

THE CROSSING

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

HOLIDAY ISSUE 2010

During my drug career, I lived a life of deceit. With God at my side I have no more reasons to lie

My name is Joe. In the past I was addicted, unhappy, a liar and just plain miserable. I'm deeply grateful to Judge Breen, who gave me the choice between 2-6 years in prison for possession or coming to the Mission. But even though I was court-ordered to come here, down deep I wanted change in my life.

For 17 years I was addicted to drugs. I had a relationship with God when I was young, but after being placed in a group home I started fending for

myself. In the process, I became angry with God. That anger, in the end, served no good purpose.

The worst days of my drug-infected life were when I did an ounce of dope, lost \$25,000 in slots at a casino, and took out a second mortgage on my home. It's terrible what a person will do when on drugs...or looking to find money to buy drugs.

I've finally found a place I can call home

But then I was directed to the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. Here I'm finding love and acceptance. I've never had much self-esteem.

I lived from day to day without any purpose or direction. I didn't care if I lived or died. But today I have a place I can call home. It makes my heart warm just to say that — and to know it's true. I've never had a family like this.

I now know God doesn't care about my past. In His sight I am clean. Forgiven. Set free. I'm even beginning to renew my relationship with my sister. I was never able to make amends with my mother, something I regret. I'm thankful to God, the Mission staff, my friends here and to you who donate your time and money. God bless you.

"I'm deeply grateful to Judge Breen, who gave me the choice between 2-6 years in prison for possession or coming to the Mission."

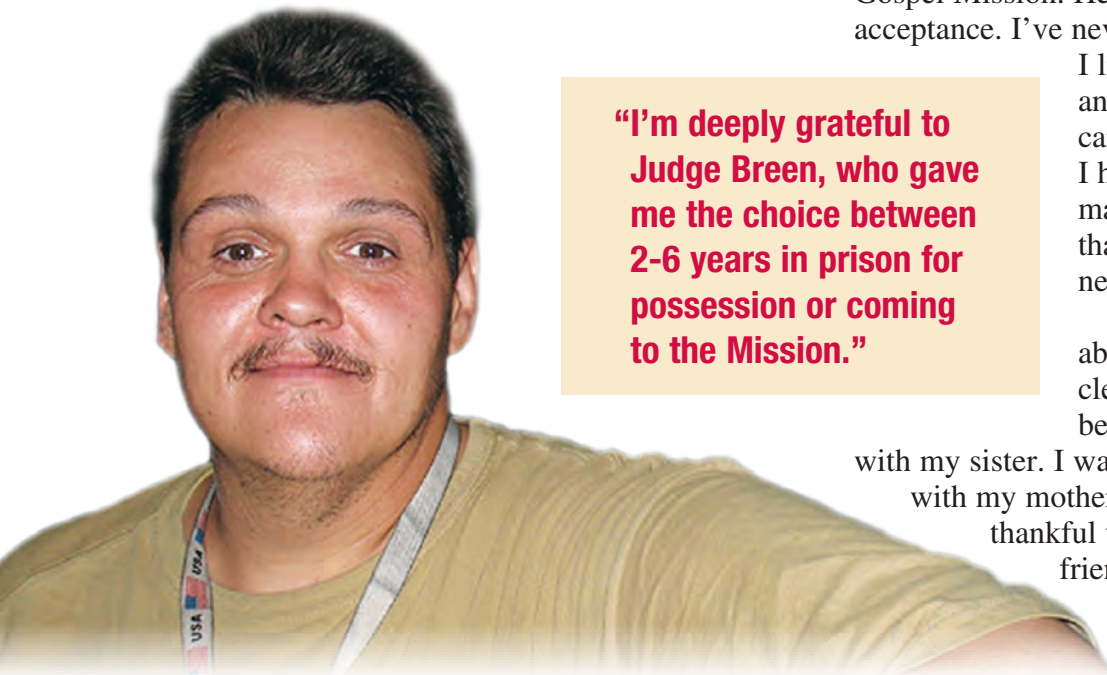


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Holiday Needs

The winter season is the busiest time of the year at the Mission as **we provide more than 1,000 hot meals every day** and give away thousands of needed warm clothing, jackets and blankets to the homeless and needy.

