



Compassion for Christmas

"It is so wonderful to be able to say to our clients, you just concentrate on keeping your bills paid and we'll organise Christmas." – Rosemary Campbell

The proud woman sitting across the table from Salvation Army community welfare worker Rosemary Campbell wept as she was told she was going to have "a beautiful Christmas".

Each year Nambour Salvos South Queensland is privileged to be able to tell more than 150 struggling clients that Christmas will be taken care of. Although Rosemary is passionate about supporting those in need throughout the year, organising a special Christmas for clients is her favourite job.

Backing the Salvos is "the most generous community ever", says Rosemary. Among the support is the Sunshine Coast Daily newspaper which encourages locals to 'Adopt a Family' at Christmas, and Aussie World, which opens its doors free every year to Salvation Army clients and others at Christmas.

Circle of care

Rosemary, herself, was a recipient of support from the Salvos for a time, after her marriage broke up and she was left struggling to raise four children.

Rosemary remembers, "My youngest one used to go to school with holes in his shoes. You struggle and go from one pay to another and think 'where am I going to get the money to pay this bill?'"

Rosemary did not at first approach the Salvos for help, but rather came in contact



SHARON PATERSON

ROSEMARY (LEFT) LOVES LAVISHING CHRISTMAS CARE ON CLIENTS.

through the children's SAGALA program. This led to volunteering in a number of roles, including Salvo Care Line. Today she is employed for 18 hours a week, but works many more as a volunteer.

"You worry you're not going to be able to put the food on the table and hearing your kids talking about what other kids have been given, makes you feel ... heartbroken."

Family Christmas

For a time when her children were young, Salvos staff insisted that Rosemary, too, accept some help at Christmas.

"The Salvation Army stood beside me and helped us for quite a few Christmases while the kids were growing up," she says.

"You try and make Christmas as happy as possible, but you still have that feeling inside that you're not giving your kids what you'd love to be able to give them.

Each year Nambour Salvos South Queensland assists more than 150 struggling clients at Christmas.

Rosemary says knowing someone cares, can help make "Christmas a very special time." ○

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Meet our brand new Salvo Ambassadors Thirty-one young ambassadors are part of the first-ever Salvo Ambassador Movement. Representing 17 high schools across Sydney, the pilot program aims to develop young social justice leaders within the community. Australian boy band, *What About Tonight*, toured a number of schools to help the new Salvo Ambassadors raise awareness of youth homelessness.

It's not a sleepover if you can't go home The Salvation Army's 2013 Couch Project has raised more than \$38,000, with people from all over Australia including television presenter James Mathison, signing up. The Couch Project is a fundraising and awareness campaign for youth homelessness and couch surfing, raising money for crisis and transitional accommodation services at Oasis in Surry Hills.

Salvos Legal wins top award Sophie Roberts, an Associate at Salvos Legal Humanitarian, has received the Lawyers Weekly Australian Law Awards 2013 Young Gun Award.

Salvos step up food 'security' in south-west Sydney The Salvation Army has built on the success of its Food 4 Life Market by opening another service in the south-western Sydney suburb of Busby. The market is modelled on the successful Warwick Farm Food 4 Life Market, which has been operating for five years.

Salvos commit to long-term care of cyclone-devastated Cassowary Coast with the opening of a Family Store at Innisfail.

Investing in the lives of others

After driving his own taxi for 30 years, then retiring at the age of 74, Dennis Wyndham began volunteering at The Salvation Army's Pacific Lodge Aged Care Plus Centre, driving residents to and from medical appointments.

"It is something I really enjoy – you meet so many interesting people," Dennis says.

In addition to his taxi service, Dennis studied at Hawkesbury Agricultural College, worked as a jackaroo and spent years with Commonwealth Serum Laboratories.

After retiring through ill health, and with no direct living relatives, Dennis became a **Salvation Army** "Honoured Friend", pledging to leave a bequest to The Salvation Army.

As well as volunteering at Pacific Lodge in Dee Why, he collects for

The Red Shield Appeal and is also exploring the option of helping those who are struggling with depression after trauma and loss.

Dennis grew up with a father who was badly traumatised after being shot and gassed repeatedly in the First World War.

"I have always admired The Salvation Army," he says.

"They are sincere. They don't judge people. If somebody's starving, they give them food. If they need emotional advice, they give them that. When I collected for them, I'd knock on the door and people would say 'I've always admired the Sallies because they're sincere'. That's the message that prevails."

Glen Evans, of The Salvation Army, says of Dennis' support: "At Pacific Lodge, the people love Dennis. He makes a real difference in their lives." ○



DENNIS WYNDHAM HELPS PACIFIC LODGE RESIDENT KATE RITCHIE FROM THE CAR

We would love to hear why you support The Salvation Army. Tell us what motivates you to give and you may feature in our next edition of *On the Scene* Email generosity@ae.salvationarmy.org

Daring to smile



AFTER YEARS OF PAIN AND SHAME, NICOLE CAN NOW SMILE PROUDLY. INSET WITH DENTIST COLIN SEANIGER.

