

September 2012

Fall

The Rescue Mission of Trenton is the agency in the City of Trenton that serves the truly needy men and women who have no place to turn for shelter, food, and clothing. The Mission offers a safe, clean, warm refuge for the homeless, the hungry, the transient, and the addicted. We provide services and counseling to encourage individuals to reach their greatest potential. The Rescue Mission creates an environment where one can live with dignity, build self-esteem, and experience love, responsibility, and hope.

Services include:

Vince's Place: Licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Human Services as a Residential Addictions Treatment Facility. Provides long term, halfway house, and extended care level of service with a full range of addictions treatment and life skills treatment.

Outpatient Program: Licensed substance abuse treatment for men and women. Provides individual assessment, group counseling sessions, and addiction education.

Permanent Housing: The Mission operates two specialty supportive housing units – Robinson Place, a licensed Rooming and Boarding House, and Brimmer House, a free standing 2-unit house.

Weekend Soup Kitchen

Emergency clothing and furniture

Emergency Shelter: Shelter for single men and women. Licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

Transitional Housing

Work Readiness: Individuals are provided training in GED preparation, basic literacy, writing skills, job seeking skills, and computer and word processing skills.

Industrial Salvage: Donated materials are collected by route trucks and processed and sold through the Carroll Street Store and warehouse.

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“Recovery & Reentry: Rebuilding Lives” Event at Educational Testing Service

On July 25th the Rescue Mission proudly hosted **“Recovery & Reentry: Rebuilding Lives”** – a morning of dialogue and discussion at Educational Testing Service (ETS) from 8:30 am to 11:45 am.

Suffice to say the event was extraordinary from every perspective – the attendance; the quality and passion of the keynote address by the featured presenter, William Cope Moyers, Vice President of Public and Community Affairs, Hazelton and author of *Broken: My story of Addiction and Redemption*; the excellent panel discussion skillfully led by Michael Aron of NJTV and the perceptive questions raised by the audience and the responsive answer offered by the panel participants which included: William Cope Moyers; Dan Forsythe of the Employability Development Program, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development; John Hulick of the Governor’s Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Raquel Mazon Jeffers of the New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction; and two Rescue Mission clients, Zane Gaines and Justin Sullivan.

We heard nothing but rave reviews from the standing-room only crowd of 170 that included a wide range of government officials, nonprofit providers, advocates, leaders from the business community and individuals who wage the good fight against their addiction.

The Mission is constantly looking for ways to shed additional light and provide a context for both addiction and recovery – two concepts that are often misunderstood. We are so pleased with the event and have heard various comments indicating that many of those who participated came away with additional insight and illumination regarding addiction and the barriers those with addiction face.

We genuinely want to thank ETS for providing the venue for the event and for their help in staging the event, The Times for publicizing the event, Penguin Books for providing copies of William Cope Moyers’ book to distribute to those who attended, and Borden Perlman, Hutchinson Industries, Janssen, Rue Insurance, Penguin and the Rescue Mission of Trenton Alumni Association for underwriting the cost of the event.

We would be remiss if we did not express our appreciation to Mr. Moyers for being an absolute pleasure to work with, including his willingness to stay and sign his book for audience members. His story and on-going presence is truly inspirational. As Scott Morgan wrote in *U.S. 1 Newspaper* on July 18, 2012 in a story entitled “Overcome Addiction, Rebuild Your Life,” he has truly become “part of the solution.” We also want to thank our panel moderator, Michaels Aron for his professionalism and all of the panelists for their knowledge and forthrightness.



William Cope Moyers addresses the audience at “Recovery and Reentry: Rebuilding Lives” event on July 25, 2012.

(continued on page 3)

Trenton's 'triangle' of services for homeless can become a more stable resource

By Mary Gay Abbott-Young, John Ferreira and Dennis Micai

The recent Times article "**Surviving in the triangle**" (April 30), and the subsequent editorial "**Helping those caught in triangle**" (May 1), provide some desperately needed insight into the lives of our community's neediest citizens and their "sometimes sudden circumstances of poverty, as well as mental illness, addictions, poor health and violence that may be the reasons for (their) constant trek (among the service agencies)."

