See what's going on around the Texico Conference.

Unity in Diversity

Partnership in Mission

Texico Update Newsletter
November 21, 2014

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"President's Corner"
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Treasure Trove
Prayer Requests

Please join us in praying for the following churches during the weeks listed:

November 30-December 6
East Mountain

December 7-13
El Paso Central

December 14-20
El Paso Five Points

December 21-27
El Paso Meraz Spanish

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12,203

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Groups: 4

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TD: $5,479,955

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After that meeting, the administration outlined certain criteria to look for in a rustic camp. Originally, we were looking for approximately 100 acres, in a primitive area with trees, nestled in the mountains, a possible water source, and a place that would be in the middle of the Conference. That is a lot to ask for in West Texas and New Mexico. Our search started in the Otero and Lincoln Counties, Ruidoso, Cloudcroft and Weed area. We found some property in that area but it did not have the water source that we were looking for or it would have existing buildings that increased the price drastically. We expanded our
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Submitted by: Dodie Pelopero, Communication Director, Odessa Church

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Massages were one of the many services offered.
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He needed a haircut. “It’s getting too bushy,” he said. He wanted new clothes. He wore layers of clothing, and everything — the shirt, the pants, the jacket — was just too big. The soles of his sneakers were giving out. He kept pulling various identification cards out of his pockets and then misplacing them.

Avelino — who wasn’t sure he wanted his last name published — said he was happy with the Stand Down, a two-day event designed to give homeless veterans a hot meal, clothes, sleeping bags, counseling on several levels, haircuts, and medical and dental screenings.

Avelino was one of about 250 people — about 160 of whom were veterans — who came into Alumni Hall between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Friday to take advantage of the event, sponsored by Adventists Community Services of Santa Fe. This is the fourth year of the Stand Down, according to Phillip Chavez of the Santa Fe Vet Center. The organizers don’t turn away anyone who claims to be homeless, but they keep track of
In past years, the event has drawn about 350 veterans and 200 others who are considered homeless, Chavez said.

Veterans Affairs representatives joined various community service providers — including Life Link, St. Elizabeth Shelter and La Familia Medical Services — at a series of tables lined around the hall. Entertainment — from a rendition of the national anthem to a spirited presentation of “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy” — continued throughout the day.

Pastor Eric Redic, who was overseeing Friday’s Stand Down, said many veterans — particularly those from the Vietnam era — are reluctant to ask for help and are dealing with so many issues related to their service that they often shun other people.

“A lot of them are outcasts,” he said. “This event lets them know that somebody cares.”

John Herman, a social worker for the Homeless Veterans Program, said it’s tough to know how many veterans are homeless in the state or in the nation. “It’s a population that’s really hard to count,” he said.

“A lot of them have mental health issues. A lot have substance abuse issues. A lot are straight-up economic issues. And a lot of the times, it’s all of the above,” he said.

Avelino said he spent the previous night sleeping in a park by a fire station. He gets scared at night. “I hear noise,” he said. He said he has no peripheral vision in his right eye, so if you stand to that side, he can’t see you and gets nervous.

What happened to him in the Army, or since, is unclear. His warm smile suggests he may be as young as 50, but everything else about his face, including the questioning eyes, seems older.
He is not alone. Another Army veteran, John, also has a face that looks older than the age he gives. He's missing some teeth. His breath smelled of alcohol Friday. He collected a duffel bag of clothing, a sleeping bag and toiletries at the Stand Down. He said he is not homeless but didn't want to say where he lives.

“It's not easy,” he said. He lost a job he held for 20 years. Then he lost his wife. He said he was six months away from earning his associate degree at Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque when everything fell apart and he had to drop out of school.

“They help you with a few things,” he said, referring to the volunteers at the Stand Down. “They try to get you back to work.”

Stand Down is a military term relating to a military unit's relaxation of status from an alert or operational position.

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Massages were one of the many services offered.

A worship service, foot washing, communion and anointing service were provided for spiritual nourishment and healing.

He needed a haircut. “It’s getting too bushy,” he said. He wanted new clothes. He wore layers of clothing, and everything — the shirt, the pants, the jacket — was just too big. The soles of his sneakers were giving out. He kept pulling various identification cards out of his pockets and then misplacing them.
Avelino — who wasn't sure he wanted his last name published — said he was happy with the Stand Down, a two-day event designed to give homeless veterans a hot meal, clothes, sleeping bags, counseling on several levels, haircuts, and medical and dental screenings.

Avelino was one of about 250 people — about 160 of whom were veterans — who came into Alumni Hall between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Friday to take advantage of the event, sponsored by Adventists Community Services of Santa Fe. This is the fourth year of the Stand Down, according to Phillip Chavez of the Santa Fe Vet Center. The organizers don’t turn away anyone who claims to be homeless, but they keep track of how many are veterans.

In past years, the event has drawn about 350 veterans and 200 others who are considered homeless, Chavez said.

Veterans Affairs representatives joined various community service providers — including Life Link, St. Elizabeth Shelter and La Familia Medical Services — at a series of tables lined around the hall. Entertainment — from a rendition of the national anthem to a spirited presentation of “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy” — continued throughout the day.

Pastor Eric Redic, who was overseeing Friday’s Stand Down, said many veterans — particularly those from the Vietnam era — are reluctant to ask for help and are dealing with so many issues related to their service that they often shun other people.

“A lot of them are outcasts,” he said. “This event lets them know that somebody cares.”

John Herman, a social worker for the Homeless Veterans Program, said it’s tough to know how many veterans are homeless in the state or in the nation. “It’s a population that’s really hard to count,” he said.

“A lot of them have mental health issues. A lot have
substance abuse issues. A lot are straight-up economic issues. And a lot of the times, it's all of the above,” he said.

Avelino said he spent the previous night sleeping in a park by a fire station. He gets scared at night. “I hear noise,” he said. He said he has no peripheral vision in his right eye, so if you stand to that side, he can't see you and gets nervous.

What happened to him in the Army, or since, is unclear. His warm smile suggests he may be as young as 50, but everything else about his face, including the questioning eyes, seems older.

He is not alone. Another Army veteran, John, also has a face that looks older than the age he gives. He’s missing some teeth. His breath smelled of alcohol Friday. He collected a duffel bag of clothing, a sleeping bag and toiletries at the Stand Down. He said he is not homeless but didn't want to say where he lives.

“It's not easy,” he said. He lost a job he held for 20 years. Then he lost his wife. He said he was six months away from earning his associate degree at Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque when everything fell apart and he had to drop out of school.

“They help you with a few things,” he said, referring to the volunteers at the Stand Down. “They try to get you back to work.”

Stand Down is a military term relating to a military unit’s relaxation of status from an alert or operational position.

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