



THE SALVATION ARMY OF SAVANNAH NEEDS THE COMMUNITY'S HELP TO RESCUE CHRISTMAS

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CRYSTAL VOGEL



This year has been full of strife, loneliness, challenges, disputes, hostility, and desperation. As the holidays approach, we are all seeking for ways to reconnect, find joy, love, and most importantly—give back. During these times of the pandemic and economic stress, we have been reminded of the importance of giving and caring for those in our lives and in our community. This holiday season, some families won't have food on the table or gifts under the Christmas tree—they are just trying to find ways to stay afloat. One organization we should all support has a mission of "Doing The Most Good"

and is aiming to help those most in need while at the same trying to spread a little Christmas joy.

The Salvation Army of Savannah (TSA) recently launched their Red Kettle Campaign in order to 'Rescue Christmas' to aid children, families and individuals who are struggling financially, emotionally, and spiritually. This year's annual holiday fundraiser has an ambitious goal of \$300,000 to ensure the nonprofit can provide Christmas assistance, including putting food on the table, paying bills, providing shelter and helping place gifts under the tree. An anonymous donor has offered to match every dollar given to the iconic red kettles.

The funds raised through the organization's holiday fundraiser are at risk this year due to COVID-19 while requests for services are at an all-time high. Since March, TSA has provided more than 23,000 meals, safe shelter to 5,285 individuals, and emotional and spiritual support to over 150 people in need. Based on the increase in services already provided in response to the pandemic, the organization could serve up to 155% more people during the holiday season.

At the same time, due to the closing of retail stores and the decline in foot traffic, TSA has a limited amount of time this year to ring kettles. There will only be 26 kettles throughout the greater Savannah region this year until Christmas Eve. TSA could see up to a 50% decrease in funds raised nationally through the red kettles, which would limit their capability to provide services for the most vulnerable. To put this in perspective, last year \$250,000 was raised locally through 42 red kettles.

"The Red Kettle Campaign is our biggest fundraiser of the year, and it is crucial we meet our ambitious 2020 fundraising goal of \$300,000. With more people hurting and fewer Red Kettles to help them, donors giving generously to help rescue Christmas is vital," said The Salvation Army of Savannah's Major Paul Egan. "We are immensely grateful to our anonymous donor who has provided us with the opportunity to double the amount we raise. Every dollar goes straight back to the Savannah community—which needs your support now more than ever."

The Salvation Army has served Greater Savannah for the past 120 years and has always supported the most vulnerable in our community. Whether the community



is affected by COVID-19, hurricanes, floods, fires or the Spanish influenza that impacted the world over a century ago, The Salvation Army continues to serve those who need it the most.

For more information about TSA, please visit www.salvationarmygeorgia.org/savannah/ or call 912-200-3004.



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