We applaud The Times for putting a face on the chronically homeless and for documenting that, although we are making progress in providing long-term housing to certain segments of the homeless population, there is still much work to be done.

The three private nongovernmental human care agencies that comprise the three corners of Trenton's social services "triangle" or zone — the Rescue Mission of Trenton, the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK) and the Salvation Army — face very difficult challenges as we attempt to meet the needs of the various client populations we serve.

Providing shelter, sustenance and human interaction to the long-term homeless, many of whom are grappling with mental illness, addiction and chronic health conditions, is especially difficult.

Providing nutritious meals, sanitary sleeping accommodations, clean restrooms and washing areas, and maintaining appropriate order and high-quality referral and case management services to this population with special needs is a daily challenge.

Each of us is truly blessed that, because of the tremendous support of the community at large, area companies and foundations, we are able to provide the emergency services we do with very limited government support and with the help of many partner referral agencies located within the social service triangle or on the periphery of the triangle, i.e. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Trenton, City of Trenton, Community Health Law Project, Escher Street SRO (Single Room Occupancy), Greater Trenton Behavioral Health Care, Henry J. Austin Health Center, HomeFront, Mercer County Board of Social Services, Mount Carmel Guild and the Trenton Treatment Center.

These social care agencies have a long tradition of working together to formulate strategies designed to treat the homeless with dignity and respect.

From as far back as Trenton Mayor Arthur Holland's first Task Force on the Homeless and Hungry in 1987, we have sought as a community to be creative in meeting our clients' needs around the clock.

We acknowledge that addressing the needs of those with fractured lives is extremely difficult and that much more can and should be done for those we serve through our emergency services.

This is especially the case in light of recent changes made to the Work First New Jersey general assistance regulations, which will delay benefits to persons receiving general assistance who are determined employable and

who face stricter time limits on emergency assistance. We all must constantly do more with less.

In The Times' article, an area agency director suggested replacing the triangle with a "one-stop resource for those in need ... In this way, the city's homeless would have just one stop to store their belongings and work to better their situation."

This idea would need to be discussed in much greater detail by the various agencies located in the triangle and at its periphery.

Existing one-stop models would need to be reviewed to ascertain their relevancy to Trenton, the range of programs and services they offer, their up-front cost, ongoing operating costs and fundability.

More specifically: Would clients be expected to stay there all day? We will be asking Steve Leder, Esq., of the Community Health Law Project, a longtime advocate for Trenton's homeless and disabled, to convene a meeting of all the relevant players to discuss possible consolidation and coordination of services with the goal of immediately improving the direct, referral and case management services offered to the clients served by the triangle.

The Times' story is correct when it indicates that the third corner of the triangle was established when the Salvation Army opened its drop-in center in the mid-1990s.

The geography of the triangle stems in large part from TASK being forced out of its home at the First United Methodist Church on the Trenton Common to what The Times on Nov. 15, 1984, termed one that would be "suitable."

The then-executive director of the Commons Commission was quoted as saying the "soup kitchen attracts totally undesirable people."

TASK's first permanent home was constructed on land made available to it by the City of Trenton on Escher Street.

As the history of the siting of the soup kitchen indicates, even in good financial times, finding a location for a facility for the chronically homeless is extremely difficult. In these times of reduced government resources, it would be nearly impossible.

In the meantime, let's focus on doing everything we can to make Trenton's social services zone a model of exemplary interagency cooperation in order to maximize and enrich the services offered to Trenton's chronically homeless.

We should be guided by the premise that those we are seeking to help are not problem people, but rather people with problems.

Mary Gay Abbott-Young is CEO of the Rescue Mission of Trenton. Capt. John Ferreira is Corps Officer for the Trenton Salvation Army. Dennis Micai is Executive Director of the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen.

