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Elgin Salvation Army brings new resource director on board, planning new U46 coat program and bike ride fundraiser

By: Gloria Casas



Elgin Salvation Army Capt. Xavier Montenegro, right, with Rick Reigner, the organization's new resource development director. Reigner is seeing the Salvation Army through a new lens thanks to his new job and learning how much the nonprofit organization does in the Elgin community.

The Elgin Salvation Army's red kettles are familiar to Rick Reigner. He has often dropped money into them at Christmastime.

But as he settles into his new job as resource development director for the nonprofit organization, Reigner is learning just how much the Elgin Salvation Army counts on that money to help the community throughout the year and how it continually adapts to meet those needs.

"People are more aware of their kettle campaign at Christmas time, but there's so much more going on," he said.

Reigner's role is to help the longtime agency get its name out into the community more, Capt. Xavier Montenegro said.

"We really felt if we had someone dedicated to telling our story and focus on that, it would help people understand how they can help us, whether with donations or by volunteering," Montenegro said.

Having Reigner onboard also gives Montenegro and his wife, Capt. Heather Montenegro, time to do all the other activities required as part of his job, he said.

The couple oversee all aspects of the Salvation Army, including a summer camp program, assistance programs that help with things like utility bills or rent, a toy drive, music programs and its church, Montenegro said.

One of Reigner's roles will be creating more collaborations with other organizations and businesses.

One of those partnerships is with School District U46. The Coat Closet program will provide coats for elementary and middle school students, Montenegro said.

"We know there are certain organizations that provide coats, but what we're going to do is put a physical coat closet in 24 (School District) U46 schools," he said. Nine of the schools are located in Elgin, he said.

Each will have 16 coats in different sizes for children who need one, Montenegro said.

The Salvation Army is still looking for businesses or organizations to sponsor a closet, Reigner said.

The organization is also participating in the Salvation Army River Ride. The inaugural bike ride is meant to raise awareness and funds for the Salvation Army across the Fox Valley region, Montenegro said.

The event will be held from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 28, along the Fox River Trail. Three different lengths of trail rides will be offered for the expert, novice and family riders, he said. More information is available at centralusa.salvationarmy.org/elgin.

"It's a fun way to spend a Saturday and support a good cause," Montenegro said.

The Elgin organization is always looking for new ways to raise funds and provide services to the community, he said. Reigner's new position is one of ways the organization is adapting to new ways to do things, he said.

But there are some things that are constant, like the annual toy drive/giveaway and the red kettle campaign. The campaign, which this year hopes to raise \$235,000, is the Elgin Salvation Army's main fundraiser, providing financial support for its programs all year long, Montenegro said.

This year's campaign kicks off Nov. 8, Montenegro said. Last year, volunteers ran bells for 600 hours, and they hope to increase that number to 750 hours, he said.

Reigner said he hopes to create more partnerships with groups who can sponsor a kettle by providing volunteers to ring bells at Elgin area locations.

Rolling Meadows teen attends Robotics Academy in Alabama

By: Norrine Twohey



Corinne Love shakes hands with astronaut Capt. Wendy Lawrence at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama.



Dr. Julie Fogarty



Charlotte Coleman

- Corinne Love of Rolling Meadows recently attended Robotics Academy at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama.

The weeklong educational program promotes science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), while training students with hands-on activities and missions based on teamwork, leadership and decision-making.

This program is specifically designed for trainees who have a passion for programming and engineering. Using the Office of Naval Research's SeaPerch undersea robotics, Corinne and her teammates strengthened teamwork and leadership skills while learning engineering, programming and wireless control concepts using Lego Mindstorms EV3 technology, testing payloads on unmanned aerial vehicles and creating and piloting underwater robots.

- With nearly 15 years in building level administrative experience, Julie Fogarty has taken on the role of director of curriculum for Des Plaines Community Consolidated School District 62, responsible for supporting student learning through curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Fogarty served as principal of Forest Elementary School for 12 years before becoming principal of Algonquin Middle School in 2017. Prior to joining District 62, Fogarty served as an assistant principal/building assistant for four years in Community Consolidated School District 15, Palatine, and was a second-grade teacher at Harlem Consolidated School District 122 in Machesney Park.

Fogarty earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Clarke College in 1992 and a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from National Louis University in 1997. She later received a doctoral degree in education from Loyola University in 2011.

- Elgin Area School District U-46 has named Charlotte Coleman principal at Kimball Middle School in Elgin. Coleman was previously principal of Nature Ridge Elementary School in Bartlett since 2013.

Coleman first joined the District U-46 as a teacher in 2005, then served as the assistant principal of Nature Ridge Elementary before taking the top job there. Prior to joining U-46, Coleman was a teacher and then curriculum coordinator for the Hattiesburg Public Schools in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Coleman holds an undergraduate degree in elementary education and a Master of Science degree from Alcorn State University in Mississippi. She also holds a master's degree in general administration from Northern Illinois University, and is working toward her superintendent endorsement from Aurora University.

- U.S. Air Force Airman Jaylon D. Clark graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas.

The airman completed an intensive, eight-week program that included training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness and basic warfare principles and skills.

Clark is a 2019 graduate of William Fremd High School, Palatine.

- Des Plaines Toastmasters 1645 recently inducted six new officers: President Theresa Arcega of Skokie; Vice President of Education Cathy Stroh of Arlington Heights; Vice President of Membership Ayako Gilkeson of Des Plaines; Vice president of Public Relations Ralph Dellar of Park Ridge; Secretary Terry Przbyski of Des Plaines; and Treasurer Teresa Powell of Des Plaines.

Membership in Toastmasters is open to adults ages 18 and older who are committed to improving their communications and leadership abilities. Des Plaines Toastmasters 1645 meets the first and third Mondays on the month at the Des Plaines Public Library, 1501 Ellinwood.