



FRIENDS OF THE WAY HOME

Our Mission: To meet former prisoners at the prison gates and the office door in Georgetown to provide connections with community, meet needs, and foster relationships that prevent return to prison.

Volume 6, Issue 1

Summer 2015

From the Director's Corner

Summer 2015



Two days ago, in the aftermath of a violent thunderstorm and downpour of life-giving rain, I received a call from a participant in need. As I went out to find him, I looked to the east – there I saw double rainbows – full arcs stretching from the heavens to the earth! It felt as though the whole earth and sky were shimmering with golden light – “like shining from shook foil” to borrow the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins in his poem God’s Grandeur.

The golden sky, the rainbows, the tall green corn and strong, freshly washed trees in their leafy August glory – all took my breath away! The symbol of God’s promise, of God’s mercy, was so moving – it deeply affected both me and the participant as we prayed for God’s guidance and protection in the days ahead.

Continued on Page 2

Save the Date!

September 17th 6:30 p.m.

Quarterly Celebration -- Participant of the Quarter Dinner

Georgetown Presbyterian Church
North Bedford Street
Georgetown

The quarterly dinners are times for fellowship, good food, inspiration, sharing ideas, but most of all, supporting The Way Home participants as they continue their journey. If you wish to participate, please call The Way Home office (302) 856-9870.

Save the Date!

October 24th 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

The Way Home Fundraiser

Catch 54 Restaurant
Route 54, Madison Avenue, Fenwick Island, Delaware
Scrumptious Hors d'oeuvres & Beverages Cash Bar

Silent Auction
Hand-wrought Jewelry and Sports Memorabilia
For Sale
{O's, Yankees, Phillies, Nats, Eagles & Redskins}

\$50.00/person \$90.00/couple
Call Bob at (410) 693-2277 to Reserve Tickets

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 From The Director's Corner.....Page 1
- 2 Meet Your Board MemberPage 2
- 3 Profiles in Courage.....Page 3
- 4 Helping Hand.....Page 5
- 5 Support Groups.....Page 6



Since 1998, The Way Home has helped hundreds of ex-offenders stay out of prison, providing comprehensive case management for participants for less than one-sixth of the cost of incarceration.

An assessment, released in September 2012 by the School of Public Policy and Administration of the University of Delaware, covering the period 1999 through 2008, compared the recidivism of Way Home (WH) clients and Delaware Department of Corrections (DOC) detainees. Subject, released from Supervision Levels IV and V, were compared in marital status, gender, and race. Recidivism is defined as the return of ex-offenders to incarceration (prison or jail) due to either an arrest or a parole/probation violation.

The Way Home Program performed more effectively than Department of Corrections on all recidivism dimensions:

- **Over the 1999-2008 time period, the various recidivism analyses showed that the predicted odds of WH clients to NOT recidivate are 1.23 times the odds for DOC.**
- **Over a five-year period, the risk of recidivism for WH clients has been 57% of the risk for DOC ex-offenders.**
- **WH had lower proportions of their clients who recidivated in the first year of their release than DOC ex-offenders.**
- **WH clients experience a longer time period before recidivating.**
- **For any point in time after release WH clients had higher probability of not returning to incarceration.**
- **Women, Caucasians, married, and older ex-offenders and those released from Level V were less likely to experience recidivism and they manifested higher probabilities of avoiding recidivism than men, non-Caucasians, non-married and younger offenders.**

The present analyses and findings represent a preliminary evaluation. A longer time frame for analysis is needed for The Way Home programmatic experience so that more conclusive statements can be made regarding The Way Home's performance.

From the Director's Corner...continued from page 1

Somehow it doesn't seem like chance that I have been meditating for some weeks now on a deeper level – ever since a medical event in my life stopped me in my tracks. For three days I was “off the grid”. Sometimes we really have to be slowed down in order to hear the voice of the Spirit. The gift given to me during that time of enforced change of pace was a deeper sense of compassion – not only for others – but also for myself. Seeing the rainbows, and ‘suffering with’ the person in need as we drove through that golden light to find refuge moved my heart. We traveled under the sign of the rainbow – the symbol of God's promise of mercy shining all around us. Mysterious. Ephemeral. Inexplicable.