The Mission has special community dinners planned on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, and will continue its traditional "Random Acts of Kindness" events right before those holidays (in which staff and volunteers pass out hundreds of turkey and ham meals to local residents).

We also will **give out more than 1,000 winter jackets** at the special dinners, along with hats, scarves, gloves and other winter necessities. Children receive wrapped presents at the Christmas meal.

To meet the needs of thousands of hurting men, women and children in our area, we are asking for your help with the following donations:

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

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



An Encouraging Word from Rick Redding



It was a vacation adventure of a lifetime recently for my wife and me. We spent nine days travelling 193 miles rafting the whitewater of the Grand Canyon. One of the websites announces, "**you will need to bring rain gear or a change of clothes because you will get wet.**" What an understatement. Much whitewater rafting in the nation is rated 1-5, 5 being reasonably extreme. However, we did a bit better than that, by rafting in a rampaging river filled with 7s, 8s and 9s during our nine-day journey. A wild ride it was.

And, of course, I could only think of our trip as a metaphor for the men and women who come through the doors of the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission. Their lives have been lived in the swirling, dangerous, whitewater of drugs, alcohol and lifelong addictions. Others have simply lost their way. No number 1, 2 or 3 rankings for these folks. The people who come to us have lived with number 9s for most of their days on earth. They are our *whitewater people*.

Stepping out of our comfort zones is an exhilarating experience

For me to get on that raft was to step out of my comfort zone. It would have been safer (and a lot less wet) to jump on a cruise ship and enjoy being pampered by its onboard service. But once in a while it's good to step out of our usual box and live life from a new perspective.

When I was a journalist in Los Angeles, I hardly noticed the homeless. They were invisible to me. I'd walk over them. That's because I chose not to step out of my comfort zone. But then God took me by the lapels and threw me into a ministry with the needy that's now spanned 13 years.

Your gifts help move mountains of pain for the homeless

So what kinds of people do we work with? Well, there's the little girl whose mother shot her up with heroin on her 10th birthday. The 28 year old whose uncle gave her a shot of whiskey at five years of age to see her stagger (because he thought it would be funny).

At this moment, your donations are helping to restore hope to men, women and children who once had little chance to make it in life. This holiday season you are giving a gift that keeps on giving: the opportunity to allow the Christ of Christmas to invade lives today and for eternity.

How about you? Are you stepping out of your comfort zone these days? It's something to think about. Thank you for your compassion and your support now and throughout the year.

Your servant,



Rick Redding, Executive Director

The holidays are here, and the

No question about it. God could have chosen other methods. More dramatic announcements to be sure. He could have sent His Son trailing clouds of glory through suddenly opened heavens with legions of winged angels at His side serving as bodyguards. Or He might have announced the arrival of His Son through a succession of horrendous seismic shocks, torrential floods, enormous (perhaps even scary) voices of thunder or other means that would certainly have gotten humankind's attention.

But no. That was not the plan. It was a baby. A *baby*...born of a humble girl in a crude stable. Who but God would have thought of such a thing? Yet, it was at this precise moment in time that Love was set forth on His mighty mission.

I graduated from the Mission's program in 2009. But when I left, I didn't take God with me

My name is Danielle, and I've never been more excited about the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. For me it's a time to serve others, to see the faces of children light up when they receive presents and to observe God working in the lives of so many who come through the Mission's doors.

This is my second time at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission.

"Past holidays were meaningless. Just more days to get high. That's why I never celebrated them. But this year is so different. I'm filled with Christ's joy."

I graduated from the program in February 2009, but when I left the Mission, I forgot to take God with me. As a result, I returned to my addiction and to the one other thing that controlled my life: bulimia. For more than 10 years, I've had an eating disorder. Coupled with my drug addiction, I have always been pretty messed up. Only when a friend OD'd in front of me did I decide to change my ways.

Past holidays were just days to get high

Right now this is the only place where I'm happy. That's because I have people around me who want me to succeed. They keep me honest — and that's what I need most. Past holidays were meaningless. Just more days to get high. That's why I never celebrated them. But this year is so different. I'm filled with Christ's joy. I understand the meaning of Christmas...and I want to be His servant now and for the rest of my life.

Thank you for your part in my sobriety. You may never fully know how much I appreciate what you are doing for me and for my friends.

