

Volunteers recognized at dinner

Contributed by Mike Devich
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The local Salvation Army affiliate held a dinner last Saturday to show their appreciation to all of the volunteers who worked so hard to make sure the Salvation Army's work was done this past holiday season in the Kern River Valley.

The buffet dinner was held in the Veterans Room at the Senior Center in Lake Isabella. Attending were Major Wayne Froderberg, the Salvation Army's Golden State Division Commander, and his wife, Trish.

Pastor Bill Blanton of Lake Isabella is the head of the local Salvation Army office, which is located inside the Community Christian Center at 6105 Lake Isabella Blvd. He and his wife, Shirley, do this in conjunction with their ministry, A Helping Hand, and their business, WEB Recycling in Lake Isabella.

After a prayer and introductions, a presentation was given highlighting the accomplishments made in 2008.

The Salvation Army's bell ringers raised over \$7,000 locally from generous donors here in the valley. They served 326 holiday dinners to the needy and sent 14 kids to a special youth camp. (Their goal this year is to raise enough money to send 20 kids to the camp. They also would like to send a few senior shut-ins to a senior camp for a few days.)

It was explained that here in the valley, 6,713 live below the poverty line, which is 18.2 percent, or double the national average. The Salvation Army supports three food pantries here, and also assists people with clothing, blankets, tents, propane and other utilities, transportation, showers, laundry, rehabilitation and counseling.

The mission statement of the Salvation Army is as follows. "The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. 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."