At this juncture, The Way Home must travel under the sign of God's promise and keep heart. The path has suddenly become so much more difficult in the harsh light of state funding cuts that have drastically reduced our operating budget by over 20%. The dollars that are suddenly gone were used to support our case management services. Each month, Tony Neal and I typically serve around 150 persons -- people who have nowhere to turn. We are indeed walking by faith as we reach out to so many who are in desperate need. It takes time to find a job after prison. Shelters are filled to overflowing. While public transportation is improving in Sussex County, there are still many gaps, which staff and volunteers struggle to bridge. We do not plan to turn anyone away who comes to us in need.

The Way Home is in need of your help – your time, talents, and treasure – in order to keep meeting the escalating needs that face us each day. We would be more than happy to come to your group, church, or civic organization to explain our work. We meet released prisoners at the prison gates and labor in many different ways to help them get on their feet and build better lives after prison. They have a chance, with help, to change their former destructive patterns that brought them to prison in the first place. Results show that our work continues to improve rates of reductions of recidivism in program participants.

The Way Home saves the State of Delaware thousands of dollars by helping people stay out of prison. Our goal has always been to help our participants stabilize and live

Continued on Page 3

productive, crime-free lives. The community is strengthened and safety is enhanced by each man and woman who does not return to a life of crime.

It takes time, patience, resources, encouragement, and compassion to help someone climb up from the dark to a place where they can see light – they can feel hope, they can see rainbows! Won't you help us keep meeting people at the gates and travel these roads toward a brighter life?

Faithfully,

Barbara Sophia Del Mastro



Ed. Note: Also See Helping Hands on Page 5.

Meet Your Board Members

Dr. Samuel B. Hoff, Distinguished Professor of History and Political Science and Law Studies Director at Delaware State University, was a guest speaker at an August rally in the County Council Chambers in Georgetown celebrating the signing of landmark legislation titled the Voting Rights Act, signed on August 6, 1965 by then-President Lyndon B. Johnson. Hosted by Sussex Unity, a coalition of civic activists, community, and faith leaders, working together to ensure all Sussex Countians are treated with respect, equality, and dignity, Dr. Hoff explained the history of the Act: Prompted by blatantly discriminatory voting procedures practiced by some states, such as the requirement for literacy tests, at-large elections, white primaries, and poll taxes among others, the Act and its amendments is designated, fifty years later, as one of the top 100 documents in American history and the top civil rights law. Most importantly, the law assisted citizens by getting the federal government involved in monitoring and enforcement of fair voting procedures in states where questionable practices occurred. The law increased the number of Americans registering and voting in Delaware, he informed participants in the crowded council chambers celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act designed to curb fraud and illegal voting practices.

explained the League's mandate in ensuring that all eligible voters -- particularly those from traditionally underrepresented or underserved communities -- have the opportunity and the information to exercise their right to vote.

She also explained the League's activities and presence in Sussex County. Founded in 1921, The nonpartisan League of Women Voters of Delaware worked for voters service, abolition of child labor and support of school construction. The League in Laurel, formed in 1957, was reorganized as the Sussex County League in 1976. Since its inception, the League has worked tirelessly educating the public about candidates, elections, and advocating for important legislative changes including open government, equal rights for all, renewable energy, recycling, affordable housing, quality of health care, and improvements in the criminal justice system. Ms. King's voice, rising clear and commanding in the County Council chambers included the following comments: She reminded us that the League was established during the suffrage movement that secured the right for women to vote. "The demand for this right began in 1860 and after much pain and struggle, the League and the right to vote for women became a reality on August 18, 1920 when the 19th Amendment was added to the American Constitution. While Delaware ratified the law in 1923, Mississippi ratified it in 1984, 64 years after the law was enacted nationally." She asks, "Why this determination to deny people the right to vote? Why is the vote considered a more formidable weapon than the bullet which is fiercely protected by the 2nd Amendment? It must say to all of us that indeed, the vote of one person is the most powerful entitlement of a democracy." Quoting the League's founder and early pioneer in the women's suffrage movement, Carrie Chapman Catt, Ms. King said, "There will never be a true democracy until every responsible adult in it, without regard to race, sex, color or creed has his or her own voice in government."

