

THE CROSSING

RENO-SPARKS GOSPEL MISSION, INC
Sharing and Caring in Northern Nevada since 1963

EASTER ISSUE 2008

From a Mental Hospital *into God's Arms of Love*

My name is Zaid. For too many years I was addicted to alcohol and intravenous heroin. If there were a one-word metaphor for my life it would be *nightmare*. Nothing was right about my life or my lifestyle. I was suicidal and, as a result, I was also a regular at the Nevada Mental Health Center. In fact, I was at the Center when I was released to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. The longer I'm here at the Mission the more I realize there is real hope for me. My relationship with God is now filling the holes in my life that I once filled with alcohol and other drugs.

I'm smiling again

I'm excited that God is giving me back my joy. I'm smiling again because it feels so good to be clean and sober. In the past I was so far away from God it was impossible for me to connect with him. Today, in this Easter season, it's all so different. I'm enjoying a new birth in Christ that's filled with optimism and opportunities for service.

I also have a deep appreciation for you who give so much to the Mission — whether it's your money, your time or your influence. I don't say it

lightly when I tell you your donations helped save my life. What greater Easter gift could you ever give a person? I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Because of a loving God and so many caring people,

I no longer need sleeping aids for depression and mood disorders. God is taking care of my physical problems as well. God bless you for helping one more lost person find his way home.

"My relationship with God is now filling the holes in my life that I once filled with alcohol and other drugs."



*Thanks to so many caring people,
God is transforming my life*

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New Thrift Stores

Bargain shoppers now have two new thrift stores to find great deals from the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission.

At press time, the new Thrift Depot in Sun Valley was slated to open in February at the new Sun Valley Shopping Center, 5055 Sun Valley Drive. The store will feature furniture, appliances, electronics, knick-knacks and plenty of excellent clothing.

And, by popular demand, the Thrift Depot returned in January to the Raley's Shopping Center at 1075 North Hills Blvd., in north Reno. The store includes a smaller version of the Mission's women's clothing store, Mary & Martha's Fashion for Less, which opened late last year.

The Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission now operates five Thrift Depots in the Northern Nevada area, with all proceeds helping the needy and homeless in our community.

Shop and save today at the following locations:

- **Thrift Depot Kietzke**
630 Gentry Way (at Kietzke), Reno
825-4424, 9-5, Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot Reno**
575 E. Fourth St. (at Elko), Reno
786-4499, 9-4:45, Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot Sparks**
640 Greenbrae Dr., #160
(Greenbrae Shopping Center), Sparks
331-5020, 9-5, Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot North Hills**
1075 North Hills Blvd.
(Raley's Shopping Center), Reno
677-2266, 9:30-5:30, Mon-Sat.
- **Thrift Depot Sun Valley**
5055 Sun Valley Dr.
(Sun Valley Shopping Center), Reno
No phone number yet. 9-5, Mon-Sat.

An Encouraging Word from Rick Redding

Have you ever wondered how important your donations are to the men and women who come through the doors of the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission? As we celebrate this season of new life and new hope, I want to give you just one example of how vitally important you are to this ministry.

Over the past two years we've enjoyed a strong relationship with the Nevada court system which, in some cases, gives offenders two options: Either serve time in prison or come to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission for 13 months. During the past 24-month period 50 men and women have graduated from our program and have not returned to a life of crime.

Here's the financial bottom line. It costs a minimum of \$35,000 to keep a person behind bars in Nevada for one year. This means because you have already helped us keep 50 men and women out of the system *you have helped save 1.75 million tax dollars during the past two years alone*. If that's not a mega-return on your investment I don't know what is.

Your donations are changing lives

However, it's not just about saving tax dollars — as important as that is. Your donations are saving lives for eternity. When you write a check for your rent or your credit card debt, it's probably not all that exciting. But you keep telling me that when you write a check, or give online to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, your heart is filled with joy. You know you're helping to change lives. Because of you, old things are passed away and all things are becoming new for people like Zaid and Sharon and the scores of others who come to our doors each month.

Your gifts are helping to restore sanity to those who once had little or no hope. You are giving the gift of life in Christ, not only at this Easter season but throughout the year. I don't have enough words to express my gratitude to you for your many acts of kindness. Now, I thank you in advance for your continued support of God's work in our community. God bless you, and Happy Easter.

