



# RESCUE MISSION NEWS

2018  
Summer

A PUBLICATION OF BRIDGEPORT RESCUE MISSION

## My Life Was A MESS!



*Turn to Page 3 to read how Matt's life was transformed from a mess to a message through God's love and your prayers and gifts!*

www.BridgeportRescueMission.org

SERVING THE HUNGRY, HOMELESS AND ADDICTED OF COASTAL FAIRFIELD COUNTY





# Get Connected

Dear Friend,

"My life was a mess." We hear this phrase time and again as men and women describe the tragic and complex circumstances that brought them to our doors—substance abuse, poor decisions, destructive behaviors and often situations that were out of their control.

As they make our Men's Shelter and Guest House for Women and Children their temporary homes and dedicate the next few months of their lives to our New Life Discipleship Program, we offer them guidance, training and education that will allow them to create futures that are filled with hope. In doing so, they're blessed with many messages: *You are forgiven. You are loved. You are worthy.* Most important, their transformation becomes a message to others: *You can accomplish anything through God's power, which strengthens you.*

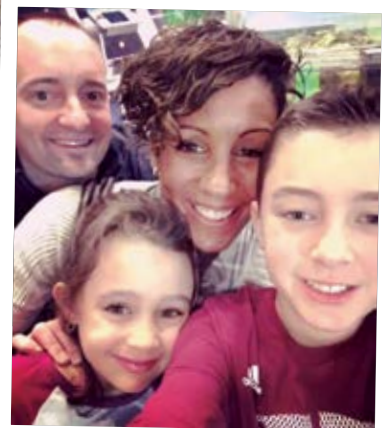
Through your prayers and financial support, we're turning messes into messages every day at Bridgeport Rescue Mission. Every gift is your message of faith in our work. Please accept our message of gratitude in return. God bless you.

In His service,

*Terry Wilcox*

Rev. Terry Wilcox  
Executive Director

Executive Director Terry Wilcox and Mission staff and volunteers help strengthen guests physically, spiritually, emotionally and educationally, as their lives become a message of hope.



## A Family's Call TO SERVE

(By Melissa O'Neill)

"Trying to raise two young children in the faith, with good morals and kind hearts can be a

bit of a struggle in the environment in which we live today, which is why, after hearing about Roodner Court, I immediately signed us up to serve.

Each visit to Roodner Court has been an awakening for our family. From our interactions serving with the men from the Mission and the conversations with the residents at Roodner, we have been given a chance to do what God asks of each of us while gaining so much in return. On our last visit my son expressed how excited he was to serve that evening. He said, 'It makes me feel really good when I help. I can't stop smiling.' Later there was a very special moment when my husband and I looked at one another, then back at our children in awe as if we were witnessing them growing spiritually at that very moment in front of our eyes.

Proverbs 11:25 says, 'Generous persons will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.' This Scripture speaks such truth for us, and by serving as a family at Roodner Court with Bridgeport Rescue Mission, we have been and continue to be refreshed."

Melissa O'Neill shares her thoughts on serving hungry neighbors at Roodner Court through our Mobile Kitchen with her husband, Don, and children Logan (10) and McKenna (6).

**Bridgeport Rescue Mission**  
1088 Fairfield Ave.  
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[www.BridgeportRescueMission.org](http://www.BridgeportRescueMission.org)

**Rev. Terry Wilcox**  
Executive Director

**Linda Casey**  
Director of Program and  
Strategic Development

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**



# Matt's Message of TRANSFORMATION

*"I let my drinking get out of control. It got to the point where I was unable to work. My employer gave me several chances, but eventually let me go. Then I couldn't pay the rent. I stayed at a friend's home for a couple of weeks, but after that I had nowhere to go. My life was just a mess."*

That's how 36-year-old Matt describes the situation that brought him to Bridgeport Rescue Mission's Men's Shelter earlier this year. Today he has a message for others . . . *"Life can be tough and I know a lot of people give up hope. My life now is a testament to the fact that if you keep pushing through, good things can happen."*

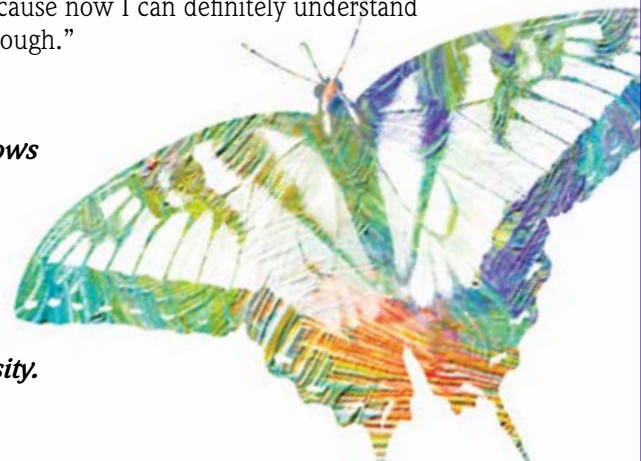
Matt is grateful for the time, resources and compassion he found at the Mission that enabled him to get back on his feet . . . and to rebuild his future. He'd had a full-time job—working over 50 hours a week—and was going to school at night to earn degrees in psychology and human services. And he was living in a neighborhood he loved. "Life had become pretty good," he says. But he let it slip away.

After becoming homeless Matt spent two weeks in our care and found comfort in our faith-based environment. We provided him with a bed, wholesome meals, and most important, he says, "the opportunity to think about and strategize what my next move was and where I wanted to go from this point. It really motivated me to get back on track."

