



**THE SALVATION ARMY OF EL PASO
SERVING EL PASO COUNTY**

4300 E. Paisano Dr.

El Paso, TX 79905

915-544-9811

salvationarmytexas.org/elpaso

facebook.com/salarmyelpasotx

EMERGENCY SHELTER

Open Daily

Intake: 9:00 am–8:00 pm

SOUP KITCHEN

4300 E. Paisano Dr.

Open to everyone in the community

Served daily from 6:00 pm–6:45 pm

SOCIAL SERVICES

Rent/Utilities Assistance/Food Boxes

Monday–Friday

8:30 am–5:00 pm

Closed for lunch from 12:00 pm–1:00 pm

FAMILY THRIFT STORE

3920 Morehead Ave.

Monday–Friday 9:00 am–5:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 am–4:00 pm

*Every \$20 spent at the store
provides 10 meals for a family.

EL PASO CORPS

WORSHIP & COMMUNITY CENTER

4900 Hercules Ave.

915-755-4168

Sunday 11:00 am Worship

Wednesday 5:00 pm Youth Program

EL PASO CONNECTION

FEBRUARY 2021

A Newsletter of The Salvation Army of El Paso

COVID-19 Response: Collaborative Shelters

Once it was clear in the spring that all shelters in town were not going to be able to be at full capacity and safely maintain social distancing, two collaborative shelters were created by the City of El Paso.

The Welcome Center is where folks experiencing homelessness go to first for vetting. This is a safety precaution to ensure they have no symptoms and prevent the spread of COVID-19 to other shelters.

Delta Haven is the overflow shelter. The city provided the building, and a number of other non-profits contributed to this endeavor. Disaster Services of The Salvation Army Texas Division provided two mobile units to the Welcome Center and Delta Haven, one with eight showers and the other with three washers and three dryers.

The Salvation Army was asked to provide food every other day, as well as clothing for all the clients. We provide a hot breakfast, sack lunch, and a hot meal to clients at both locations on top of the clients we feed at our own shelter 365 days a year.

Between both the Welcome Center and the Delta Haven shelters we have provided thousands of clothing items and 69,515 meals to date. We will continue this project as long as the city is in need of our services!



Hotel Food Delivery: Feeding Families in Quarantine Since April 2020

Every city and county responded to COVID-19 in their own way at the beginning of the pandemic.

El Paso Office of Emergency Management was tasked with the unprecedented issue of where to place someone who is homeless and tests positive for COVID-19.

A regular shelter was not an option as it posed the risk of spreading it to other residents. Ultimately, the solution was to quarantine each person or family in a monitored hotel room; that solved the shelter issue. The next point of focus was food, and that's where The Salvation Army stepped in.

This project began on the first weekend of April. Since then, our team has been committed to providing meals for these families in quarantine. This means

cooking, packaging, and delivering 3 meals a day to multiple hotels each day.

It's a major commitment on top of regular operations, but our team has risen to the challenge.

To date, we have provided and delivered 15,452 meals to the homeless and first responders being quarantined at hotels!



A Word From the Major's Office

Friends of The Salvation Army:
This last year has been a unique experience filled with new challenges.

You may already know about our homeless shelters, soup kitchen, emergency financial assistance, and disaster relief. These are essential services we provide year-round.

Homeless families and those living in poverty have been hit especially hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. At The Salvation Army, we open our doors to those who need help.

Local homeless shelters Delta Haven and Welcome Center were set up in

response to the pandemic 10 months ago, and our team has been serving meals there every other day. Our team is also preparing and delivering meals to first responders and the homeless who are quarantined.

We know that the community spirit in El Paso is strong. People are concerned about their neighbors and looking for ways to help during this crisis, and we welcome the partnership of donors and volunteers.

It's been a year of hardship and loss—but also generosity and fellowship. Thank you for helping us helping our neighbors in this crisis.



Thank you for trusting in our mission!

We will continue to do The Most Good for the glory of God and for the good of our community.

God bless each one of you,

Majors Floiran & Eloisa Estrada

Commanding Officers

9th Annual STUFF the Truck Goes Contactless & Curbside

The 9th Annual STUFF the Truck Donation Drive at Barnett Harley-Davidson was initially slated for April 2020 but ultimately cancelled due to the pandemic. The event was rescheduled for November as the first ever contactless curbside STUFF the Truck.

The team didn't know what to expect or whether people would even be interested, so it was narrowed down to a single day instead of the entire weekend.

Over 380 families came and filled the semi-truck with 28,065 pounds of clothes, housewares, and furniture in just 5 hours! Donors patiently waited



up to 2 hours in line to donate and to receive one of 300 free turkeys given out to donors.

