

"Like A War Zone"

- 2 Staff Members Assigned to World Trade Center Relief
- Read A First-Hand Account of Their Work in "The Pit"
- Army is Unique, Feeds Body & Soul
- Advice: Pray, Donate Nationally & Locally

City Coordinator Major Daniel Sjögren had just returned from his Oct. 5-14 assignment as the area supervisor for the Red Zone at the World Trade Center's disaster relief efforts. He had been right in "the pit" where

rescue workers search for bodies. As an ordained minister, his job was to provide counseling to rescue workers and family members. Envoy Shirley Kerestesi served the following ten days as a counselor.



This photo was taken on Sept. 12, showing the American flag still standing at the far right.

the Red Cross across the street where people can sit and rest. The Army also has dehydration tents with beverages and light snacks. All three feeding formats are needed.

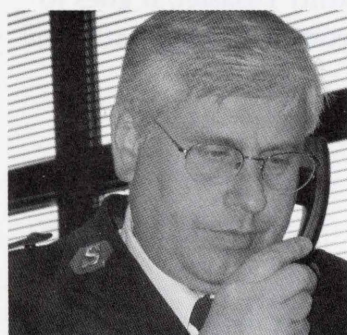
The Salvation Army also has centers at the morgue, where family members receive counseling. "Priests will perform last rights for people of the Catholic faith, they work right alongside us," said Sjögren. "The one thing that makes us different is that we do in-depth counseling and crisis intervention in the pit area itself," explained Sjögren. "We also counsel other chaplains because they hear such horrid stories," added Kerestesi. As both shared their experiences with staff members and friends, their voices shook and their eyes filled with tears.

"Each day they found body parts. When they

As an ordained minister, Major Sjögren provided in-depth counseling to rescue workers and victims' families.

did, they wrapped them in an American flag and the fire fighters and police officers made a procession up the hill to the makeshift morgue and I and another chaplain were always with them,"

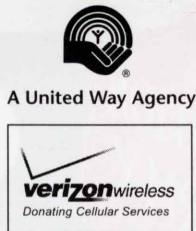
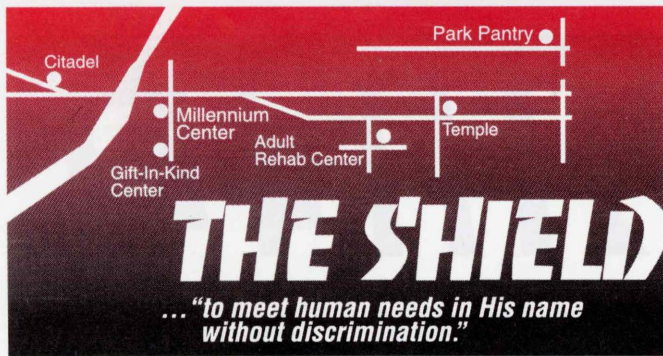
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Major Daniel Sjögren that's being done and needs to be done — 17 acres of devastation," said Sjögren quietly. "The fire-fighters say it's 1700 degrees where they're working. The steel is so hot it's dripping," added Kerestesi, providing a glimpse of the conditions under which the rescue efforts are made.

Their Work

Because of the contamination in the air, the rescue workers cannot eat in the pit, so The Salvation Army has feeding sites right at the edge of the rescue area, moving when needed to where the action is. Major Sjögren's cafeteria-style canteen site served 9,000 meals a day, operating 24 hours a day. There are additional feeding centers run by



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The Salvation Army Temple/City Office
500 S. Rockford Avenue • Rockford IL 61104
815/226-4400

The Salvation Army Gift-In-Kind Center
416 S. Madison Street • Rockford IL 61104
815/972-1135

The Salvation Army Citadel Corps
210 Kilburn Avenue • Rockford IL 61101
815/963-2480

The Salvation Army Millennium Center
220 S. Madison Street • Rockford IL 61104
815/969-7408

The Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Center
1706 18th Avenue • Rockford IL 61104
815/397-0440

The Salvation Army Park Pantry
5441 Harlem Road, Loves Park IL 61111
815/654-8783

(Continued from front)

said Kerestesi. "Then we did a salute and a prayer service."

"I counseled people who were working right near there when this all took place, like ConEd people, sanitation workers, taxi cab drivers," said Kerestesi. She talked about a fire fighter who was on duty when it happened. "Her life was saved because she was under a steel arch. She said she saw cars and bodies and furniture flying in the air. One month later, she was reassigned back here. On her first day she was in charge of the morgue and that day they found nine or ten fire fighters and she was having a really hard time dealing with it. I was able to minister to her," said Kerestesi.

"The fire fighters and police officers are now angry, blaming Arabs for everything in their lives. Their best friends have been lost in the disaster. They want to be there in case bodies are found, and there's no assurance they will be found. They're not at home to take care of things and some are having marital problems. Our counseling and crisis intervention tries to help them deal with all that," said Sjögren. "We need to remember that terrorism, hate, and destruction isn't

about the color of skin, it's about attitude and working toward reconciliation," he advised.

What Can People in Rockford Do?

"Pray," replied Kerestesi. "The terrorists had no idea that New York would pull together, that the country would pull together. I'm sorry it took a tragedy to bring people close together. It makes you feel good to be a part of it, to help someone in a time like this. I'm thankful. There's no where else I'd rather be."



Envoy Kerestesi

Major Sjögren added, "realistically, I hope people will donate to both the national disaster and the local needs. With the economic slow-down and layoffs, there's counseling going on right here at home, so don't forget our local needs. When you send a check to The Salvation Army, you are meeting local needs. When you send a check to The Salvation Army Disaster, it goes to the national need. Please consider doing both," he requested.

Fight Hunger Here At Home!

That's the theme of our 31st annual Metro Food Drive for the Needy this year. We hope to collect enough non-perishable foods for 3,000 food boxes to give to needy families this holiday. Drop your food off at any of the six Army facilities.

Greatest Need is for Bell Ringers From Your Club, Church, Synagogue

One important source of income for the food drive, as well as our many other holiday projects, like Adopt-A-Family, is the income generated by The Salvation Army Kettles. Thanks to our volunteer bell ringers stationed at many retail sites, we are able to fund our many holiday projects.

If your group can sign up for a half day of bell ringing, please call Norma Baker at 226-4400. It's a great way to get better acquainted with a fellow member — and a wonderful way to get in the holiday spirit!

Rockford Mayor Doug Scott will be one of many volunteer bell ringers this year. He encourages your club, church, or synagogue to ring for a day.