Your servant,

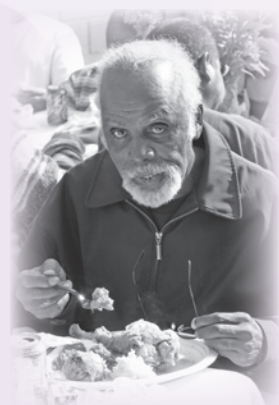


Rick Redding, Executive Director



"Your gifts are helping to restore sanity to those who once had little or no hope. You are giving the gift of life in Christ."

God Bless You for Providing Help, Hope and Healing for



The vast majority of health professionals today are familiar with the strength-giving powers of hope. We could not agree more. That's because here at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission when people know they have *hope*, they are capable of enduring the most rigorous challenges of recovery.

The good news is that the saving message of Jesus Christ is a message of healing. Yes, the words of scripture provide comfort, understanding, moral values and inner strength. But they also heal mental, physical and spiritual issues. Deuteronomy 8:3 reminds us, ". . . man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord."

Thank you for your faithfulness

We at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission thank you for your vital role in sharing this message of health, healing and hope with those who come through

"When people know they have hope they are capable of enduring the most rigorous challenges of recovery."

If I ran out of vodka, I'd drink a whole bottle of Listerine

(It's what alcoholics do when they're desperate)

My name is Sharon. After a painful divorce and losing a job I'd held for 13 years, my life began to spin out of control. I was so depressed that my only objective was to drink myself into oblivion. My prayer was *God, please don't let me see another sunrise.*

A typical day for me would be to scrape up enough money to buy my vodka, go home, lock the door and drink until the bottle was empty. I'd then get in my car and head out to the back roads (where I hoped there would be no cops) to buy some more liquor. Then I would come home and start the process all over again. If I couldn't afford vodka, I'd drink a whole bottle of Listerine! This is the kind of thing alcoholics do when they're desperate. All I can say is that if I hadn't come to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission I would be dead. No question about it.

God's changing me from the inside out

A loving God, the caring people here, and you who donate your time and money to the Mission have given me back my life. There's

nothing I would not do for this place of rescue. That's why I work at the Women's Prayer House, where I clean the rooms, counsel with the women and do what I can to let them know there's hope for them, too.

Easter used to be about the Easter bunny and hiding eggs. Today, Easter means new hope in Christ because of his resurrection power in my life. No longer am I sinking in quicksand, counting the seconds until I'd be dead. Praise God

I'm alive and thriving. I also know that the best is yet to come because God is in control of my life. He's changing me from the inside out. Thank you for playing your part in my recovery. Happy Easter.

"If I hadn't come to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission I would be dead."



I'm a changed person because you care about someone like me. Thank you!

People in Need in Reno-Sparks

our doors. It's because of your generosity that our doors remain open. You stood beside us so faithfully during the recent holiday months by providing nourishing food, safe shelter and the opportunity to hear God's Word. As a result, hundreds of desperate people found rest for their weary souls.

Now we come to you again at the beginning of the Easter season, asking you to make an investment in the lives of people in need. You are a valued member of our Mission family, and we thank you in advance for your generosity.

To keep on reaching out to people like Zaid and Sharon, and so many more, with a generous Easter love gift, please use the remit form enclosed or call us at **775-323-0386**. You may also donate on our secure website **www.rsgm.org**. Thank you for being our partner in caring for the poor and needy in Reno-Sparks during the Easter season and throughout the year.

Easter Events



The Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission invites the community to its annual Easter morning "Bible and Breakfast" service beginning at 8:00 a.m. Sunday, March 23, at its Record Street Facility, 355 Record St., Reno.

Join us as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus with a beautiful time of singing and prayer. Following the service, we'll serve a hearty breakfast of eggs, bacon and pancakes to all in attendance.

Singles, couples and families are invited to attend this free event.

For details about the Easter service and meal, call **775-329-0485**.

Women's Drop in Center

More homeless women have a safe place to seek shelter with the opening of the new 70-bed Women's Drop In Center on Record Street in Reno.

The Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission has contracted with the City of Reno and Washoe County to operate the 6,000-square-foot facility to provide clean beds, shower facilities, clothes and meals to homeless and needy women. The shelter opened in January and has been operating at near capacity since.

