

FAIRBANKS RESCUE MISSION

Making a Difference One Life at a Time

SERVING GOD AND THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1974

JUNE 2011



INSIDE
THIS
ISSUE

Vet Program 1

**Executive
Director
Greeting** 2

**Mission
Needs** 3

**Road to the
Mission** 4

723 27th Avenue
Fairbanks, AK
99701

Phone:
907-452-5343

Fax:
907-451-7058

Vet Program

Over the next few months I will be giving you a more complete picture of each of our programs. I'll give you some history and the progress, struggles, and successes we have encountered along the way. My objective is to give you a greater understanding of your investment in the Fairbanks Rescue Mission and the people we serve.

A few years ago, we began gathering demographic data. We wanted to find out more about who our clients are and what their needs are. One of the alarming statistics that we came across was that our population was over 30% veteran. Being a military veteran myself, I found this disturbing. How could someone sacrificially serve his or her country and then end up homeless? We had to do something about this...but what?

Part of our data collecting process was

conducting interviews with people to examine the contributing causes to their current bout of homelessness, how long they had been homeless, and what was needed to get them back on their feet. We received many answers and

although there were many underlying reasons, there was a common pattern that

surfaced. People were homeless because they had, for whatever reason, lost their source of income. After further reviewing the data that we had collected, we realized that the most helpful response would be to help remove the barriers that were preventing them from having a sustained source of income or keeping a job.

We began to write a program that would use sustained employment as the means to end homelessness. Our Veteran's Program was the result. The program focuses on identifying the barriers which prevent the individual from keeping a job. These include things like substance abuse, poor conflict resolution skills, lack of documentation, anger management, or inadequate work etiquette. A fair number of our veterans are also dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome or Traumatic Brain Injury. We realized there could not

be a one size fits all approach, so the program is individual based. Each individual has a treatment plan based on their unique challenges.

We knew we didn't want to create dependency or institutionalization so we use what we call the "Native blanket toss" case management

approach. We reach out to the helping agencies in our community to assist our



VETS AND CASEWORKERS DISPLAY VALENTINES FROM MARTHA CURTIS'S 2ND GRADE CLASS AT BADGER ROAD ELEMENTARY.

Because You Gave

APRIL

NUMBERS

6,911 MEALS

were served

3,266 BED NIGHTS

were provided

2,298 for MEN

800 for WOMEN

168 for CHILDREN

31 BIBLE STUDIES

were held

30 CHAPEL

SERVICES

were held

Thanks to our

VOLUNTEERS

for 167.25

volunteer hours!

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREETING



Father's Day is a very special day for me and no, it's not about me getting showered with gifts and acts of service ~ w e l l , n o t completely. It's the day I celebrate my father, father figures, and

Heavenly Father. My dad passed away two years ago and I thank God for him and the great relationship we had. However, there are many men that have mentored me as a man, husband, and father. This Father's Day I want to honor them, but in this letter, I want to celebrate God the Father.

I once thought God was like a Basic Training Drill Sergeant. My drill sergeant was this huge guy that yelled everything and could spot an untied boot lace, undone button or peach fuzz at a distance of two football fields. I knew his ultimate goal was for me to succeed, but it was going to cost me a lot of pain and punishment. I thought as long as I stayed in step, dressed right, or stayed hidden I wouldn't get pummeled. Simply stated, I thought God's plan also was to whip me into shape.

I gained a greater understanding of God's love when I became a father. Nothing could stop me from being crazy in love with my four daughters and it was nothing they did to earn that place in my heart...they're just mine. I've asked God a few times how He could trust undeserving me with the responsibility of fathering these beautiful gifts. God simply said, "It was nothing you did to earn this place in My heart and I am crazy in love with you, cause you're mine."

One holiday family gathering, my granddaughter wouldn't stop jumping up and down on the couch. I was afraid she would fall and hurt herself, so I kept sitting her down but she just popped back up and continued to jump. This went on for a while until my son-in-law said, "Let her go Rodney, maybe gravity is a better teacher than you." My first thought was "Does he understand the wisdom that he just spoke?" and then came, "How can I sit back and just let her fall?" So, while my granddaughter jumped, I sat on my hands. I struggled with the temptation to grab her. She jumped a few more times until she teetered and almost fell off the couch. It really scared her (me more) and she sat down and didn't jump anymore. I told her I was proud of her good decision, grabbed her, and gave her a big hug and kiss.