"Donors waited up to 2 hours in line"

These turkey prizes came courtesy of Sam's Club (donated over \$2000 in turkeys), and Walmart (donated \$5000 for turkeys and toys).

"We are so grateful to Walmart and Sam's Club for once again partnering with us!" said Peter Jordan, Family Store Operations Manager.



Our Mission

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

Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God.

Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.



Judge Phyllis Gonzalez volunteering for Thanksgiving curbside delivery



Community Thanksgiving

Every Thanksgiving, The Salvation Army's dining room is filled with people celebrating together. However, the COVID-19 pandemic meant things looked a little different this year.

Although the crisis has led to greater unemployment and greater need, The Salvation Army's mission remained the same. "We knew that providing a special Thanksgiving meal was more important than ever," said Brenda Sanchez, Special Events Coordinator.

The event remained as big as previous years, but proper safety precautions led to lowering the number of volunteers. Switching to curbside was the biggest adjustment, but it rescued Thanksgiving for hundreds of people.

Each family received a Salvation Army tote with a meal, drink, and pie for every family member. 511 meals were distributed to families in need on Thanksgiving Day!



2020 Top Virtual Bell Ringers:

Hornedo Middle School–National Junior Honor Society



While the COVID-19 pandemic has severely hurt fundraising efforts this past 2020 season, volunteers are still passionate about raising money for the organization.

For years, the Hornedo Middle School (in El Paso, TX) National Junior Honor Society has made "Bell Ringing" part of their holiday tradition.

The students would sing, dance, and play musical instruments. They wish patrons of our local Walgreens a happy holiday



season, spreading cheer and raising money for a good cause.

The year 2020 brought new challenges, and they looked at alternate ways to raise money.

With the new Red Kettle challenge, individuals and organizations were able to host a virtual Kettle and raise money from the comfort of their homes through social media and email.

That's right—the NJHS students did their fundraising completely online this time. This virtual campaign succeeds through a strong team effort with each person using their social media to draw awareness to the fundraiser.

Some people were uncertain whether a virtual kettle could be as successful as traditional bell ringing.

Last year, they raised \$380.25, and their goal this year was \$800. That's an ambitious goal, so it came as a big surprise when the final tally was \$8,481. That's more than ten times the goal!

Their outstanding efforts equaled outstanding results. This team was ranked #1 in El Paso and #13 nationwide!

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#1 in El Paso and
#13 nationwide!*

"We know how much The Salvation Army depends on the Red Kettle donations, and we are so glad for another way to help those in need" said Susan Navarette, Math Teacher and NJHS Sponsor.

Volunteer Bell Ringers Make Year-Round Impact

It's an old Salvation Army tradition. Bell Ringers are stationed outside stores with red kettles, raising funds for the local Salvation Army unit.

The campaign only lasts for the winter season, but funds raised make a year-round impact. Thank you to all our volunteers!

CSM Fred Apuan with Major Floiran Estrada at Sam's Club at 9498 Gateway Blvd.



Volunteers Make a Difference With Every Ring!

Paul Apuan and Aurora Apuan at Sam's Club at 9498 Gateway Blvd. (left)

Peter Jordan & Family volunteering together (right)



Angel Tree: Sharing Christmas Joy

Each year, The Salvation Army provides Christmas assistance to millions of families across the country.

Last year, Angel Tree reached 398 families in the El Paso area! We knew that this year the need would be even greater.



Applications are usually done in person for the client interview and to verify that there is a financial need. However, some clients lived too far, had no transportation, or were in quarantine. This year online applications were provided as an alternative, and this really made a difference.

With more families to serve than last year, the primary focus turned towards getting these children sponsored. So many sponsors

from last year participated again this year! And for every previous sponsor who was not able to participate this Christmas, a new one turned up.

Toy drives and regular toy donations also play an important role. Since these toys are not assigned to specific Angels, they are used to fulfill gifts for children who are not sponsored. This ensures that no child gets left out.

Distribution was a great success! Appointments were scheduled by segments to avoid crowding and kept efficient with just the sign-in sheet and distribution of gifts. Staff and clients followed social distancing and safety guidelines. Appointments were so quick that there was rarely a line at all!

Each family received their gifts, a turkey or chicken, and a food box to help make their Christmas a joyful occasion!

