

# APPEAL-DEMOCRAT

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## Salvation Army tours homeless shelters, rehousing programs

By Michaela Harris



Salvation Army Major Julius Murphy guides a tour group last week through the Hope Vista transitional housing property in Olivehurst.

The Salvation Army Yuba-Sutter Corps provided a bus tour of its temporary housing and homeless shelters in Marysville and Olivehurst on Friday.

The tour was held to introduce Salvation Army board members to the programs and services the organization offers and gain a better understanding of the people who are impacted by homelessness.

Major Julius Murphy guided attendants through the Salvation Army Corps Community Center in Yuba City and gave a presentation about the food bank and grocery programs that the Salvation Army offers.

The organization recently brought back the Fresh Fridays program, an outdoor market for families and seniors experiencing food insecurity. The program was reimplemented in February and will continue indefinitely, Murphy said. The food offered at these markets are based on dietary and cultural needs. Fresh Fridays partners with the Yuba-Sutter Food Bank to provide non-perishable items as well as grocery stores like FoodMaxx to supply dairy and meat products.

Hope Express is another food program that acts as a street outreach service to provide meals for sheltered and unsheltered homeless people. The mobile food pantry serves two meals per day, seven days a week. Because most shelters do not have shower facilities on site, Hope Express also acts as a shower trailer in order to provide cleanliness and presentability to homeless people, regardless of their shelter situation.

Food programs offered by Salvation Army are operated under a client choice model in order to give recipients control over their diets. Medically tailored food and grocery packages are offered to program recipients with allergies or health issues.

The first stop on the facility tour was 14 Forward, a 21 day, temporary housing unit for adults in Marysville. The facility is geared toward single individuals and couples experiencing homelessness. Residents are placed in one of 25 single-room sheds and assigned a case manager to gain resources toward self-sufficiency.

The facility has been in operation for three years and was able to remodel some of the sheds through the local contracting firm Hilbers, Inc. All sheds come equipped with two single-person cots, vinyl flooring and access to the facility's recreation room.

A TV, games and lockers for personal items have been implemented into 14 Forward's rec room.

"This is light years ahead of where we first started," Murphy said. "It feels more like home now."

While 14 Forward is available to homeless individuals on a self-referral, the best way for residents to enter the program is through a coordinated entry system from Yuba County Health and Human Services or Sutter County Behavioral Health.

The facility is unable to provide temporary housing for minors because 14 Forward is one of the few shelters that accepts registered sex offenders, Murphy said.

Families with children, single women and couples who experience homelessness are directed to the Depot Family Crisis Center.

The Depot offers 90-day programs to reach transitional housing and 28-day programs for immediate shelter and rehousing. The shelter provides residents dealing with homelessness, substance abuse and child custodial issues with resources to enhance their life skills.

Classes on anger management, parenting skills and financial literacy are offered in the Depot's case management facility.

The shelter currently provides three dorm rooms and 11 family rooms, totaling to 64 available beds. Although there is a waitlist to enroll in Depot programs, the shelter is not always at capacity.

The shelter also offers different amenities like a dining room, TV and Wi-Fi, showers, laundry services and a playground. These features provide more than basic necessities for the residents, but the Depot is still in need of significant renovations, Murphy said.

The shelter is specifically in need of more housing space and renovations to the building's infrastructure. Marysville Councilmember Stuart Gilchrist introduced plans for a new Depot shelter to tour participants.

A five-story, multifamily facility will be built as a gateway to the future Medical Arts District in Marysville, Gilchrist said.

This district will surround the Adventist Health/Rideout hospital by one or more blocks in each direction, according to a Marysville City Council community directions agenda.

"Our vision is to make (the shelter) a model for what you can do with multifamily, multicomplex buildings," Gilchrist said.

The introduction of the Medical Arts District is one facet of the ongoing Bounce Back initiative in Marysville. The 2012 city renovation plan has restructured five commercial areas of Marysville in order to promote economic growth for both the city and its citizens.

According to the Salvation Army's Yuba-Sutter Corps program evaluation, the Depot has the highest number of successful exits out of the three rehousing facilities. As of this year, 57 families and individuals have gained self-sufficiency through the Depot.

Depending on the needs and ambitions of a resident, Depot programs are set to be completed within 21 or 90 days. However, a resident will never be rejected from the shelter for not reaching their milestone.

"We will never return someone to homelessness," Murphy said.

People who complete the programs or "graduates" have the opportunity to move into the transitional housing community Hope Vista.

The low-income gated community is located in Olivehurst and provides fully furnished, two-bedroom homes to Depot graduates who are prepared for life beyond Salvation Army shelters.

The land was purchased by the Yuba-Sutter Corps for \$50,000 in 2002, Murphy said. The property contains eight 1,100-square-foot homes that were renovated in 2020. Families are housed in Hope Vista for three to six months while they work toward finding employment and permanent housing. Extensions are available on a case-by-case basis for a maximum of two years, Murphy said.

Hope Vista is offered through the Yuba County Housing Support Program for families transitioning out of Salvation Army shelters.

Families living in Hope Vista will obtain permanent housing as they gain jobs and security, Homeless Project Manager Chaya Galicia said.

The Salvation Army also plans to build a playground in an adjacent lot to Hope Vista. The 10,795-square-foot lot will feature a multi-functional play structure, picnic areas and grassy knolls. The project was originally established in 2019, but construction was postponed due to COVID-19. The

Yuba-Sutter Corps plans to build the playground in September with volunteer builders and Hilbers contractors.