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Around the Kroc News

August 2009

Salvation Army Back-to-School Health Fair and Gospel Concert Helps Kids Prepare for August School Start



Dr. Eileen Couture from Stroger Hospital provides a free back-to-school physical to Justin Buchanan at The Salvation Army Back-to-School Health Fair and Gospel Concert at Cooper Park in West Pullman.

The Salvation Army and the West Pullman community came together for a fun-filled day in the park at The Salvation Army sponsored Back-to-School Health Fair and Gospel Concert on July 25 in Cooper Park. More than 1,100 individuals and 428 families took part.

The health fair provided free back-to-school physicals for kids and health screenings for adults, including blood pressure, diabetes and HIV testing. Physicals and health screenings were provided by the Cook County Health Department and the Christian Community Health Center.

Popular Billboard gospel chart recording artist Tony Tidwell Ministries headlined a rousing and inspirational day-long lineup of gospel performers, including Focus One, Jerry King and Eclectic Worship and The Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Center Choir.

In addition to health screenings and gospel performances, the fair also featured free carnival games and prizes. The Salvation Army gave away backpacks filled with school supplies to more than 450 children in preparation for an early start to the school year in August. At least two schools in the immediate area have switched to a year-round schedule and needed early outreach to their students.



The Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Center Choir performs at The Salvation Army Back-to-School Health Fair and Gospel Concert.

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About the Kroc Center

The Kroc Center will be a state-of-the-art community and social services facility in one of Chicago's most underserved areas, a community center of unprecedented scope and size. It will provide thousands of people of all ages with new opportunities and become an anchor for the community and a beacon of hope. The array of sports, educational, arts and supportive programs has never been offered in Chicago.

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West Suburban Youth Visit Kroc Center Programs

Students from two Sugar Grove churches come to Chicago for service and discovery



Junior high and high school students from western suburban Sugar Grove, IL, took part in two extraordinary trips to Chicago's West Pullman neighborhood. From the Village Bible Church, the youth contingent took part in The Salvation Army's summer Kroc Center activities, lending a hand to the surrounding community. During the week of June 15, the Sugar Grove students participated in The Salvation Army Green Day Camp and Sports Camp during the mornings and afternoons, and contributed to several community service projects.

"This is the first opportunity we have had to allow student groups to come participate in Kroc Center programming," said Major David Harvey, Administrator for the Ray and Joan Kroc Corp Community Center. "The young people themselves said this was a great opportunity to learn what it was like to live in a challenged part of Chicago. They were able to experience some of the fears our young people go through every day and why it's so important for the Kroc Center to be built in this area."

Students from Grace Bible Church's youth program visited West Pullman during the week of June 29. The group participated in community service projects, assisting with a feeding program and cleaning front and backyards of vacant West Pullman homes.

"Normally student groups come just to do a service project in the neighborhood, but these kids came to participate in the same programs as our kids," continued Major David Harvey. "It was a good opportunity for the kids from the suburbs and Chicago to learn about each other's cultures, communities, hopes and dreams. And though the communities are different, many of their hopes and dreams to grow up to make a difference in the world are the same."

Working alongside Kroc Center Co-Administrators Majors Darlene and David Harvey and Rev. Vincent Johnson, Sugar Grove students also saw first-hand the hope and vitality that thrives in the West Pullman Community, in part due to The Salvation Army programs already established in the community in preparation for the completion of the Kroc Center.

Salvation Army Kroc Center Sends 48 Campers to Camp Wonderland

West Pullman youth win awards at Salvation Army music camp



Music students, Adventure Corps and Sunbeams from The Salvation Army Kroc Center programs in the West Pullman community had the opportunity of a lifetime this summer to hone their talents at this year's Salvation Army Music and Scouting Camps. The Salvation Army Kroc Center sent 17 students to Camp Wonderland in Wisconsin for a week of intensive musical instruction in voice and band and 31 students to Adventure Corps and Sunbeams scouting camps.

A testament to the talent of the West Pullman youth and the impact that the Kroc Center team is already making in the community, several campers received honors and awards at Music Camp, which draws campers from across the Midwest. Making the top band at camp, Wonderland Band, was Ryan Williams, 12. Other West Pullman youth who received awards are Elliot Wilson, 12, who took third place in his choir; Sakhary Prayer, 14, who took second place in his band; and Johnathan LeSure, 12, winner of the Joshua Olson award for faith and courage.

For some of the West Pullman youth, this marks the third year they have attended Camp Wonderland. Below are comments from several campers about what they enjoyed about camp in previous years and why they wanted to go back.

"I've been to music camp two times and it has been an honor to be part of this program. Salvation Army lent the students at my school instruments. Vernon Lawson taught us how to read music. I'm glad they came to Higgins Community Academy. This is a blessing for me and the other students, who are a part of the music program because it enriches our arts and self esteem." —PIERCE CRUZ, 12

"I want to go back to camp because I had a wonderful experience last year. It's both educational and fun at the same time. It was also a nice change from day to day living in my neighborhood." —LEAH PEPPER, 10

"I want to go to camp because I want to learn how to become a good person and learn how to swim and also to be with my friends. The other reason why I want to go to camp is that I will be a better person in the world and I will be with The Salvation Army."
—CELESTINA OLVARADARE, 10

The Salvation Army in Chicago and the Nation

The Salvation Army is the largest social service organization in the world and the single largest direct provider of social services in Chicago and the state of Illinois. The Army operates 200 points of entry in neighborhoods across the greater Chicago area, providing disaster relief, shelter, meals, rehabilitation programs, child care and head start, senior services and more. On any given night, about 900 people are sleeping under a Salvation Army roof. In 2010, The Army will celebrate 125 years of service in Chicago. The Salvation Army is there every day, 24-hours-a-day in Chicago and throughout the country providing disaster relief to people in crisis.

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.