



### *1st Quarter 2010 Newsletter*

*The Salvador Foundation is committed to serving God by bringing together people from all walks of life for the common cause of helping our fellow man. We, as the body of Christ, have a responsibility to care for those in need. By helping and enabling people one project at a time, our goal is to share encouragement, hope and faith.*

Overburdened budgets within Colorado Springs City Government has led to the scheduled closing of four local community centers. Community centers are the heart and soul of their neighborhoods, and for some seniors, they're a place to get a \$2 lunch and escape the loneliness of being home alone. For parents, they're a place to send their children to preschool or hang out while the parents are working. For teens and young adults, they offer a place to exercise or play league basketball instead of hanging out on the streets.

These Centers are in the city's poorer neighborhoods and serve a largely working-class population. Between 43,800 and 68,500 people visit each of the centers annually, according to city documents. According to City Councilman Sean Page, closure of the community centers will have a significant impact on those people who currently depend upon them.

Ken Callum, who grew up five blocks from a Community Center, said its existence was vital to the neighborhood. "There aren't any grocery stores within walking distance and two area schools have been closed", he said.

"We're constantly creating ghettos, and that is troubling me," said Callum, 53. "We cannot

let something that is viable in the community disappear."



### **Westside Community Center**

Al Martinez, an 85-year-old World War II veteran, said he's been going to the Community Center to eat and socialize since his wife, Tina, died of cancer a few years ago. Martinez said closing the center would be devastating to the neighborhood.

"Not for the sake of me, but the kids need this place, too," he said. "I don't think I'll last much longer anyways, but the kids need this place."

Recently, The Salvador Foundation agreed to team with Woodmen Valley Chapel (WVC) in Colorado Springs to fund the West Side Community Center and keep the doors open.

Coordinating activities for WVC is Dick Siever, who has big plans for the center with a newly established operating budget of \$220,000 per year. The \$220,000 budget represents about 60% of the operating budget when the City of Colorado Springs ran the Center. In spite of that, WVC in collaboration with several other volunteer organizations have managed to maintain (and in some cases expand) the quality of services offered. Local volunteers, other charitable organizations and local business donors are lending a hand to carpet many of the rooms, pave over a dirt parking lot, plant a community garden, mow lawns and redo the basketball court. In some cases, they provide labor, and in others they may provide raw materials or financial contributions.

WVC also plans to supplement existing programs by adding an art program, a work force skill development program and a healthcare program with Peak Vista Community Health Centers. This summer, Westside will also add a reading mentor program for teens.



**Westside Center Gymnasium**



**Westside Center Classrooms**

The Westside community Center has been a great example of how individuals can pull together to use whatever skills God may have given them to help others. We are honored to be a part of this community effort.

The Salvador Foundation is currently supporting efforts in the US and Latin America. If you would like further information on this or any other activities, please contact:

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