Can the Trenton Social Service Triangle be Improved?

Consistent with the opinion piece that appears on the opposite page, the authors met with Steve Leder, Esq. of the Community Health Law Project, to determine the best way to proceed regarding a review of the quality of services provided by the Trenton social services triangle to ensure that the homeless in our community are treated with dignity and respect.

It was agreed that an appropriate initial step would be to for Mr. Leder to walk the triangle along with those who are homeless in our community, which he did in mid-June. The next step took place on July 16th when a focus group was conducted with 14 individuals who trek the triangle. The purpose of the focus groups was to secure hard data on demographic characteristics, services utilized, benefits received, and employability of those walk the triangle. A report will be prepared on the focus group findings and shared with the nonprofit agencies located within and on the periphery of the triangle.

On August 14th Steve Leder, Dennis Micai, Joyce Williams, Manager of Emergency Services at the Rescue Mission, and Barrett Young, the Mission's Director of Operations, spent four hours at the one-stop facility in Bergen County which was cited by Herb Levine, Executive Director of the Mercer County Alliance to End Homelessness, as a "success."

This fall a follow up summit will be convened by Mr. Leder with the wide range of social services providers in the community that provide services to the homeless individuals who trudge the triangle. He will report on his preliminary findings. The goal will be to determine if improvements can be made in the current delivery system (perhaps provision of additional services or modifications of existing methods of delivering services) or whether an alternative model is preferable and/or financially feasible given current funding environment. We will keep you abreast of this effort to improve the quality of life of the truly needy in our community.

"Recovery & Reentry: Rebuilding Lives" Event *(cont. from pg.1)*

While we are sorry that Governor Christie's schedule did not allow him to participate and discuss his drug court initiative for non-violent drug-addicted offenders, we do appreciate the support he has shown on this issue (see inside story on Governor Christie's drug court initiative and bill signing at Mission).

On July 25th the Rescue Mission hosted "Recovery and Reentry: Rebuilding Lives" at ETS. The morning was both engaging and informative. Below are some of our favorite photos from the day. Many more photos can be found on our Facebook page!



Mission resident Donny Hightower and Mission alumni and current staff member Tyrone Riley poses with William Cope Moyers



Panelist Justin Sullivan talks with a member of the audience



Raquel Mazon Jeffers of the NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services during the panel discussion

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We need your support to continue to serve the needy in our community.

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Governor Christie Announces & Signs Drug Court Initiative At Mission



On Wednesday, March 1, 2012 the Mission was the place to be as Governor Chris Christie outlined details on his mandatory drug treatment initiative for non-violent, drug-addicted offenders.

Prior to his 10:45 a.m. press conference the Governor toured the Hutchinson Industry Project at the Mission and talked to Mission clients who are working part-time while receiving individual and group counseling and other supportive services during their stay at the Mission. One of the Mission residents indicated to the Governor that he had been dealing with his addiction for twenty years and that being in a place with positive people dedicated to his treatment had made a huge difference in his life.

More than two dozen television and cable TV stations and newspapers crowded the front TV room of the Mission's Halsted Building for the Governor's press conference.

The Governor was introduced by Delia Bass-Dandridge, President of the Mission's Board of Directors, who thanked the Governor for proposing a plan to "reclaim the lives of drug offenders through expanded use of drug courts." Ms. Dandridge said that the Mission believes as does the Governor that "everyone deserves a second chance, because no life is disposable."

The Governor opened by calling his plan a "bi-partisan effort to reclaim lives." He indicated that he would be building on the existing drug court program, which offers low-level offenders the option of entering drug treatment after pleading guilty to charges rather than going to jail. The current program is voluntary, the Governor's program would be mandatory when fully implemented in 2013.

While indicating that he was "not denigrating efforts of the past," he characterized past efforts as "failures" and as simply "warehousing people." He noted these approaches had "high rates of recidivism and high costs to society across the board." He added that it costs approximately \$49,000

to keep a person in prison and around half of that for drug treatment with wrap-around services.

