



RESCUE MISSION NEWS

Summer

2017

A PUBLICATION OF BRIDGEPORT RESCUE MISSION

Hope is...

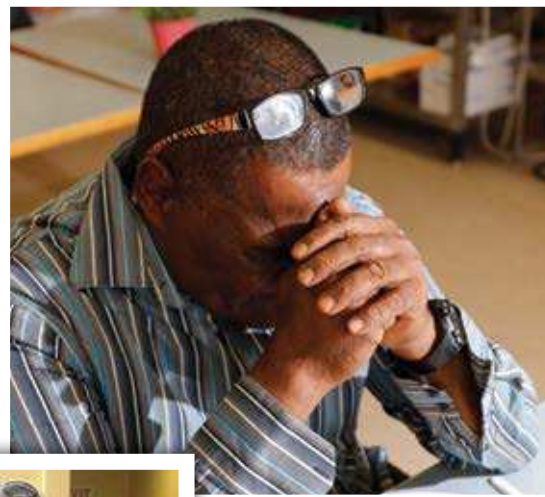
Nourishing meals and safe shelter

Restful sleep and wholesome food give our guests the strength they need to begin the hard work of rebuilding their lives.



Accepting God's love and forgiveness

Faith-based recovery and spiritual guidance help men and women overcome destructive habits and grow in their relationships with God.



Renewal through life and job skills

help them transition to independent living.

Adult education, work readiness and supportive housing teach our residents marketable skills and



Compassion for the community

Food and warm coats uplift impoverished families and individuals.

Through the Mission's faith-based outreach, your generosity brings hope to people like Greg.

Your heart will be warmed by his story on Page 3.



www.BridgeportRescueMission.org

SERVING THE HUNGRY, HOMELESS AND ADDICTED OF COASTAL FAIRFIELD COUNTY

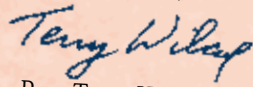
Get Connected

Dear Friend,

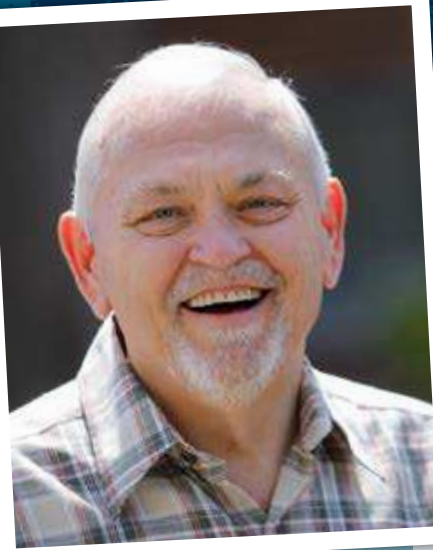
If I were to ask each person Bridgeport Rescue Mission cares for on a daily basis to describe what "hope" is, their answers would be quite different. For a homeless man who has come in off the streets, hope is as simple as the hot meal that fills his empty stomach and allows him to survive another day. For a woman fleeing domestic violence with her little ones, hope is safe shelter and the assurance that she's not alone. For an individual like Greg, whose story appears on the next page, hope is overcoming addiction and finding meaning in his life.

For all of those who seek our assistance – as well as for our Mission staff and volunteers – hope is also the heartfelt support you demonstrate through your gifts. Your generosity makes our ministry a place where hope is real and accessible. This newsletter describes how your giving makes hope happen here, inside our doors, 365 days a year. God bless you for your continued compassion.

In His Service,



Rev. Terry Wilcox
Executive Director



Executive Director Terry Wilcox is grateful for the opportunity to offer hope to hundreds of hurting men and women each year, through your compassion and partnership.

Bridgeport Rescue Mission

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(203) 333-4087

BridgeportRescueMission.org

Rev. Terry Wilcox
Executive Director

Donna Romano
Director of Marketing

All stories and photos in this newsletter are of students and guests at Bridgeport Rescue Mission.



