

FAIRBANKS RESCUE MISSION

Making a Difference One Life at a Time

SERVING GOD AND THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1974

AUGUST 2011



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FRM Recycling Center - By Rodney Gaskins

FRM Recycling will celebrate its second anniversary on Labor Day weekend. It's amazing to me that it has been two years already. Also amazing is that we have collected and shipped over three million pounds of recyclables and have 250 plus business partners. We recently added plastics to the items we are accepting and 24-hour drop-off bins. The FRM Recycling Center has provided 21 participants with on-the-job training, career counseling, and professional certificates (materials handling, forklift, and safety) and references.

What is really incredible to me, though, is how the FRM Recycling Center and its Green Collar Jobs Program came to be. The idea of a recycling center was conceived four years ago when the Mission was struggling financially. As the Executive Director, I was searching for ways to create another income flow. Within that framework I also wanted the Mission to model how we work with residents; offering a hand up, not a handout. I wanted to partner with the community and participate in our own support.

I gathered a bunch of information on recycling and then struggled with the concept for nearly two years. I knew it was a perfect fit, because the Mission was already in the recycling business. We take those society has thrown out and work at revealing the worth in each person. I would periodically examine my folder on recycling, but was unable

to bring a project to fruition. I could not figure out what piece was missing.

In 2007, I began writing a program which uses the different areas of the Mission (kitchen, reception, and maintenance) to provide job training to our residents. The inspiration came from observing that some people at the Mission didn't have a problem finding a job, but keeping one was the struggle. We wanted to create a controlled environment where their work related issues would not get them fired, but would signal an area to work on for success. However, like the recycling program idea, it too was set on the shelf waiting to be completed.



Then on Thanksgiving Day 2008, I met the missing piece of the puzzle. Her name is Mary Walker and she is the Project Coordinator of Alaska IPL and a very knowledgeable environmentalist. She supplied information, contacts, and loads of enthusiasm. When we began discussing the details of the recycling program, it became apparent that the jobs program was a perfect match. We met with the Executive Directors and toured the facilities at Valley Recycling in Wasilla, Smurfit Stone of Anchorage, and Threshold Recycling in Kodiak -

Because You Gave

JUNE NUMBERS

MEALS

4,716 were served

3,085 BED NIGHTS

were provided

1,892 for MEN

971 for WOMEN

222 for CHILDREN

36 BIBLE STUDIES

were held

30 CHAPEL

SERVICES were

held

Thanks to our

VOLUNTEERS

for 348

volunteer hours!

LIVING IN THE PROMISED LAND WITH AN EGYPT FRAME OF MIND



When God sent Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery to the “Promised Land,” He performed many miracles to convince Pharaoh to release them from captivity. However, when they reached their first obstacle, the Red Sea, and saw the Egyptian Army pursuing them, they became fearful and began to question God’s plan. Then God divided the sea, they walked through on dry ground, and He closed the waters on the pursuing Egyptian army. God led them with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, turned bitter water sweet, delivered bread from heaven, had quail just show-up, sprang water from a rock, defeated armies for them, and yet every time they faced a new difficulty, they wanted to return to Egypt.

We read these passages in our Bibles and ask, “How could they witness all those miracles and still have doubt, not trust God, and want to turn back to a life of slavery and despair?” Was it because the promised land was too far away or was Egypt just too close and familiar? What would make people want to go back to a life of suffering and pain? The answer is familiarity (Egypt) and fear of the unknown (Promised Land).

Once, while walking the building with staff, I noticed the living area of a man in our recovery program. I saw that although he had a sizeable area available to him, he had taken his furniture and created a 6 x 6 living space. When I asked about it, I was told that he had recently been released from prison. I thought to myself, “He’s released, but not yet free.”

Many of our residents come to us from their own Egypt, slaves to poverty, domestic violence, substance abuse, mental illness, or hopelessness. They long to escape the lifestyle they have chosen for themselves or which was thrust upon them. Yet the Promised Land of trust in God, drug and alcohol free living, caring for their families, supporting themselves and a home may seem like just too long a journey.

Many times God does deliver, only for us to return to our old ways, habits, coping mechanisms, and destructive lifestyles. When we face new difficulties or unanticipated challenges, we habitually use the tools we acquired in our old lifestyle. Many times we would rather return to familiar hardships than face the unknown adversities that are ahead.

When I left the Army, I had spent twenty years in the military, enlisting when I was just seventeen. I was excited about my retirement day but less and less so as it drew near. I understood the military, its culture, and systems. I was going into a completely new world that didn’t even speak my language. I had many questions and fears. “What type of job would I have, what skills do I have, who would hire me?” I thought to myself, “I’m not ready to leave. I want to stay in the military forever, because this is what I know!”

