

FAIRBANKS RESCUE MISSION

Making a Difference One Life at a Time

SERVING GOD AND THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1974

MAY 2010



A Mother's Story

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A Mother's Story	1
Because You Gave	2
FRM Recycling Center	3
Mission Needs	3
Twin Bears	4
Visitor Industry Walk for Charity	4

723 27th Avenue
Fairbanks, AK
99701

Phone:
907-452-5343
Fax:
907-451-7058

Nicki hadn't seen her son, Mike, for almost four years. He was only seven years old the last time she'd been able to hug him and now he's eleven.

She remembers her conversations with the boy's dying father about what Mike's future should be. She recalls the soul searching and the difficulty of that decision. Her ex-husband had told her, "You know you're on a dead end road," and she



knew he was right. She knew she couldn't take care of Mike the way he deserved and that her ex-husband's brother and wife in Maine could. So Mike went to Maine and Nicki, having lost her son, his father, and her home, flew to Fairbanks to stay with her sister.

The next three years were a blur of various jobs, partying, hotels, and phone calls to her son. She spent some time at the Mission too and when asked if she'd like to join the recovery program she replied, "You can't program *me*." She didn't have a problem, she could handle it, she wasn't as bad off as her mom had been.

Until one morning she woke up after sleeping in the woods, exhausted and sick. She knew she had hit her personal bottom. It was a desperate cry she whispered to the sky, "Lord, please help me." Just then someone came back from the store with beer and offered her one. She told him, "Nope, I've

quit drinking." She went straight from that place in the woods to the Rescue Mission and told staff that she wanted to join the program and she wanted to join *now*.

Nicki learned much through the Genesis Recovery Program and her hard work. That God can be trusted, why she does what she doesn't want to do, that she does have a hope and a future. But for six long months she was afraid to call her son or let him know she had hit bottom and where she was now. Her family didn't know if she was dead or alive. She felt "desperately ashamed" and worried that if she did relapse, what then? Finally, with encouragement from her counselor and with a pounding heart she placed the call. It was so good to hear his young voice say "Mom." She told him she was going to come see him soon, a promise she'd made before, and knew that this time she *had* to keep. That promise motivated her through

Continued on Page 3
Mother's Story

Because You Gave

7,436 MEALS

were served

3,244 BED NIGHTS

were provided

2191 for MEN

855 for WOMEN

198 for CHILDREN

32 BIBLE STUDIES

were held

31 CHAPEL

SERVICES

were held

Thanks to our

VOLUNTEERS

for 350

volunteer hours!

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREETING



DOWN BUT NOT OUT

In the mid-eighties, I was a member of the 25th Infantry's Boxing Team. One summer night a friend (because he may someday read

this, let's call him Leon) asked if I would work his corner for his first fight. I considered it an honor and I quickly agreed.

It was one of the most painful ordeals I have ever endured. My friend had courage and aggression, but very few boxing skills. Leon was knocked all around the ring the first round without even laying a glove on his opponent. When the round was over, I expected a disappointed Leon to come to the corner, but when he sat down and I removed his mouthpiece he blurted out, "I'm wearing him down; he's bound to get tired of hitting me sooner or later."

Just as I thought, this guy is crazy or he was hit too many times on the head, the bell rang for the second round. Leon rushed back in. Right away Leon hit the mat, but he jumped back up as fast as he went down. The referee wiped his glove and told him to continue fighting. Leon quickly hit the mat again, only this time when he bounced back up, he wiped his own glove and attempted to go after the guy, only to be stopped by the referee. The ref checked him to ensure that he was fully aware and allowed him to continue to fight. Leon was knocked down again, but this time he didn't



bounce back up as quickly .

He made his way slowly to his feet. I wished he would stay down. Once on his feet the referee began to question him to check his responsiveness:

Ref: "Are you okay?"

Leon: "Yes, sir"

Ref: "Are you okay to continue?"

Leon: "Yes, sir"

Ref: "Do you know where you are?"

Leon: "Yes, sir"

Ref: "Where are you?"

Leon: "In one hell of a fight."

Ref: "Continue to fight young man."