The Governor indicated that he favored expanding drug court in New Jersey and making participation mandatory based on a clinical assessment. He expressed the view that addiction is a "treatable disease" that most "people never admitted to." For those found guilty of 2nd and 3rd degree offenses, there would be a court order clinical assessment. If there was a court finding of addiction, the person would be required to go to treatment. If they opted not to go to treatment their actions would be noted. He indicated this approach would free up jail space for more serious criminals and give nonviolent offenders a second chance.

The Governor cautioned against accusing him of "being soft on crime." He indicated his record on crime was very clear and that this was not a question of being "soft, but rather being smart." He went on to indicate that from his five years of service on the board of Day Top Village in Mendham, New Jersey, that drug addiction was "not just an urban problem." He spoke from the personal experience of knowing that some have a predilection to addiction.

He closed his comments by indicating that it is important to provide treatment for those with the disease of addiction and that he viewed this initiative as an element of his lasting legacy and that he hoped that it would save lives and bring about permanent change.

On July 19, 2012, the Governor returned to the Mission, again amidst dozen of cameras and reporters, to sign a bill that The Times in a cover story on July 20th described as "a measure requiring drug treatment for low-level offenders who would otherwise serve time in prison. The bill establishes a \$2.5 million pilot project to expand existing drug court programs gradually over the next 5 years."

At the Governor's first visit to the Mission he indicated that "what folks here at the Rescue Mission do ... is they make miracles happen. And if you are privileged enough to watch a miracle happen, it affects your life. And it always affected me."

We thank the Governor for his kind words about the Mission.

Rescue Mission Board President Delia Bass-Dandridge talks with CEO Mary Gay Abbott-Young before the bill signing.



Rescue Mission Announcing 3 New Collection Boxes in East Windsor



Rescue Mission CEO Mary Gay Abbott-Young poses with East Windsor Township Mayor Janice Mironov at the Senior Center collection box at 60 Lanning Boulevard

The Rescue Mission of Trenton is proud to announce 3 new locations for the public to donate their gently used and new clothing in the East Windsor Township area. The locations are the Senior Center at 60 Lanning Boulevard, the Public Works building at 309

Ward Street, and the Rescue Squad at 69 Twin Rivers Drive.

The Rescue Mission worked closely with East Windsor Township Administration to place these boxes, illustrating the Township's commitment to helping those in need in the region. "I salute Mayor Mironov's forward thinking in recognizing the importance of community-wide involvement in recycling, especially as through community members donations of clothing they are directly assisting the economically needy right here in Mercer County," stated Mary Gay Abbott-Young, CEO, Rescue Mission of Trenton.

Upon meeting with Mayor Mironov on July 30th, Rescue Mission CEO Mary Gay Abbott-Young stated: "It is particularly fitting that this collection box is located at the East Windsor Senior Center, a space which itself is a testament to the Mayor's commitment to socially conscious community building."

All clothing donations should be bagged and washed. The Rescue Mission also accepts wearable shoes and accessories. Of particular need is men's clothing, especially professional wear. Winter gear is always in demand, especially winter coats, hats, gloves, and scarves. Out of respect for the landowners, the Rescue Mission asks that you please place donated items inside the metal donation box.

The Rescue Mission of Trenton is the agency in the city of Trenton that serves the truly needy men and women who have no place to turn for shelter, food, and clothing. All clothing donations go directly to the Rescue Mission, either to be sold in the Mission Store at 100 Carroll Street, or given away through the Rescue Mission's courtesy shop to needy members of the community.

The Rescue Mission also offers a free at-home pickup service for donations of furniture and clothing. To schedule a pickup call 1-800-528-8825. In addition to the new collection site, the Rescue Mission of Trenton has 19 other boxes in the area.