Ms. King, born in New York City, graduated from St. John's College in Annapolis. After graduation, she returned to New York City and to broaden her professional horizon secured employment with Catholic Charities child welfare programs. "I missed Annapolis. When St. John's Dean of Women called

Continued on Page 4

Profiles in Courage

asking if I would fill in for her to 'babysit' students when she traveled on sabbatical to India, I eagerly accepted the offer. It took two-and-one-half seconds to say 'yes'," she laughingly explained. She lived with her seven-year-old daughter on the campus in downtown Annapolis for four years and established a counseling program for students.

Ms. King is a licensed social worker and mental health therapist for 40 years. Some of her public social service career included serving as Director of Social Services of Catholic Charities in Washington, D.C. and the District of Columbia Social Services; serving at various public social services agencies around the state of Maryland including a position as Director of the Charles County Department of Social Services and finally serving as Director of the Maryland Social Services Administration.

Restless after settling in Lewes in 2000, she looked for a job. "I moved in on a Saturday, and secured a job with Delaware Guidance for Children the next Monday." After working for five years, she served for two years as Vice President of the Delaware State League of Women Voters based in Dover and as President from 2013 to 2015. She chaired the Advocacy Corps and is also an unpaid licensed lobbyist during the General Assembly. "My major responsibility is to advocate regarding pending legislation which may lead to bad public policy and try to assure that needed legislation is passed," she explains.

Recently, The Way Home's Director, Barbara Del Mastro and Tony Neal, were invited to speak about The Way Home's mission at a League-sponsored seminar and as a result, Ms. King is in the early stages of establishing the Sussex County Alliance for Racial and Social Justice with one committee established titled the Re-Entry Committee. "We hope to support the re-entry work of The Way Home and to educate the community about all the issues related to mass incarceration," she concludes.

Welcome to The Way Home's board!



"I try to keep busy and out of trouble. I enjoy what I am doing. I'd rather be here than anywhere else. It is thrilling and fulfilling to be able to give back to the ones who helped me. I'm happy with my life. I wake up without a hangover and I know I can handle any situation without going to the bottle. It is a joy to be coming here each day."

Melvin, soft spoken and eyes glinting with happiness, sits in the front window of the Christian Storehouse in Millsboro. He served two prison terms at Sussex Correctional Institution for DUIs. While in work release, he volunteered at the Storehouse for community service. Melvin, his brother, and Tony Neal, now the Way Home's case manager, knew each other through school. When Melvin heard about The Way Home from inmates, he contacted Tony before release in 2014.

Among the services provided by The Way Home, Melvin took up residence at The Men's House in Millsboro, a home provided to Way Home participants by the Christian Storehouse. For almost 22 years the Christian Storehouse has accepted donations of food, clothing, household items, and furniture and sells these items at a nominal amount or gives other necessities to thousands of needy individuals and families. Eighteen years ago, Storehouse profits financed buying the home, now called The Men's House, on a back street in Millsboro first for homeless families and then, for approximately nine years, as a home for ex-offenders of the Delaware prison system transitioning to a new and better life. The Way Home provides case management for participants living at the home.

Melvin is a role model for new members of The Men's House. He welcomes them and makes sure their necessities, such as towels and bedding, are provided. He often cooks for everyone. "Everyone has a job to do but I still try to keep the house clean. When I see something, I go ahead and do it," he states confidently.