Fighting Poverty
from the Inside Out
and Serving the
Hurting and
Homeless of Coastal
Fairfield County

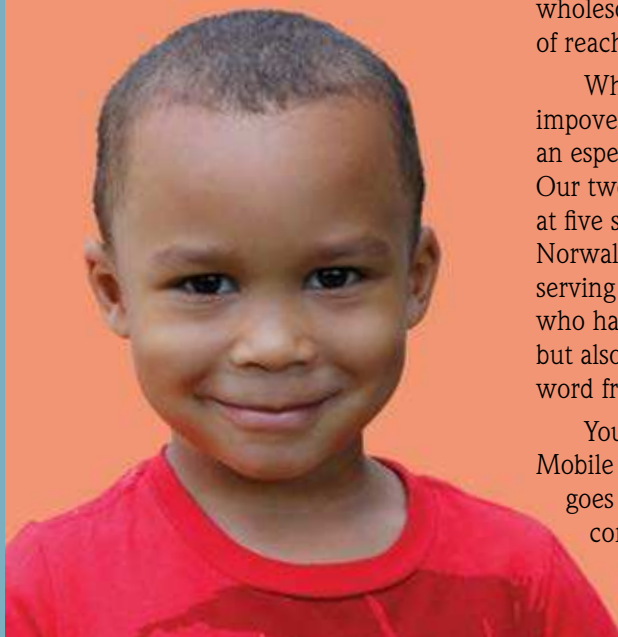
Mobile Kitchens Ensure Children Won't Go Hungry



Summer is just around the corner, and for many kids, the end of school signals the end of the breakfast and lunch programs they rely on. Their parents often struggle just to keep the lights on and pay the rent, so providing three wholesome meals a day is a goal that's often out of reach.

While our Mobile Kitchens bring relief to impoverished families all year long, they provide an especially important safety net in the summer. Our two Mobile Kitchens make weekly stops at five sites in Bridgeport and four in South Norwalk, and the lines that form outside our serving windows often include hungry children who have come on their own, not only for food, but also for a friendly smile and encouraging word from the volunteers inside.

Your continued generosity will help keep our Mobile Kitchens operating and ensure no child goes hungry this summer. Thank you for your compassionate support.





Restoring HOPE Finding PURPOSE

When Greg's family moved to a new city right before his junior year, being the new kid in school wasn't a problem for him. "I played baseball, I drank beer and I smoked pot," he says. "So I fit in with lots of crowds."

His drinking escalated when he went to college, and he dropped out. He entered the world of sales – cars, copiers,

software – and was good at it. Sadly, however, alcohol and drugs remained the focus of his life.

"When my friends were moving on, having families, buying houses, building careers, I was still acting like a teenager," he shares.

He tried a variety of treatment programs, eight in all, but his sobriety never lasted. He began to lose hope he'd ever build a meaningful life. After the death of a friend drove him into a deep despair, he turned to Bridgeport Rescue Mission.

"I've been to 'country club' rehabs and state rehabs and it doesn't matter what the surroundings are. It matters who the people are," he explains, referring to the compassionate staff of our New Life Program who helped rekindle his faith and guided his work therapy. Working assignments in the kitchen, greeting guests at the front desk and even mowing the grass renewed his self-worth and made him feel productive. And serving hungry neighbors from our Mobile Kitchen gave him a sense of satisfaction he'd never known. ***"Those people have so little, and it made me realize how important a meal is... how important a smile is," he says.***

Greg graduated from our New Life Program in December and will soon celebrate one year of sobriety. Today he's married, working full time and saving money so he and his wife can buy a home. He continues to attend church and AA meetings regularly.

"I have an incredible amount of gratitude for the Mission and everything they've done for me," he shares. "The people, the programs – they changed my life."

"The Mission gave me a desire to be happy and productive."

"My spiritual tank was on empty."

Greg has a special message for friends and donors like you:
"It's not only physical things that your gifts provide, but also hope and change!"

Your gift today and continued generosity are so deeply appreciated.





Stuff-A-Truck at Stop & Shop

Bridgeport Rescue Mission trucks will soon be stationed at **Stop & Shop** supermarkets throughout Fairfield County. Mission staff and volunteers will be on hand to collect food items we can use to prepare the thousands of meals served each day in our dining rooms, through our Mobile Kitchens and in the Pantry Bags we distribute to struggling families and individuals.

Mark your calendar for June 23 and 24, and plan now to help us stuff a truck with food at participating **Stop & Shop** stores. Simply pick up a few extra canned goods and nonperishable foods as you shop, and drop them off at our truck as you leave the parking lot.

Calling Churches and Businesses *Our Great Thanksgiving Project Starts Now!*

Once again, the Mission will distribute more than 3,200 Thanksgiving Dinner Fixings Bags to struggling families throughout coastal Fairfield County, and we are calling on churches and businesses to pledge their support now. By collecting canned goods or hosting food drives in the months leading up to the event, you can ensure we have all the items we need to bring a joyful Thanksgiving to grateful men, women and children. Your partnership will also allow us to avoid taking money from our budget to purchase the food, meaning more funding can be used for our life-changing programs and services.

