container.



Quick quiz

1. Which city hosted the inaugural Paralympic Games?
2. In which year were the first Paralympic Games held?
3. The Paralympics logo consists of three crescents. What colours are they?
4. What is the current Paralympics motto that was introduced in Athens in 2004?
5. What two sports feature in the Paralympics but not the Olympic Games?
6. Which country has topped the medal table a record nine times at the Paralympic Games?

Bible byte

“So the impossible is possible with God.”

Luke chapter 1, verse 37
The Voice Bible translation

Tum-Tum

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



M P B F L H I G H L I G H T S R
 W M A Y R E E O E S V T D H D E
 O I M R T E G R O W I N G K T X
 B F N C A B E A X J H A O S E S
 W H E C Y L R D C W U T M T N W
 B A Q N L C Y A O Y U H E A N I
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 I J J M T A C C E S S I B L E M
 G D I S A B I L I T I E S U X G
 L S W H E E L C H A I R W O E O

Wordsearch

Words are hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, forwards and backwards. Enjoy!

- Accessible
- Archery
- Athletes
- Boccia
- Braille
- Cycling
- Disabilities
- Equality
- Fencing
- Freedom
- Highlights
- Inclusive
- Legacy
- Medals
- Paralympics
- Paris
- Phryge
- Rowing
- Stadium
- Swimming
- Team
- Tennis
- Unity
- Wheelchair

HAVE A LAUGH



Why did the librarian get kicked off the plane?
 Because it was overbooked.

What goes through towns, up hills and down hills but never moves?
 The road.

What's worse than raining cats and dogs on vacation?
 Hailing taxis.

WHAT AM I?

I am a technological masterpiece in building-construction history, built almost entirely of open-lattice wrought iron. Constructed over two years 1887-1889.

At an elevation measuring 330 metres, I was the tallest structure in the world until 1929.

I am one of the world's premier tourist attractions.

Quiz answers: 1. Rome, 2. 1960, 3. Red, blue and green, 4. Spirit in Motion, 5. Boccia and Goalball, 6. USA.
 I am: The Eiffel Tower
 Turn-Turn: is hiding behind the heading on page 6.



Have you taken care of your Will?

A gift in your Will can help The Salvation Army create a long-lasting impact in the lives of those experiencing hardship.

Find out how you can start or continue your legacy of generosity. Contact The Salvation Army's Wills and Bequests team and ask for a free Wills booklet.

Together, we can give hope where it's needed most long into the future.



CONTACT US TODAY

1800 337 082 or visit
salvationarmy.org.au/wills