I learned a valuable lesson that day. It became a picture for me of what God had to do during my childhood foolishness, teenage tantrums, adolescent independence, and now in my mid-life madness and I'm sure it will continue into my senior insanity. God at times has had to sit on His hands. He wanted to grab me and tell me to "Sit down, son," but He knows, as did my son-in-law, that sometimes gravity has to be the teacher.

This Father's Day, know that God is crazy in love with you and it's nothing you've done to deserve it. It is simply because . . . you're His. Imagine, God has your picture as His computer desktop image and it's not your cute Facebook pose, but the one of you in tears, asking for forgiveness. God is crazy in love with you...take it from a father.

clients in overcoming their barriers. We are aware of the importance of surrounding our clients with positive people and the more people we place around them, the higher they launch.

The case management approach provides critical linkages to a variety of supportive services available in the community. The result is meaningful job placements and job retention and includes follow up efforts to ensure that those who find employment and housing have the resources they need to avoid returning to homelessness.

The program is in its third year and has been successful in getting many veterans the assistance they need to obtain housing, health care, employment, and a new start in life. None of this would be possible without the assistance of individuals, churches, service groups, businesses, Alaska Employment Service, Access Alaska, Mature Alaskans Seeking Skilled Training, Interior Community Health Center, Public Health Center, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Fairbanks Vet Center, and Basset Army Hospital investing in the lives of our veterans.



VETS RAISE THE FLAG ON THE "MISSION POSSIBLE," THEIR ENTRY IN THE 2010 RED GREEN REGATTA. FACING US LEFT TO RIGHT IS MICHAEL ERTL AND BOOMER NELSON. .



Commercial Pick-up
of Your Business Recyclables
Is Now Available at Great Rates

Call 452-5343 x110 or
e-mail: recycle@fairbanksrescuemission.org
to set up your pickup today.

MISSION NEEDS THIS MONTH

Shelter Needs

Men's Underwear
Men's Socks
Towels
Diapers - Sizes 3-5
Disposable Razors
Deodorant, Men's
Coin King Laundry
Tokens
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

Coming Up The 6th Annual Cruise With a Cause

Please consider donating art, sports or hunting equipment, Alaskana, craft items or anything that would be fun in a silent auction.

Call 452-5343 with questions
and please drop off your donations at the Mission - 723 27th Avenue



ROAD TO THE MISSION

Bill "Boomer" Nelson was born and raised in Kentucky and at the age of 55, you can still hear the soft drawl of it in his voice. A series of events concluding with his home being sold out from underneath him left his life in upheaval. He moved to Fairbanks where his sister was living. She'd found out about the Vet Program and recommended it to Boomer. In May of 2010 he moved into the vet quarters at the Mission, "a physical and emotional train wreck." He spoke about the turmoil of his upbringing in a poem we shared with you in November of 2010. It said, in part:

*How did I let myself get to this place
It's really not that hard to see
I've been made to feel worthless most all of my life
So what else could I turn out to be*

He connected with fellow vet and caseworker, Jeff Wilt, who, he said, "Gave me direction and kept me so busy with appointments and getting things taken care of that I didn't have time to be depressed." He says all of the staff has been helpful and the Vet Program has given him a safe place to fall and a stable place to start over from. He found joy in being needed and appreciated as the Mission breakfast cook.



WILLIAM "BOOMER" NELSON

Boomer now has a full life. He has his own apartment and a job through the MASST program at DMV. He loves the job and loves the people interaction there. He volunteers with the Alaska State Defense Force—a volunteer group which trains to help in the event of a disaster. He says he enjoys the military structure and discipline there. He has reestablished contact with his grown children and recently was able to visit with his youngest son and meet his two little granddaughters. Grandpa proudly shared pictures when he returned to his hometown, Fairbanks.

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

WWW.FAIRBANKSRESCUEMISSION.ORG

REQUESTED

RETURN SERVICE

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 7
Fairbanks, AK

PO Box 73250
Fairbanks, AK 99707