Mission Receives Exceptional Four-star Rating From Charity Navigators



The Rescue Mission is proud to announce that for the sixth time, we have been awarded a "coveted 4-star rating for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency" by Charity Navigator, the leading independent evaluator of charitable organizations in the United States.

Charity Navigator is an independent 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization that works to guide intelligent giving. They aim to help charitable givers make intelligent giving decisions by providing information on over 5,500 charities and by evaluating the financial health of each of these charities. The goal of Charity Navigator is to "provide donors with essential information needed to give them confidence in the charitable choices they make." The rating reflects how efficiently Charity Navigator believes the charity will use the funds donated to them today, how well it has sustained its programs/services over time and their level of commitment to being accountable and transparent.

According to Ken Burger, President and CEO of Charity Navigator, in a letter to Mary Gay-Abbott Young, the Mission's CEO dated May 1, 2012, "receiving a four out of possible four stars indicates that your organization adheres to good governance and other best practices that minimize the chances of unethical activities and consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way. Approximately a quarter of the charities we evaluate have received our highest rating, indicating that Rescue Mission of Trenton outperforms most other charities in America. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Rescue Mission of Trenton from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worth of their trust."

A 4-star rating is awarded to charities that exceed industry standards and outperform the majority of public charities and almost all other social services charities in terms of accountability transparency and financial health.

"We are proud to once again demonstrate to the foundations, individuals, organizations and corporations who have made contributions to the Rescue Mission that their investments have been channeled directly into the hands of those that are truly needy," indicated Delia Bass-Dandridge, the President of the Mission Board of Directors.

RESCUE MISSION OF TRENTON

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Did You Know... *Did You Know ...*

- ✓ **Mission Stages Night Out for the 9th Straight Year:** On Tuesday August 7th the Mission again hosted a block party in observation of the 29th annual National Night Out. This nation-wide event seeks to enhance positive relationships between citizens, police and local government. More than 200 Mission residents, neighbors, staff, and friends feasted on hamburgers, hot dogs, and grilled chicken. There was a water slide and various games for the neighborhood's children. "This is always a fun event and an excellent way for our neighborhood to come together," indicated Barrett Young, the Mission's Director of Operations.
- ✓ **Rescue Mission Residents Secure Employment:** As the agency in the City of Trenton that serves the truly needy men and women who have no place to turn, we acknowledge that remaking, reshaping, and rebuilding fractured lives is extremely difficult. Despite the many challenges, we are extremely proud that in these trying times our education and employment training program, TEACH, has yielded very positive results. In just the past five months 7 residents have secured decent, entry-level employment. Such results illustrate a commendable personal achievement, and we thank our many staff members, volunteers, and supporters who work tirelessly to connect our residents with the tools that enable success.
- ✓ **Rescue Mission Welcomes New Staff:** Over the past few months the Rescue Mission has welcomed several new faces to our various departments. Samantha Bobila has joined the Administrative Office as our new Administrative Assistant; new to the Outpatient Program are Kathleen Camille, Counselor-Intern, and Brenda Esaw-Howard, Recovery Aide; the Emergency Shelter staff welcomes Atiya Dixon, Lise Figueroa, Aaron Fogle, and Theresa Hill. Kelvin Smith has joined the Rescue Mission as a NJ Bonner Vista Fellow and will be working with us over the course of the next year to develop community awareness of the Rescue Mission, coordinate clothing drives, and volunteers. Welcome!
- ✓ **Sharing the Bounty of Farm Fresh Produce:** The Rescue Mission serves over 186,000 meals annually through our residential substance abuse treatment program, emergency shelter, and Sunday soup kitchen. Cherry Grove Organic Farm in Princeton has generously donated fresh, local, organic produce throughout this summer growing season. Additionally, New Jersey Farmers Against Hunger and Mercer Street Friends have kept us stocked with fresh local fruits and vegetables year round. We are grateful for the support of so many local grocers, restaurants, and individuals which allow us to feed so many hungry mouths. Thank you to our many contributors – we couldn't do what we do without you!