

# THE CROSSING

Sharing and Caring in Northern Nevada since 1963

## “I GOT ON MY KNEES AND BEGGED FOR HELP”

I was always pretty good at most things I tried. High school football. Running a business. Becoming a chef. Everything I did, I went all out.

Unfortunately, that went for my drinking too. I grew up with an abusive stepfather, so I drank partly to ease that pain. But I also liked how it made me feel confident.

Even though I was an alcoholic, I held good jobs. But I failed at two marriages. I went to a rehab program to try to save my second marriage, but she divorced me anyway.

After that, I holed up in a hotel and drank vodka all day and all night for two weeks.

Then three people I loved all died within five months — my biological father, with whom I’d reconnected and had a good relationship; my brother-in-law; and my brother.

I was devastated. I drank all the time. I lived on the streets. I panhandled, I stole, I got arrested. I wasn’t suicidal, but I didn’t care if I lived or died.

### Welcomed with open arms

On the streets, I came to the Mission for meals. But I didn’t want to stay here, because I didn’t trust anybody. And I was still convinced I could turn my life around anytime I wanted . . . till it finally reached a point where I realized I couldn’t.

I got on my knees and begged for help. I felt like God was pointing me to the Mission, this time to stay and get *real* help.

“I drank all the time . . . I wasn’t suicidal, but I didn’t care if I lived or died.”

I was welcomed with open arms and hugs. I was overwhelmed by their kindness and God’s love. And I was blown away by how much they help people on the streets.

I’m 52, and for the first time in my life, I’m at peace.

Today, I work at the front desk and welcome people who come in for help. I can look at them and say, “I know how you feel. I’ve been there. You’ve come to the right place.”

David



SUMMER ISSUE 2016

A Word from Rick:  
No Summer Vacation  
Pg. 2



Christmas in July  
Pg. 2



A God-Shaped Hole  
Pg. 3

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# Christmas in July



## SUN. SUMMER. AND SANTA. SANTA?

That's right. Every year, Santa greets the more than 500 men, women, and children who attend the Mission's annual "Christmas in July Dinner," which brings attention to the fact that our area's homeless need basic necessities and services year-round.

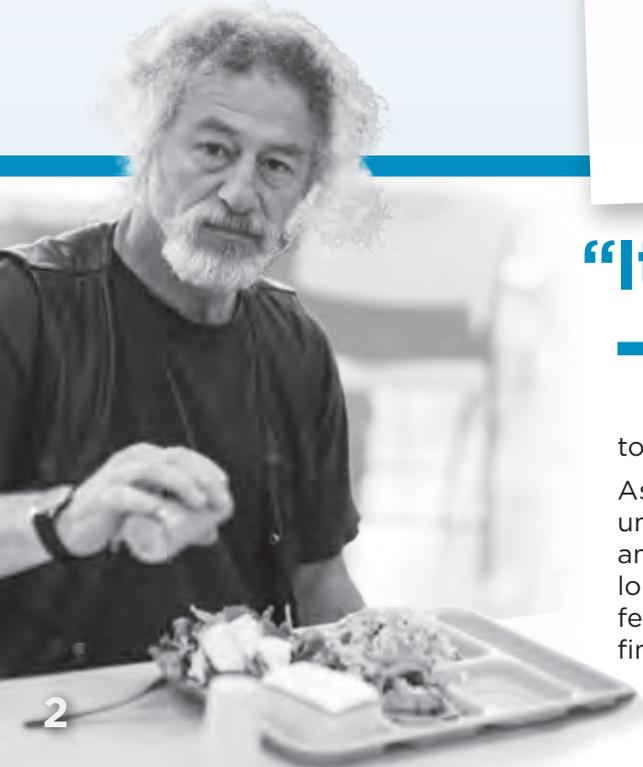
This year's festivities begin at **4 p.m., Monday, July 25**, at the Mission, 355 Record St. in Reno.

We need volunteers for this festive event to help serve meals and pass out gifts, hygiene items, and clothing to uplift the hurting in our community.

