



Connection

KANSAS CITY RESCUE MISSION • Holiday 2013



"I was alone. I slept in shelters when I could get a bed, but if I wasn't in line early enough I was just on the street, sleeping under bridges." Sally is remembering her recent past. "I was drinking, drugging, not caring. I was the walking dead."

Sally is one of the first women to move into Kansas City Rescue Mission's Women's Center, and since she arrived almost four months ago, so much has changed. For Sally, years of the street life ... with all its awfulness ... have ended. Today she lives a life where she feels "safe. I'm safe here," she says quietly.

At the KCRM Women's Center, Sally wakes each morning in a warm, comfortable bed to a day that's filled with three good meals, counseling, life-skills classes, prayer, Bible study and much more. And at the close of each day, she has put years of addiction, compromise and abuse even further behind her.

"I don't have to live the old life anymore," Sally smiles. "This is my new life now."

Her new life won't be free from difficult days. As Christmas draws near, Sally knows she will struggle with loneliness. "I always dread Christmas, because I'm always alone. I haven't been able to see my kids or be with family for years.

"But the ladies here and the staff here, this is my family now!" Sally's eyes light up as she talks. "What's different this Christmas is that I will be with them — my new family!"



God sets the lonely
in families.

— Psalm 68:6 —



Connecting

with Rev. Joe Colaizzi



Marilyn and Joe Colaizzi

Christmas is about family.

At Kansas City rescue Mission, it's important to make those we serve feel they are welcomed and that they belong. Each day, and especially at Christmas, we want it to feel like family within our walls.

For most of us at Christmas our thoughts rewind to familiar, happy moments, surrounded by our loved ones.

Sadly, for those who dread this time of year, for those who are chased down by sadness at Christmastime, it's almost always because the thoughts of those happy family moments and the nearness of loved ones have become such distant memories — seemingly impossible to find again.

And for hurting people like Sally (*see cover*) being in a family means, beyond all else, having a place to belong.

This holiday season we have the joy of saying **Welcome Home!** again and again. We'll sing carols, enjoy the wonder of the Christmas story, serve hot, nourishing meals, provide warm, clean beds in safe surroundings, give meaningful gifts, a listening ear and the offer of hope. And by these actions we'll say, "God loves you, and you are not alone!"

As we prepare for our Christmas celebration at KCRM's Men's Center we're also completing an extensive renovation ... a special Christmas gift to the Mission and to all who find 'family' here — and who find KCRM a place to belong.

There are so many ways you can help provide hope and love to the homeless who will spend Christmas at KCRM this year. Come visit us and see what you — and the rest of the KCRM family — are accomplishing together. Lives *change* here!

Finally, Marilyn and I want to extend to you and your loved ones our sincere wishes for many happy family moments and the nearness of loved ones to celebrate with this Christmas season. May God bless you richly in these special ways.

Merry Christmas!

Overheard ...

- **From a donor on KCRM's online giving page:** I always give when I see someone on the side of the road. My hope and prayer is that giving this way will do the MOST good.
- **On a KCRM graduate's Facebook post:** Oh, how I praise Him. Oh, how I thank Him, for today is three years since I have done anything with alcohol and drugs. I'm so glad that the LORD instructed me to give up that way of life.
- **From a volunteer taking calls from folks wanting a Thanksgiving dinner:** This lady is so thankful for the meal we will provide her on Thanksgiving! I could hear tears in her eyes and heart as she expressed her thanks.



Visit **Williams Christmas Lights** to Benefit KCRM!

Beginning Thanksgiving, bring the whole family to witness over 40,000 lights set to music! Make a donation to KCRM while you enjoy this unique Christmas experience. Scan the QR code above with your smart phone for Google Map directions or visit williamschristmaslights.com.

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An AGRM "Certified Excellent" Mission



Merry and Bright



KCRM is preparing special Christmas activities that share God's love and compassion. Individuals, families and groups will deck our halls and supply holiday meals and cookies while churches provide special programs. To join the fun, call Julie Larocco at (816) 421-7643, ext. 141 or email jlarocco@kcrm.org.

C-COR Residents 40 each (new only)

- \$25 Walmart gift card
- *Experiencing God* Daily Devotional
- Zip-up hoodies
- Hardbound journals with pen and highlighter
- Large Christmas stockings for treats

Homeless Guests 125 each (new only)

- Back packs or tote bags
- Pocket-sized New Testaments or Gospel of John (ESV, NIV or Message)
- Water-resistant gloves
- Thermal underwear, all sizes
- \$5 McDonald's gift cards
- Christmas stockings for treats
- Inexpensive, disposable shavers
- Pocket memo pads with pens

Christmas at the Men's Center



Christmas at the Women's Center

Gifts for Residents — 20 each (new only)

- Robes (plus sizes XL and larger)
- Slippers (sizes 8 – 10)
- Watches
- Water bottles
- Trinkets or book marks
- Bible covers
- Purses, nice bags
- Jewelry
- Scarves
- Gloves
- Hats
- Gift cards: Walmart, Target, Starbucks, Dollar General, McDonald's, etc.

Other Ways to Make the Season Bright

- Sponsor a day at the spa and lunch for our residents
- Women's Center Angel Tree — adopt our clients' families (\$25 max per gift)
- Coordinate a holiday party
- Carol at the Women's Center
- Throw a cooking, baking party
- Plan a Christmas craft day

This is Why I Give — Diane Freeman

I really don't recall when I first heard the name Kansas City Rescue Mission. All I know is that it struck a cord deep in my soul. I had a grandfather who had disappointed everyone and everything he came in contact with — mainly through alcohol. And when he had nowhere else to go, a Rescue Mission was there to take him in and give him hope and the possibility of a future.

Later in my own life, as I learned more about the grace of God and His commandments to love and help "the least of these," KCRM was a vehicle I wanted to support. The staff and volunteers at KCRM give light and love to so many — possibly to a down-and-out grandfather who simply needs food and warmth. I am forever grateful to the folks of KCRM who have the desire to help all. They truly are the hands and feet of Christ!



Diane and Drew Freeman are owners of Covenant Packaging in Olathe, Kansas. Visit them online at covenantpackaging.com.



You Did It!

Throughout the renovation of KCRM Men's Center, not one person went without a meal! "We didn't know how we would feed everyone, but dozens of calls from area churches and groups came in and every meal was covered!" exclaims Food Service Manager Tara Richardson. Here, she is pictured with her calendar full of volunteers who bought and brought prepared meals throughout October and November.



Everyday Miracles

When KCRM Health Clinic Coordinator Liz Preston, RN (pictured below) saw Bill's note from Truman Medical Center, she knew she'd need all her nursing skills and more to meet his needs.

"Bill came here because he needed to be off the street due to severe frostbite. His doctor noted he **would** lose six of his toes," Liz says. "I took it as a challenge; my goal was that he would lose **none** of his toes."

The result, says Liz, was a miracle. "I did my part in the natural and asked God to do what He would in the supernatural. It took months of individualized care, but as of today, *he has all 10 toes and he is sober!*"*

We asked Liz how folks could help meet the needs of homeless men as the cold and wet weather sets in. "The men line up at my door asking for lotion for dry skin, socks and foot powder because their feet are often wet, lip balm and cough drops.

"Many come from the emergency room with prescriptions they can't get filled so we need funding for prescription assistance. The addition of the Women's Center makes this even more critical."

This Christmas, we invite you to support our clinic's need for medication and relief items by donating a Walmart card. Enclose it in the envelope provided, and we'll get it to Liz right away to bring comfort, joy ... and maybe a miracle, too!

*Watch for Bill's story of recovery in an upcoming letter from KCRM.