In total, Angel Tree served 435 families—for a total of 1,340 children. **The most challenging year inspired the most generosity!**



Angel Tree 2020 Summary

Families Assisted	435
Total Angels	1,340
Toys Distributed	6,700
Food Boxes	417
Turkeys/Chicken	409
Bikes Distributed	35
Clothing Items	3,618



Surprise Sponsor! Old Navy

On November 12, 2020, Jennifer McClain from Old Navy at El Paseo Marketplace called The Salvation Army about opportunities for her team to give back to the community and expressed interest in the Angel Tree program.

This was her first Angel Tree experience, and she initially decided on sponsoring 7 Angels. "Week after week, I'd get an email from Jennifer asking to sponsor more Angels," said Joanna Estrada, Angel Tree Coordinator. News of Jennifer's Christmas project travelled to other Old Navy employees and friends. The final tally was 62 sponsored Angels!

Biggest Sponsor! El Dorado High School

Every year, El Dorado High School sponsors 200 Angels! Student Activities Coordinator Theresa Maya organizes the event with staff, friends, and students.

The gifts were picked up on December 12 and included toys, clothes, and bikes! Thank you to Theresa Maya and the team from El Dorado High School!

Family Thrift Store Needs Volunteers

The Salvation Army's Family Thrift Store located in central El Paso, continues to thrive in the midst of the pandemic, even with the city's two different shut downs (March-June and November). It was closed a total 79 days in 2020.

The Family Store the ideal place for donating clothing, furniture, and housewares. Other families can obtain quality items for a bargain price. The proceeds help support social programs like the shelter and soup kitchen.



"While we've had a shortage of shoppers this last year, we haven't been short of donations!" said Peter Jordan, Family Store Operations Manager.

More time spent at home has led to the people of El Paso cleaning their spaces and donating more clothes and household items than in previous years.

"The proceeds help support social programs like the shelter and soup kitchen"

Although furniture donations are usually slim, particularly at this time of year, that has not been the case lately.

"We've had families coming in needing furniture, and God answered our prayers," said Peter.



Over the past few months Chicago American Manufacturing donated multiple semi-trucks full of wood furniture (beds, night stands, dressers, entertainment centers, and the hot commodity...student desks!)

This excess of donations means...volunteers are needed!



Continuum of Care Program



Alfredo's Story

The Continuum of Care Program's objective is to ensure that individuals gain ownership of their responsibilities and help them sustain self-sufficiency. This program is offered to the chronically homeless with a disability.

There are currently 23 single clients and 5 families in the COC.

One client has experienced constant homelessness for the past four years. Alfredo became homeless in October 2016 and struggles with a severe drug addiction that has impaired his physicality. He was living on the streets and was in and out of jail.

Rescue Mission of El Paso, Emergency Health Network, and Allivane have all tried to reach out to him in the past to help him stay on a clean path towards sobriety.

In September 2020, Alfredo was referred to The Salvation Army's COC program through

2-1-1. He was housed in his own apartment the following month. The COC assists with his rent, groceries, and supportive monthly meetings with his case manager. It's all part of the process.

When Alfredo joined the COC program, he started a new chapter in his life. "He's been sober and drug-free, taking steps to move towards a healthier and independent lifestyle," said Felicia Fournier, Case Worker.

He was a Bell Ringer for The Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign and was able to find stable employment shortly after.

The COC program provides long-term assistance. As his situation becomes more stable, Alfredo will begin to gradually take on some of his own financial responsibilities on his road to self-sufficiency.

Felicia said, "He has a positive attitude and an appreciation for this opportunity."



The Salvation Army Partners with the Texas National Guard for PPE

At the start of the pandemic, there was a huge demand for personal protective equipment (PPE). The Texas National Guard partnered with The Salvation Army to help transport PPE across the state.

El Paso was the major connection point between the National Guard locations and the Border RAC Medical Readiness Team.

From April to August, our local Salvation Army used our box trucks to transport 176 pallets of PPE in 40 different missions.

This project took a total 1239 miles and 691 hours of labor to supply first responders, testing clinics, and hospitals with essential PPE!



COVID-19 RELIEF EFFORTS

Totals through January 31, 2021



DOING THE MOST GOOD

Nights of Shelter



12,907

Total Meals Served



122,626

Emergency Financial Assistance



\$372,372.12

PPE Supplies



32,565

Clothing Items



3,832

Emergency Food Boxes



1,846



Soup Kitchen serves hot meals every evening at 6:00 pm



Cars line up around the block for Community Thanksgiving, see page 3



Mobile unit with 3 washers and 3 dryers, see COVID-19 Response on page 1

The Salvation Army, 4300 East Paisano Drive, El Paso, Texas 79905
Majors Floiran & Eloisa Estrada, Commanding Officers