The Mission, which runs the facility at cost with no profit involved, also operates the area's first emergency shelter for women. The 20-bed facility will remain open to provide as much help as possible to women seeking help off the streets.

Rick Redding, Mission executive director, said the female homeless population has dramatically increased since the first shelter opened in October 2006. The Mission used to serve about 15 women a night — but the number has grown to more than 60 in the last year.

"They're telling us that they feel empowered to leave abusive relationships and other horrible situations," Redding said. "They don't have to put up with it anymore."

"We want women to know they will always find safety here at the Mission. There are alternatives. No one should be abused."



Ad2Reno

The ads are somber at first glance.

Seemingly dejected men and women holding enlarged name tags with their name and addiction scrawled beneath the "Hello My Name Is . . ."

A closer look reveals the hope. The addiction has been crossed off, leaving just the name.

A new identity. A new life. A changed life.

That's the theme of "Changing Lives," an advertising and marketing campaign designed for the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission by Ad2Reno, a professional club of young advertising professionals that annually selects a charity for a free public service campaign.



RSGM was chosen from dozens of applicants to be the recipient of a comprehensive advertising campaign. Ad2Reno members will donate their time to create the campaign from concept to finish and will present the campaign in book and presentation format at the American Advertising Federation Conference in Atlanta, GA, in June.

The campaign includes a redesigned website (www.rsgm.org), radio and television spots and printed material. The group chose "Changing Lives" as the theme after interviewing dozens of clients and staff and working closely with Rick Redding, Mission Executive Director.

"They felt it best captured the work we do at the Mission," Redding said. "We're changing people's lives and giving them their identity. They're no longer 'Tom the Alcoholic.' They're just 'Tom' now.

"Too many times we stigmatize and label people as 'homeless' or 'addict' or 'alcoholic.' By crossing out their label, people can learn to be free as God intended them. He is the creator of new lives."

Holiday Wrap-Up

Boasted by its generous donors, the Gospel Mission served nearly 50,000 hot meals during the holiday season while giving away thousands of warm articles of clothing for the needy and homeless.

On Thanksgiving and Christmas days alone, more than 4,000 men, women and children flocked to the Mission to eat a hearty meal and receive a winter jacket, gloves, hats or wrapped toys for the children. More than 200 senior citizens at local centers also received a turkey meal.

The Mission's 3rd Annual "Random Acts of Kindness" — held the weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas — spread holiday cheer to some 600 families who answered a knock on their door and received a turkey meal or grocery store gift certificate.



Dozens of volunteers ensured the events went off without a hitch and that everyone received special attention.

"Our volunteers and staff are incredible," said Rick Redding, Mission executive director. "You could feel God's love just poured out."

Hundreds of individuals and businesses made the events possible. The Mission would like to thank all who gave generously so that others might receive, with a special thank you to the following:

Grocery Outlet in Sparks; Grand Sierra Resort Casino; AAA Nevada; Siena Hotel Spa Casino; the Nell J. Redfield Foundation; Carrows Restaurants; Smart & Final; Renown Medical Center; Sak-N-Save; Wal-Mart in Carson City; Harrah's Casino Reno; Champion Chevrolet; Yvonne St. Onge; Kelsey Kloss, a 14-year-old who knitted 68 hats; Susan Choi of Hawaii, who crocheted 20 hats and 25 scarves; Summit Christian Church in Sparks, which collected nearly 1,000 winter coats; and the thousands of donors who opened their wallets to support this needed Mission.

Thank you all for making this a very special holiday season!



My Easter Gift

YES, Rick, please use my donation to help feed and clothe those in need during the Easter season.

- Please bill my credit card:
 VISA MC AMEX DISCOVER

Here's my best gift of:

- \$17.90 to provide **10 meals** and other assistance
 \$26.85 to provide **15 meals** and other assistance
 \$53.70 to provide **30 meals** and other assistance
 \$_____ to provide **as many meals and as much care as possible**

Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, Inc.
P.O. Box 5956
Reno, NV 89513-5956

ACCOUNT NO. _____ EXP. DATE _____

NAME _____ SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Please use this completed form and return it with your Easter donation, or donate online at www.rsgm.org. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.