When Matt's former employer learned he had quit drinking, he rehired him. Then Matt found a place to live and returned to school. He recently returned to Bridgeport Rescue Mission, but this time as an intern volunteering at the front desk of the Shelter to fulfill a requirement for his degree. He will soon graduate and celebrate his sobriety. "It will be one year without a drink for me and I never thought I would stop drinking," he says. "It is possible!"

Matt's experience at the Mission, both as a guest and as a volunteer, has given him a better idea of how he might like to use his degree and his message of hope to help others. "Whether it's working with the homeless or the mentally ill, I want to contribute and give back through my life experience, because now I can definitely understand what they're going through."

***Your gift today and ongoing support allows the Mission to be a place where lives are renewed and restored, becoming a testament of hope for others. Thank you for your generosity.***



# Bring a Message of HOPE to Neighbors in Need

## DONATE FOOD

Please purchase and deliver the items\* below to our Donation Center, 1069 Connecticut Avenue, Unit 2B, in Bridgeport, Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. These items are also available on AmazonWishLists and can be shipped directly to our door. Simply visit Amazon.com and search for Bridgeport Rescue Mission's wish list.

peanut butter & jelly • macaroni & cheese  
Ramen noodles • pasta  
tomato sauce • hearty soups •  
canned tuna, chicken & ham • dry beans  
cold cereal • ground coffee & creamer

\* Please provide all food in unbreakable packaging



## DONATE TIME

We invite individuals and groups of all sizes to take part in these volunteer opportunities. To learn more, contact Perri at (203) 333-4087, ext. 112, or [pperisco@BridgeportRescueMission.org](mailto:pperisco@BridgeportRescueMission.org).

- Helpers for our summer **Stuff-A-Truck** events (See Page 4.)
- Volunteers for children's Summer Meals Program. (Provide and pack homemade bagged lunches with a sandwich, snack, dessert and a juice box or bottle of water.)
- Partners to organize canned food drives in their church, synagogue or place of business

SAVE THE DATE  
*Plan Now to Attend!*



RESTORE HOPE  
*Bridgeport Rescue Mission*

# Banquet

A BENEFIT FOR BRIDGEPORT RESCUE MISSION

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2016

CROWNE PLAZA STAMFORD  
2701 SUMMER STREET, STAMFORD

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

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER - JOHN ASHMEN

John Ashmen is president of the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions, North America's oldest and largest network of independent ministries providing radical hospitality for the poor and powerless. His writings have appeared in numerous books, journals, and websites, and he speaks and teaches around the world.

Join other like-minded and compassionate friends for an evening of inspiration in support of Bridgeport Rescue Mission's life-changing programs and services for homeless and struggling men, women and families. Together, we can 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 Gifts and Donor Relations Officer at 203-333-4087, ext. 111. Watch our website—**BridgeportRescueMission.org**—for more event details.

Cut out and share with others.



# Thank You for Your **HEARTS OF HOPE!**

Sharon (right), a recent graduate of our New Life Discipleship Program, shared her testimony and expressed her gratitude to Women's Program Director Yeharar Vielot (left) and the program staff for their encouragement and support.



Thank you to everyone who took part in our 2016 *Hearts of Hope women's reception* in Fairfield and Stamford. More than 500 guests attended the event and together we raised more than \$160,000 to support our women's ministries. A special thank you to the following sponsors who helped ensure the success of this 8th annual event:

*United Bank  
Edgewood Design Concepts  
Koskoff, Koskoff & Bieder  
Grace Community Church  
Crossroads Community Church*



Associates from the **McIntyre Group** who volunteered during last year's Great ThanksGiving Project attended the event in support of our programs and services for women.

## Stuff-A-Truck at Stop & Shop!

Mission trucks, staff and volunteers will soon be on hand at area **Stop & Shop** supermarkets to collect donations of nonperishable food items which will be used to prepare the thousands of meals we serve each day in our dining rooms and through our Mobile Kitchens and included in the Pantry Boxes we distribute to people in need.

Simply pick up a few extra items for the Mission as you shop and drop them off at our truck as you leave the parking lot. Plan now to **Stuff-A-Truck** at **Stop & Shop**, and watch our website for dates, times and locations of participating stores near you.



## Follow and Stay Informed



Keep up with our events, urgent needs and stories about how your partnership makes an impact by making our Facebook page part of your daily news feed. Or follow us on Twitter and Instagram too. Simply click the icons at the top of our homepage at **BridgeportRescueMission.org**.

## Corporate Partnerships Offer WIN-WIN OPPORTUNITIES

We invite businesses and corporations to support the Mission financially and take part in special employee engagement and volunteer activities. You will receive a Communications Spotlight package, our Radiothon, social media, press releases, this newsletter and other forms of recognition. Contact Kim Fawcett at (203) 333-4087, ext. 113, for all the details.

### • We send a shout-out of gratitude to these corporate partners:

- **Northeast Medical Group** for supporting homeless women and children by adopting and renovating a bedroom in our Guest House
- **Barcelona Restaurant** for providing nearly 400 turkeys during our 2015 Great ThanksGiving Project and for their ongoing gifts of great food

## The Mission's Greatest Need

Second only to God's guidance, Bridgeport Rescue Mission's greatest need continues to be undesignated cash gifts. Because we are privately funded by individuals, churches, synagogues and businesses—and accept no government resources that would compromise our faith-based outreach—we rely on your financial support to offer our life-changing programs. Your cash gifts enable us to purchase the exact products and services we need, often in bulk quantities or for discounted prices, allowing us to provide the most effective outreach possible and to be the best stewards of your generosity.

The bottom line is this: **Your dollars make all the difference for men and women working to transform their lives!** Please bless them with your continued financial support.