We may have lost our way, but we are finally coming home. God bless you.

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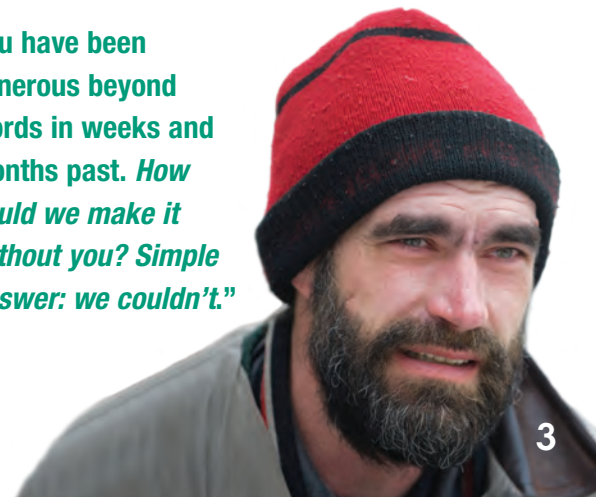
homeless still need to know you care

Your generosity allows us to declare the gift at Bethlehem

And it is this baby, this child of Bethlehem, this Savior of the world, this King of Kings whom we celebrate and share with other homeless folks who come through the doors of Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission this holiday season. With one exception: *here, there is always room in the inn.*

Your faithful support keeps our doors open. Your kindness brings joy and peace to shattered spirits and broken hearts. God bless you for all you do. To continue to respond generously to the physical and spiritual concerns of the needy, please use the remit slip in this newsletter and mail it to us today. You may also donate on our secure website www.rsgm.org. Thank you for being a friend of the homeless and friendless in Reno-Sparks during the holiday season and throughout the year.

"You have been generous beyond words in weeks and months past. How could we make it without you? Simple answer: we couldn't."



Michael Darney's big project

When Michael Darney needed a project to earn his Eagle Scout rank, he went big. **Really big.**

Undertaking the largest project in his Boy Scouts troop history, Darney secured about \$5,000 in donations and racked up 365 hours of his own time to landscape the Mission's facility for women.

"I like to help those who help others," the 17-year-old Reno resident said. "I'm really pleased with the way it turned out."

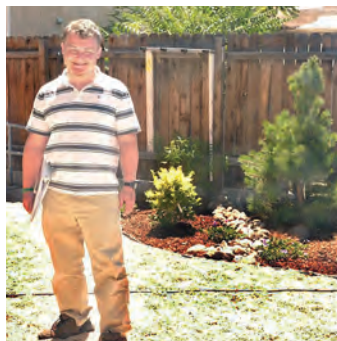
Darney and his volunteers — he had a ready crew of friends, parents and seven brothers and sisters — installed an irrigation system, garden beds, paths, boulders and planted trees, bushes and shrubs.

The project touched the hearts of the 46 women who call Prayer House their home.

"He made the outside as beautiful as the inside," said Tammy Treadwell, the Mission's women's services coordinator. "I can't begin to describe what this has meant to the women who live here. They are so grateful to Michael and the donors."

The Mission wants to thank Michael and the Darney family, landscape architect Marc Chapelle, and the following for their gracious donations: Artistic Gardens; Basalite; Ferguson Irrigation; Garden Shop Nursery; G & G; Home Depot; Moana Nursery; National Landscaping; Northern Nevada Electrical Training Center; R T Donovan; Silverado Excavating; and Wedco.

*Thank you Michael
for all your hard work!*



Appliance Donations



We need your appliances!

The Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission is seeking donations of used large appliances for help within our repair and training division.

Working and non-working appliances are used by a trained technician to teach Mission clients how to diagnose and repair refrigerators, washers and dryers, stoves, microwave ovens and other kitchen appliances.

Repaired and working appliances are then sold in the Mission's Thrift Depot thrift stores to raise money to help the homeless and addicted. Irreparable items are recycled or used for spare parts.

Donations are tax deductible. To donate or arrange free pickup, please call the Mission at **323-7999**.

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My Holiday Gift

YES, Rick, because those who are homeless need food, clothing and shelter, you can count on me to do my part to help—not only *during the holidays but 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

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 holiday donation, or donate online at www.rsgm.org. Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.