

# THE CROSSING

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

HOLIDAY ISSUE 2009

## From Fallen Giant...to Gentle Giant. Again, proof of the mercy of a loving God.

**M**y name is Pat. I came to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission because I needed help with my alcohol and drug addiction. Methamphetamines were my downfall. I used crank (a white powder which can be eaten or mixed with liquid and drunk) and cocaine since I was 18. Drug use and abuse were my downfall.

I'm a big guy and I love football. I was 230 pounds in high school and I had every intention of going pro. To meet my athletic objectives I started early on steroids. I got hooked up with a doctor who gave me three cycles of steroids for three months. I could bench 450 pounds, and I thought I was doing pretty well. But there were others who could do better... *so I figured I also had to do better.* I did steroids to keep up.

To make a long story short, I ended up with nine knee surgeries, addictions that were ruining my life and time in prison for the possession of a stolen vehicle. Being in prison was my wake up call. While behind bars, I was still living large. Lots of people wanted to fight me. But if they did, they'd pay for it. One of my jobs in prison was breaking wild mustangs. I guess I was the prison horse whisperer. It taught me a lot about horses and a lot about myself.

**"One day I saw the film *The Passion of the Christ*. That did it for me. What I saw in that movie brought me to Jesus."**



### ***The Passion of the Christ brought me to Jesus***

One day I saw the film *The Passion of the Christ*. That did it for me. What I saw in that movie brought me to Jesus. I could not believe how my Lord could forgive people for what they were doing to him. When the film was over I said to myself *I need to follow that guy.* And I did...right to the doors of Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission.

So here I am. From being a mean, angry, out-of-control giant to becoming a gentle giant. From hating others, to having compassion and love for all who come into my shadow. God bless you for making this Mission possible through your donations and your support. You've given this big guy one more chance. *Thank you.*

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About 30 teenagers from a Northern California choral group made an inspirational tour stop to worship and pray with the men and women in the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission's addiction recovery program.

The group, called "Power and Light," is made up of energetic high schoolers from Golden Hills Community Church in Brentwood near San Francisco. Their summer visit to the Mission — "the high point of the trip," one teen singer remarked — was the end of a week-long tour made by the group, in its 20th year of touring surrounding states.

Mission clients were talking about the performance for days. "It was awesome!" said James Lambert. "It was so refreshing to see a new generation with that kind of outlook on Jesus."

We thank "Power and Light" for their selfless gift in reaching out to us, and we hope they can come again!

## An Encouraging Word from Rick Redding



The Invasion of Normandy was the invasion and establishment of Allied forces in Normandy, France during World War II. It is the largest amphibious operation in history — an invasion that began on June 6, 1944 and lasted until the time of the Allied breakout in late-July. Why do I mention this piece of military history? Because our work at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission has a lot in common with that ferocious battle.

Every day we take casualties. Each day we bind up the wounded, the spiritually and physically sick and the dying. We do triage on some. Many make it. Others won't. We work with full-blown addicts. They've spent their lives drinking from morning to night. They've been shooting up 24/7. It's all they know. They've been consumed by drugs and liquor. If they do become sober while at the Mission, *that's just the beginning of their often painful recovery.*

### Do what we say...and you'll be okay

One thing is clear: if our residents do what we tell them to do they'll probably be okay. Unlike a recent graduate of our program. He'd done a terrific job in allowing God to put his life back together. But get this: three weeks after graduation he started working a 60 hour week. He stopped going to church. It was a hot day, so he poured himself a beer. One beer became two, then four, then six. A guy walks in with some dope. He gets high. He's still on parole and he violates it. The cops find meth in his system. He's now facing four to six years in prison.

But thank God many of our residents stay the course — people like Pat and Beverly. They keep going with God. Every day they do "Normandy" type battles with demons that continually dog their footsteps. But they remain faithful. Praise the Lord these folks are *not* casualties.

Let me tell you the practical value of your donations. The chronically homeless are costing Reno-Sparks hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. That's our *tax* money. I recently heard of one homeless man who was arrested 104 times. The cost to our community? 10 million dollars.

So let the homeless, the needy and the addicted beat a path to our doors. Give us the opportunity to introduce them to the ultimate life-changer — Jesus Christ. The cost to help our friends is minimal; the return on your investment is beyond belief. At this holiday season I urge you to give the greatest gift of all to our residents: a sober, purposeful life with Jesus Christ at the center. I look forward to hearing from you today.

Your servant,

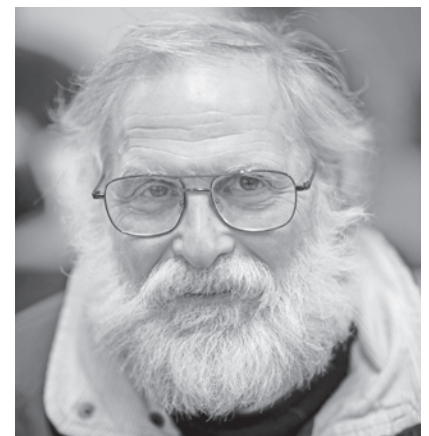
Rick Redding, Executive Director

"I recently heard of one homeless man who was arrested 104 times. The cost to our community? 10 million dollars."

# The Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission is grateful to you ...and especially during the

Once a year — and only once — the whole world stands still to celebrate the advent of a life. Only *Jesus* claims this worldwide, undying remembrance. Christmas celebrates that moment when God came down the stairs of heaven with a baby in His arms. Aren't you glad the light shining from a humble manger is strong enough to lighten our way to the end of our days?

Once again you have helped us sustain this ministry of rescue for another year. You've been generous month after month, season after season. Even when times are tough, you stand alongside those in need. *Thank you.* We ask you to keep the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission at the top of your prayer and giving list during the Christmas season.