“There were a couple of years there where the only reason we got Christmas was because the Salvos were able to help me out.” – Nicole

Several years ago, Nicole found herself parenting her three young children alone after her relationship to their father, diagnosed with a mental health issue, deteriorated.

To complicate matters, her children, now aged seven to nine, have required ongoing specialist medical treatment for a range of conditions including juvenile arthritis.

“All three of my children require a special diet and, at times, medication, which can mean that providing just the very essential things in life like food, clothing, heat and a roof over our heads can almost seem impossible,” she says.

Reaching a crisis point, Nicole says she very reluctantly sought help from **The Salvation Army** Emergency Relief in Canberra which has assisted more than 2300 clients in the past six months.

“They were the difference between having food and not having food, or

having winter clothes instead of going cold,” Nicole says. “There are times when you are literally at rock bottom and the Salvos have been the ones who have helped get us back on our feet.”

Battling pain and poverty

On top of a daily financial struggle, Nicole’s teeth were in an extremely poor state.

“Constant chronic infections, broken teeth and unbearable pain were taking a major toll,” she says. “The ongoing costs just for doctors’ appointments, antibiotics and pain relief were crippling.”

The Salvation Army referred Nicole to The Dental Health Program, run in partnership with ACT Health and the ACT Southern Tablelands Division of the Australian Dental Association which offers an on-site dental service in Civic ACT. There is also a smaller service in nearby NSW.

Founder, Salvation Army volunteer Liz Dawson (OAM) explains that a poor dental state can profoundly affect employability and self-esteem. She says: “A client when told her turn had come

on the dental waiting list wept at the end of the phone because that morning, when she had said to her seven-year-old ‘would you like me to come to assembly this morning’, he’d said ‘no, I don’t want you to come because your teeth are black.’”

The Salvation Army Emergency Relief in Canberra has assisted more than 2300 clients in the past six months.

Nicole now confidently works as an assistant manager at a school canteen and is completing a certificate in Food and Safety Management.

She says: “For a long time I couldn’t talk, I couldn’t go out in public. I was incredibly self-conscious.

“So when dentist Colin* went out of his way to get me, as quickly as possible, to a point where I felt like I could smile again, that in itself was life-changing.” ○

* Dr Colin Seaniger recently won a Highly Commended Award in the 2013 ACT Volunteer of the Year Awards.

Miracle of love



LEAH IS COMMITTED TO BRINGING HOPE TO YOUNG LIVES.

“I think a lot of people are scared about kids being damaged and worry that they can’t make a difference, but very quickly I started to see the impact that love could have.” – Leah Robinson

In her early 20s and still living with her parents, Salvation Army worker and volunteer Leah Robinson knew there was a desperate shortage of foster carers, but had no idea if she would be considered at her age.

With her parents’ support, she decided to carry out the necessary training and was immediately asked to care for a baby who required medication and treatment around the clock.

“One of the reasons I agreed to care for this little girl was because she had some illnesses and disabilities and I have a rare bone condition that I have suffered from since a young child,” Leah says.

Leah was the primary carer, but had valuable support from her family, their Salvation Army church, other carers and “a great team of doctors”.

Thriving through care

Leah says the young girl soon exceeded all expectations for walking

and talking and, as she reached each milestone, “there was just an incredible sense of joy and happiness”.

“The first day that she walked at church, when she got up for kids time and actually walked on to the stage with some wobbled steps – to hear the clap and the cheer (from 250 people) as she did that was incredibly exciting and I think everyone felt a part of her story,” Leah says.

“We all want to be a part of changing someone’s life and I can’t think of a better way than fostering.”

Still in her 20s and recently married, Leah has now not only offered long-term care, but also short-term emergency care and respite care, to nine children.

“There are children desperately in need of genuine love and affection, the basic human needs, but they’re not getting those things,” Leah says.

To hear more from Leah, visit salvos.org.au/leah 

Young hope

Recent statistics from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW, 2013) show that, as of 30 June 2012, there were 39,621 Australian children living in out-of-home care, with the number of children in out-of-home care almost doubling from 2003 to 2012 (a rise of 95 per cent).*

The Salvation Army recently became one of 38 non-government organisations to receive NSW Government funding to provide foster care services. Young Hope is currently providing homes to over 60 children in Sydney and the Hunter/Central Coast regions. (The changes follow the recommendations of Justice James Wood through an inquiry into the NSW child protection system.)

The Young Hope service is adopting the “Mirror Family Model” that helps create layers of support around the child or young person and the key carer, including wider community family-style mentoring for the fostered child, plus ongoing support once they turn 18.

Young Hope director Michelle White says: “If you look at our youth centres and services, the stories we are getting is many kids have had traumatic experiences in the system, and we felt we really needed to step into that space and work to make a real impact earlier in young lives.”

Young Hope needs your support.

You can volunteer to become a carer, donate to the service or even become an “aunty” or “grandad” to a child in care. Every contribution can change the life of a child or young person.

For further information visit salvos.org.au/younghope

*Source: Australian Government Australian Institute of Family Studies



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