

VCF HOMELESS RP 5/18/91 p. 15 RP

Salvation Army plans family living shelter

By BOB SMITH
STAFF WRITER

The Salvation Army will shortly begin to convert an old medical office building and two historic homes — all earthquake damaged — into a transitional family living complex.

When finished by the end of the year, the complex at the corner of Union and Maple streets will be able to house nine families for stays of up to 90 days, said Salvation Army Major Gary Souders.

The shelter will house families who are down on their luck temporarily and need a place to stay while they find jobs or get their finances in order so they can live by themselves.

There will be a case worker working with each family, helping them solve the problems that brought them to the shelter.

There will be no charge to the families living there, Souders said. The Army will pay all of the expenses.

The family shelter is the first of its kind run by the Army in Northern California, Souders said.

It is not, however, the first in the Pajaro Valley. There are sev-

eral houses run by Pajaro Valley Shelter Services.

The Salvation Army does run shelters for homeless men and women, but not a where entire families are counseled and helped to get back on their feet.

Salvation Army board member Chuck Allen said the germ of the idea originated with the local board members after the October 1989 earthquake.

Millions of dollars poured into the Army's western regional headquarters and Army leaders started looking for projects. Watsonville officials proposed the family shelter concept.

The property was purchased recently from the family of Dr. Marco Martínez, who died two years ago. The earthquake had left the medical offices and two homes uninhabitable. Allen said the Army paid \$525,000 for the property.

Now, the goal is to repair and remodel the buildings into accommodations for nine families plus a full-time caretaker.

When it's finished, there will be small apartments, parking and a fenced play yard with day care for the children of families staying in



Kurt Ellison

From left, Salvation Army board members Phil Lawrence and Chuck Allen confer with Major Gary Souders on plans for the new family shelter.

the project.

Allen and Salvation Army board chairman Phil Lawrence said it will cost another \$650,000 to complete the project.

Besides the earthquake donations, grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency

and Watsonville's housing rehabilitation funds will be used, Allen said.

Architect Bob Corbett is donating his services as is construction estimator Kevin Finemore and Allen, who is the development coordinator.