Call Mark Giuliano at **775-323-0386, ext. 16** to donate to the event, or sign up now before all the volunteer openings are taken!

### DID YOU KNOW?

At the end of each day, about **1,200 meals will have been served** to those in need.



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR No Summer Vacation



Dear Friend of the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, Think about what it's like to be outside on a hot summer day in Reno: *A hundred degrees, blistering sun, sweltering heat.* Now think about what you'd want or need in that situation: *A cold glass of water, sunscreen, a hat, a cool place to escape.*

Now multiply that by at least 500. That's what Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission needs *every day* to meet the needs of our homeless neighbors during the summer months.

Many of us take our vacations during this time. But homelessness doesn't take a summer vacation. Our homeless friends are out there in this miserable heat, looking for relief, every single day.

*Thanks to friends like you, the Mission provides that relief. Air-conditioned facilities. Water, sunscreen, and lip balm. A haven of rest and rescue.*

### The heat is up, and giving is down

This is also the time of year when I worry most about keeping our doors open. Every summer, donations drop dramatically, making it hard to meet all those needs. We can't afford to turn anyone away simply because of a lack of resources. I'm sure you would agree.

So please pray with me at this time that summer giving will keep pace with our needs — or, more specifically, with the needs of our friends who struggle on the streets, who have no place to lay their heads or store their belongings.

*I'm so grateful for your mercy and compassion. I'm so thankful for your support. And, on behalf of the people we serve, I can tell you they're incredibly thankful too.*

Thank you for your faithful support!

Your servant,

Rick Redding

**"Our homeless friends are out there in this miserable heat, looking for relief, every single day."**

## "It is more blessed to give than

**T**he Apostle Paul wrote, "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35).

As someone who supports the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, you understand that blessing. You truly care for those who are "weak" among us — those who are hurting, addicted, homeless, abandoned, lonely, and devastated by poverty. Your gifts mean hungry people are fed, homeless men and women are sheltered, those who are friendless find love, and the lost are found. None of this is possible without you!

# A God-Shaped Hole

Jeanne started drinking in her early teens when she would hang out with her older sisters and their friends. They would drink, so she would too.

“I’m not sure exactly when it turned into all-out alcoholism,” she says. “But by my mid-20s, I just couldn’t stop drinking.” It ended up costing her two marriages.

Because of her drinking, Jeanne wasn’t always there for her kids. She missed much of their childhood, because she was out a lot of nights, drinking. It got to the point where her husband asked her to leave.

She moved in with her mom, but it didn’t work out, and Jeanne ended up at a detox center. When that didn’t work, she went to Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission.

then relapsed. She lost her job and wound up on the streets . . . till eventually going back to the Mission.

“It’s exactly where I need to be,” says Jeanne. “They believe in second chances, which I desperately needed. I don’t have to beat myself up about my past. Jesus took care of that on the cross. I’m back where I belong, among people who love me and care about me.

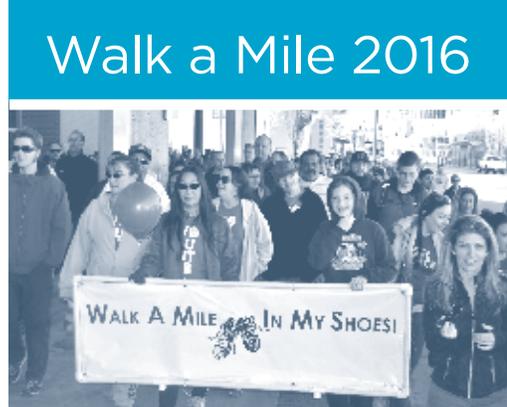
“I’ve learned that there is a hole inside me, and I was trying to fill it with alcohol. But now I know that it’s a God-shaped hole, and God is the only thing that can fill it.”