When I finally did leave the military and landed a job, I didn’t know how to conduct myself. I constantly compared the people in my new world to the soldiers that I had served alongside. I often thought, “If only I could make them do push-ups.” At the Mission, I still can’t make people do push-ups, but I have adapted and developed new

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gaining from their experience and expertise.

With our business plan in hand we began to search for start-up money and others in the community interested in recycling. We approached several organizations but Wal-Mart, Boeing and a small foundation out of Colorado named Change Happens are who responded. Now, with start-up funds secured, we began to purchase the needed equipment.

Once we received the equipment, we asked several businesses if they could bring us their cardboard so we could begin training on our new baler. We wanted to master the process before we opened the doors to the community. We wanted to make sure we could deliver the services we were going to tell the community we were offering. Also, because most of our program participants have had

many failures in their lives, we couldn't let this be another. When we were comfortable with our capabilities, we announced our plans to open a recycling center to the public.



TIMBO ERICKSON, RODNEY GASKINS, AND REV. PHILLIPS PRAY OVER OUR 1MILLION MARKER BALE

When we went public with our plans, we challenged the Fairbanks community to not let us fail and you have not let us down. Thank you Fairbanks for making FRM Recycling the most successful residential recycling program Fairbanks has ever seen.

MISSION NEEDS THIS MONTH

Shelter Needs

- Men's Underwear
- Men's Socks
- Bath Towels
- Diapers - Sizes 3-5
- Disposable Razors
- Deodorant, Men's
- Journals

Kitchen Needs

- Butter
- Eggs
- Sugar
- Brown Sugar
- Flour
- Hamburger
- Chicken
- Bacon
- BBQ Sauce
- Carrots
- Celery
- Onions
- Potatoes
- Noodles
- Grits
- Oatmeal
- Lemonade Mix
- Iced Tea Mix
- Kool-Aid

Other Needs

- 8-1/2 x 11 Copy Paper
- Scotch Tape
for Dispensers
- Kleenex

ROAD TO THE MISSION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

months. This August she received her Associates Degree with a 4.0 GPA and graduated summa cum laude. In addition to getting her degree she has also been active in her children's PTA and as a Human Services Student Organization volunteer.

When she came here in June she was concerned that clients might think she had an attitude of "Look at me now." She was relieved to find out that the staff does not hold a "them" and "us" attitude and that we confess to having our own struggles.

It was a joy to have her share this part of her journey with us.

AN EGYPT FRAME OF MIND

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

motivational tools to use in my new world.

To understand the people who come to the Mission, we must remember our own journey. We have all been enslaved and we are all, in some aspect of our life, on the journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. Many people come to the Mission fresh out of Egypt with high hopes for their new place. However, they won't relinquish their Egyptian passport, still own land in Egypt, and never really want to completely cut ties. We pray for the day that the Promised Land will be familiar and Egypt too far away.

ROAD TO THE MISSION

We met Kathy this June when she came to the Rescue Mission to complete a 3-month practicum as a caseworker in our Genesis Recovery Program. With a ready smile and laugh she fit right in and was soon successfully helping clients access services. It wasn't until she had already completed her practicum that another staff member told me she had been a client at the Mission at one time. Intrigued with the serendipity of her returning here to help, I wanted to hear her story. She consented to an interview and shared her story with me.

In the spring of 2007 Kathy left an abusive relationship and moved into the Interior Alaska Center for Non-Violent Living with her two children, aged 4 and 1 at the time. With her perpetrator in jail she reached a 3-month maximum stay at the Center and, having lost her apartment, moved into a hotel. Trying to make it on a preschool assistant's wages was impossible. No money for food or diapers or anything but the rent.

A friend, seeing her desperation, insisted she come to the Mission. She was afraid. She didn't know what to expect. She feared that it wouldn't be safe for her kids. As she says, "It was great though." There were other women here with kids and they all helped each other. She experienced healing here and the support and prayer made it like a family. She learned that God wasn't mad at her and wasn't punishing her but that He missed her and wanted her to turn to Him. The most important thing that happened to her at the Mission was that God took away her shame – over leaving her abusive partner, over being a single mom, over the struggle in her life. She stayed at the Mission until she was able to move out in mid-August.



KATHY CHRISTIAN

The last four years have been busy ones for her, including getting married in June 2009. In January of 2010 she entered a 2-year degree program which she completed in 18

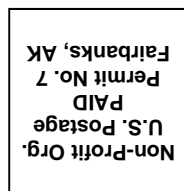
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VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

WWW.FAIRBANKSRESCUEMISSION.ORG

REQUESTED

RETURN SERVICE



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