## From Wallowing in Hell...to discovering a corner of heaven on earth

**M**y name is Beverly. Before I came to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission I was wallowing in something I can only describe as hell. After 30 years of drug addiction, I wondered if I'd ever be sober again. To support my habit I did whatever was necessary. I even sold my body for the drug. But nobody cared about *me*. It was all about money and it was all about drugs.

During my years of addiction, I lost my morals and contact with family and my loved ones. I spent my days hanging out with users. All we talked about was drugs. We never had a sensible conversation. I was just like that experimental rat in a cage — continuing to push the big button and expecting a different result. But all I got was chaos.

When I found the Lord, the devil lost a good soldier. I'd say I was one of Satan's best. I'd been in a deep hole, and I had no fingers left to claw my way out of my predicament. The more I clawed, the deeper I sank in my self-made hell.

### Jesus is showing me a new and better way to live

It was only a loving God, an understanding Judge Breen and the staff at Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission



**"I was just like that experimental rat in a cage — continuing to push the big button and expecting a different result. But all I got was chaos."**

that showed me there was a new and better way to live. I'm still peeling away the layers of pain, disrespect, disloyalty and negativity of my past life. But God is all powerful, and I'm making progress. I used to walk in a haze. Now the smoke is clearing...and I can see the light...the light of my Savior and Lord.

Thank you for your part in giving me a second chance at life. Your donations are providing me with food, clothing and safe shelter. Most of all, your investment in me is giving me hope. I can't get enough of God in my life. I have found the joy of my salvation...and that is making all the difference in my life. God bless you for caring about me.

## Thrift Stores

**V**isit us for great deals on new and like-new furniture, electronics, clothing and other great items! You never know what you'll find!

- **Thrift Depot Kietzke**  
630 Gentry Way (at Kietzke)  
Reno — **825-4424**  
9:30-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat
- **Thrift Depot Reno**  
575 E. Fourth St. (at Elko)  
Reno — **786-4499**  
9:30-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat
- **Thrift Depot Sparks**  
640 Greenbrae Dr., #160  
(Greenbrae Shopping Center)  
Sparks — **331-5020**  
9:30-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat
- **Thrift Depot North Hills**  
1075 North Hills Blvd.  
(Raley's Shopping Center)  
Reno — **677-2266**  
9:30-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat
- **Thrift Depot Prater**  
1450 E. Prater Way  
(Hacienda Plaza Shopping Center)  
Sparks — **331-5528**  
9:30-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat
- **Thrift Depot Sun Valley**  
5105 Sun Valley Blvd., Ste. 200  
(at First Avenue next to Dollar Loan Center)  
Sun Valley — **674-6444**  
9:30-6:30 p.m. Mon-Sat

## for your ongoing generosity throughout the year coming Christmas season

**"You are a wonderful instrument of God's peace. The peace I have in Christ is changing me in ways you may not know. Thank you."**  
— a Mission guest

### Here's how Mission guests are responding to your many acts of kindness...

- Your godly compassion is a powerful influence in my life. *Thank you.*
- You are a wonderful instrument of God's peace. The peace I have in Christ is changing me in ways you may not know. *Thank you.*
- Your gifts and service continue to bring me through my self-made trials and tribulations. Your compassion is giving me strength to carry on. *Thank you.*

To keep reaching out to people in need, please use the remit form enclosed to send your generous holiday gift today. Or call us at **775-323-0386**. You may also donate on our secure web site **www.rsgm.org**. Thank you for being a friend to the poor and homeless in our community during the holiday season and throughout the coming year.

# We need your help this winter!

The winter season is the busiest time of the year for us as we provide hot meals and needed warm clothing, jackets and blankets to the homeless and needy.

Our food services department is preparing to **serve more than 25,000 meals between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day** as we expect record numbers of the poor to come to us for help.

To meet the needs of thousands of hurting men, women and children in our area, we need the following donations:

- Winter coats (all sizes, especially men's)
- Warm clothing (gloves, scarves, knit hats, socks, thermal undergarments, boots, etc.)
- Blankets
- Coffee
- Wrapped **new toys for children (labeled with age and gender)**
- Turkeys and hams (fresh or frozen)
- Non-perishable canned food items

If you can help in any of these areas, please call us at **775-323-7999**.



Thoughts we will share with our guests at the Mission this Christmas...

*Somehow not only for Christmas* but all the long year through, the joy that you give others is the joy that comes back to you.

— J.G. Whittier

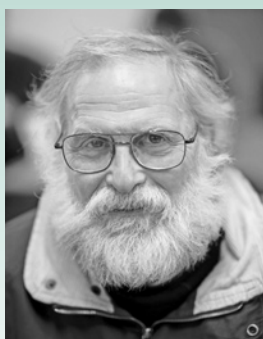
*The Christian faith* is founded upon a well-attested sober fact of history; that quietly, but with deliberate purpose, God Himself has visited this little planet.

— J.B. Philips

*It is good to be children sometimes*, and never better than at *Christmas*, when its mighty Founder was a child Himself.

— Charles Dickens

*Thank you* for giving us the opportunity to share the miraculous birth of our Savior with our Mission guests throughout the holiday season. May the same joy and peace of Christ we share with so many in need also be lodged deep in your own generous heart.



## My Holiday Gift

**YES**, Rick, You can count on my generous support during the holidays and throughout the year.

- Please bill my credit card (please print):  
 VISA  MC

### Here's my gift of:

- \$20.50 to provide **10 meals** and other assistance
- \$30.75 to provide **15 meals** and other assistance
- \$61.50 to provide **30 meals** and other assistance
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ to provide **as many meals and as much care as possible**

ACCOUNT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please use this completed form and return it with your holiday donation, or donate online at [www.rsgm.org](http://www.rsgm.org). Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.