Leon didn't win the fight, but that night he won the hearts and admiration of many, particularly me. It's now twenty years later and I'm still sharing Leon's story. There was something in him that could accept defeat, but could not accept quitting. Leon asked me to work his corner so he could learn from me, but he became the teacher. Since then, I have been in many situations where it

was apparent I would not come out on top. However, I continued as if I could win. The success was in not giving up.

Many of the Mission's residents feel that life has knocked them down one too many times and it would be easier to stay on the mat. But, we are

working their corner. We are urging them to get back up. They may feel they have no chance of winning, but we won't let them quit. We help them up, dust them off, instruct them, encourage them, and put them back into the fight. We help them understand what my friend taught me many years ago. They are in one hell of a fight and the victory is in not giving up.

Mother's Day continued

another two months of recovery and healing.

She is now at the end of a long anxious day of flying from Fairbanks to the East Coast. As she is leaving the plane she wonders where they are going to meet her. She is descending on an escalator when she sees his aunt and then Mike. She hears him say to his aunt, "Is that her?" Had it been so long he didn't know her any longer?

After a couple of semi-awkward days Mike and Nicki found their comfortable way of relating again. She saw his life and how well he was doing. She was glad for him but grieved it wasn't her seeing him grow. The week went by swiftly and she had to leave her boy again. It broke her heart, but she had more work to do before she was ready to move back into his life.

Her eyes fill with tears as she tells me of their phone conversation a few days ago. She finally had the opening to be able to tell Mike why she had moved to

Alaska and why he was with his aunt and uncle. She tells me how she assured him that she wouldn't take him away from his current life and that when she was ready she would move to him, and that she just wants to be a part of the good life he has now.

My eyes fill with tears, knowing I am in the presence of one of the strongest, sweetest characteristics of humankind, the pure selfless love of a mother who has put her child first.



Epilogue: Nicki continues to pursue her program, growing stronger with each day. She is taking steps towards job training. She is preparing for the day she can leave the Mission, armed with tools to prevent relapse, and ready to be that good mother, in the flesh.

~ Michelle Harpole

MISSION NEEDS THIS MONTH

Kitchen

- Cooking Oil
- Sugar
- Coffee
- Canned Vegetables
- Eggs
- Butter
- Instant Mashed Potatoes
- Macaroni & Cheese

Shelter Needs

- Diapers, all but newborn
- Baby wipes
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Disposable Razors

Please remember to keep those who share their journey with us in prayer.

"You can pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it." -Matthew 21:22 (NLT)

FRM RECYCLING

RENEW, RECYCLE, AND REUSE

In addition to containing Earth Day, April was a considerable public relations month for the FRM Recycling Center. We were invited to a number of venues to share our mission and success.

Early in the month, we spoke at the Tanana Chiefs Solid Waste

Management Conference. The North Pole Rotary Club invited FRM representatives to a luncheon at the Pagoda Restaurant.

Earth Day events included an Earth Day Fair at the Fairbanks Memorial Hospital on Earth Day (April 22nd). We supported the UAF

Sustainability Task Force by attending their Earth Day Fair on Saturday, April 24th.

If your congregation, club, or business would like to have FRM Recycling speak to your group, please contact Randy Russell at 452-5343 x110 to schedule.



TWIN BEARS CAMP

IDEAL FOR YOUR

FAMILY REUNION
GROUP OR CHURCH CAMP
EMPLOYEE RETREAT
WEDDING

Check availability at www.twinbearscamp.org
Call 452-5343 x109 for reservations

Cabins
Full kitchen & Dining Hall
Shower Houses
Rec Hall
Hiking Trails
ATV Trails
Fishing



Fairbanks 8th Annual Alaska Visitor Industry's Walk for Charity



“A 4K Buffet”

Begins at Immaculate Conception Church at 6:00 P.M.
Winds through town with food stations along the way -
ending with desserts, entertainment, and prizes at the
Morris Thompson Visitor's Center.

Register at www.explorefairbanks.com/charity-walk
by May 10th and select Fairbanks Rescue Mission
as your designated charity.

Minimum Adult Registration is \$25.

Registration forms can also be picked up at the
Morris Thompson Visitor's Center.

Bib-Pickup on May 10th noon to 7:00 PM at the Center

REQUESTED

RETURN SERVICE

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

PO Box 73250
Fairbanks, AK 99707