If your group would like to say, "We'll help!" please contact Courtney Pandolfi at (203) 333-4087, ext. 112, or cpandolfi@BridgeportRescueMission.org for all the details. Here is a list of the items needed most:

- 12- to 15- lb. frozen turkeys
- Canned green beans, corn & peas
- Canned sweet potatoes
- Canned cranberry sauce
- Stuffing mix (not croutons)
- Gravy mixes

Plan Now to Attend!



Banquet

A BENEFIT FOR BRIDGEPORT RESCUE MISSION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2017

CROWNE PLAZA STAMFORD
2701 SUMMER STREET, STAMFORD

REGISTRATION 6 P.M.
DINNER & PROGRAM 7 P.M.

This inspiring evening supports Bridgeport Rescue Mission's life-changing programs and services for homeless and struggling individuals and families. And it celebrates the men and women whose lives have been transformed through the gifts and prayers of our compassionate donors and partners. Please join with us and other like-minded friends for this important fundraising event, as together, we restore hope in our community.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Platinum Sponsorship—\$20,000

Gold Sponsorship—\$10,000

Silver Sponsorship—\$7,500

Bronze Sponsorship—\$5,000

Copper Sponsorship—\$2,500

For additional information about sponsorship opportunities, contact Kim Fawcett, Major Gift and Donor Relations Officer, at (203) 333-4087, ext. 113. Watch our website – **BridgeportRescueMission.org** – for more event details.

Cut out and share with others.



Fairfield Christmas Tree Festival benefits Bridgeport Rescue Mission

Bridgeport Rescue Mission has been selected as the beneficiary of the **Fairfield Christmas Tree Festival**. The 2017 celebration takes place November 30 through December 3 at Burr Homestead in Fairfield. This gala draws thousands of visitors so it is an excellent opportunity to promote your small business products and services. For information on sponsorship opportunities, contact our Special Events Manager, Patti Law, at (203) 333-4087, ext. 118.

Join the fun by buying tickets online or at the door – \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and seniors.





Pictured L to R: Linda, a New Life Program graduate who shared her moving testimony with **Hearts of Hope** guests, was honored along with Zo, a mother in our Guest House, and Women's Program Director Yeharar Vielot.

We're Grateful for Your Hearts of Hope

- Thank you to everyone who took part in our 2017 **Hearts of Hope** women's reception. Due to the popularity of the event, a third time and location were added, allowing more than 500 friends and partners to attend. Together, they raised more than \$140,000 to support our women's ministries. We extend a special note of gratitude to our sponsors, table hosts and attendees.

Give Where You Live... Our 97-Day Summer Campaign begins May 29!



Right here in our community – and all across coastal Fairfield County – there are people who are wondering where they'll sleep tonight... when they'll eat their next meal... or how they'll overcome their desperate circumstances. But because friends like you love your neighbors and show your compassion through your gifts to Bridgeport Rescue Mission, they have hope!

Throughout the 97 days of summer, we'll rely on your financial support to provide safe beds, nutritious meals, essential pantry bags and faith-based counseling to homeless and struggling men, women and children. Our expenses for June, July and August combined are expected to run as high as \$750,000. This is the goal of our 97-Day Summer Campaign – and we need your help to meet it.

In addition to your regular gift today, please prayerfully consider making special donations in June, July and August. Your generosity will ensure we can continue to meet essential needs and provide life-changing guidance this summer and all year round.

From Memorial Day through Labor Day, your gifts help provide:



9,000+
beds



55,000+
prepared meals



65,000+
pantry bag
meals



countless hours
of guidance
and education

Give online, anytime, at
BridgeportRescueMission.org!

Special "Spotlight" for Corporate Sponsors

Businesses and corporations are invited to support the Mission financially and take part in special employee engagement and volunteer activities. In return, you will receive a Communications Spotlight package recognizing your group's partnership through our radiothon, social media, press releases, an upcoming newsletter and other forms of acknowledgement.

Plan now for your company to play a sponsorship role in our 2017 **Great ThanksGiving Project** by making a financial gift and dedicating a team of 10 to 20 volunteers to take part in the many activities that make this important outreach possible.

For more information on sponsorship packages, contact Kim Fawcett, Major Gifts and Donor Relations Officer, at (203) 333-4087, ext. 113.