*Thank you for helping to give Jeanne a second chance!*

**“There’s a hole inside me, and I was trying to fill it with alcohol.”**

That was in 2009, and everything went great. Jeanne found God and turned her life around. She was sober for five years. When she left, she got a good job, but started dating a man who drank. She stayed sober for a few months, but

*Thank you for your compassion . . . and for second chances!*



More than 600 men, women, and children turned out to support homeless services during the Mission’s annual “Walk a Mile in My Shoes!” event.

Families, individuals, companies, church groups, and college students walked the mile route from Wingfield Park to the Mission, where they passed out 250 “Care Cups” to the homeless. The 34-ounce hard plastic, reusable cups contained needed hygiene items such as aspirin, antacids, toothbrushes and toothpaste, rain ponchos, nail clippers, adhesive bandages, and more.

The “Golden Shoe” was presented to Walmart for once again bringing the most walkers. Ebara International Corp. in Sparks took the silver, and Triad Plastics in Reno took home the bronze.

The event grows each year. If your business or company wants to be involved, please contact **Mark Giuliano**, the Mission’s administrative assistant, at **775-323-0386, ext. 16**.

## receive . . .”

### Your gifts bring new life to hurting people

I hope David’s and Jeanne’s stories in this newsletter inspire you. They are just two of the lives you have helped transform through your gifts and prayers. But every day, more struggling people like them walk through our doors, seeking a helping hand and a second chance — and they need people like you to give them hope for new life today and for eternity in Jesus Christ.

To send your generous gift today, please use the reply slip enclosed, or make your donation online at **www.rsgm.org**. You may also call us at **775-323-0386**. Thank you for being a compassionate friend to men, women, and children who need your help.

“Your gifts mean the hungry are fed, the homeless are sheltered, the friendless are loved, and the lost are found.”

# Partner Spotlight

## LASAGNA. SOUPS. PASTA. BREADSTICKS.

It's the stuff people crave when they visit Olive Garden Italian Restaurant. But thanks to the restaurant's corporate generosity, thousands of the less fortunate in Northern Nevada also get to savor a little taste of Italy.



For about a decade, the Olive Garden restaurants in Reno and Sparks have donated enough meals to feed about **100,000 homeless and hurting men, women, and children** at the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission.

Every Monday, Mission drivers pick up fresh ingredients that become dinners for many clients that week. The Mission serves about **1,200 meals a day** and every contribution helps, said Paul Parent, the Mission's food services manager.

"Clients love the Olive Garden food," he said. "We get creative with it and people just eat it up."

**Thank you to Luke Patrick and Jason Schweim**, the general managers of the Reno and Sparks stores, respectively, for making a difference!



If your business or company would like to know more about partnering with the Mission and helping the community, please contact Luis Santoni, director of development at **323-0386, ext. 14**.



## It's just an ordinary night at the Mission.

Men, women, and children come by the dozens to find a safe place to eat a hot, nutritious meal. The chattering is silenced only for a brief prayer, and then dinner is served. On the menu tonight is a tasty combination of mac and cheese with pastrami and a slice of cheese bread.



Add a piece of pie for dessert, and bellies are full.



After dinner, about 20 of the women will settle in for the night at the Mission's emergency shelter for women and children — safe from the predators and violence on the streets.

Others walk back to their weekly motel or low-income downtown apartment. Some make the banks of the Truckee River their home for the night.

### Most will return in the morning for breakfast.

Back at the Mission, clients and volunteers clean up the dining room while preparing some **300** meals for those staying in the public shelters run by Volunteers of America. At the end of each day, about **1,200** meals will have been served to those in need.

Through the first half of 2016, the Mission has served about **220,000 meals to the homeless** and less fortunate. And **27,000** have been kept safe at night in our shelters and houses. Another **100 beds** are full for those seeking help from drugs or alcohol.

Thanks to our incredible donors, supporters and business partners, hurting people find help and hope.

From a hot meal to a clean bed to a changed life.

*Just an ordinary night at the Mission.*

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## My Summer Gift

**YES, Rick, please use my gift to help bring new life to struggling neighbors during the summer season.**

### Here is my donation 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 care as possible

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

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

NAME ON ACCOUNT \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, Inc.  
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