Steve Smith, Director of the Christian Storehouse, commenting on Melvin's work ethic, states

Continued on page 5

unhesitatingly, " Over a period of time, Melvin volunteered in almost every area of the Storehouse, gradually gravitating to the sorting room, one of two critical areas of the thrift store. Melvin has a gift of communication and resolving minor issues between folks. Eventually the Storehouse leadership asked Melvin if he would agree to take charge and manage as he saw fit. This occurred a number of months ago and he continues to be an extremely valuable volunteer. When Melvin is here, I don't have a care or a concern. He takes charge and that's a tremendous weight off my shoulders."

Melvin also volunteers on weekends at the Richard Allen School in Georgetown, recently dedicated as a community center. He is involved in fundraising efforts, such as cooking for barbecues and fish fries, and conducting bake and yard sales. Planned are a museum and an after-school program.

He sums up his new life by saying, "With the support of The Way Home and the Christian Storehouse, I feel I can help others by doing small stuff."

The father of four successful children -- one daughter is an assistant manager of a local chain hardware store; another daughter works at a local chicken processing plant; a third daughter works at a chain grocery store; and a son works in construction -- he sees them every other weekend. Melvin, his daughters, and their mother, recently traveled together to Florida.

Melvin recently purchased a used car. "Tony and Miss Barb transported me to probation, to doctor's and dentist's appointments, and aftercare. Now, I would like to help them by transporting other Way Home participants."

"I'm grateful to be away from the environment where the temptation to drink prevails. My kids are happy about it. I don't want to fall back into that situation. I stay to myself. I learned to trust Steve and Wayne [of the Christian Storehouse] and they trust me to handle any situation."

Melvin was honored as The Way Home's Participant of the Quarter at the June quarterly dinner. We can understand why.



Helping Hands

A friend of The Way Home, Mary Hart, when she became aware of the State of Delaware's funding cuts, sent this email to her representatives:

"Good morning. I hope this email finds everyone in the best of health. I am writing with a heavy heart. I have just learned that the funding for The Way Home Program has been cut. I am not sure if any of you are aware of what a fantastic program this is. Not only that, but Delaware is in such need of this program. I have seen firsthand what this Program does and can do. I am a counselor for the State of Delaware, department of corrections. So many of our offenders have been cut off from their families for a myriad of reasons. When they are released they have no one or nowhere to go. So the system is failing them, setting them up for failure. Why is it that we as educated and informed people are allowing this to happen. What we need to do, is continue to fund this program and if possible obtain more funding for them so they can help even more people. I believe we are not just letting down these released offenders but the community as well. If they are released into the community with no housing, no work, etc., we may be forcing them to go back to their old ways thus putting our communities at risk. I implore each and every one of you to find the funding to help The Way Home Program to continue with its vital work. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully, Mary Hart"



*We, at The Way Home,
are Grateful for This Helping Hand!*

Visit The Way Home Website: <http://www.twhprogram.org>

Visit Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/thewayhomeprogram/>

Office Phone: (302) 856-9870

To contact Barbara Del Mastro: Barbara@twhprogram.org

To contact Tony Neal: Tony@twhprogram.org



Ongoing Support Groups

Everlasting Hope

Wednesday nights, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Booker Street Church of God, Georgetown

Conflict Resolution Workshops

Held throughout the year at St. Paul's Episcopal Church Pine & Academy Streets, in Georgetown from 9:00 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. Lunch of soup & bread supper is provided. Call The Way Home office for the schedule and to register.

Men's Support Group

Held every other Tuesday at Sussex Violation of Probation Center from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. For more information, call Ira Kalbrosky at 215-431-1927

Transforming Trauma Workshops

Led by Charito Calvachi Mateyko, are held throughout the year. For more information, call The Way Home office.

...to everyone who plays such a vital role in helping The Way Home keep reaching out to those leaving prison!
...and the many individuals who give of their time, talent, and treasure!

...Churches, synagogues, and other worship centers across the State of Delaware
businesses, banks, financial institutions, foundations, clubs,
and other nonprofit organizations, county and state,
and individual donors and anonymous patrons...

Thank You!!!!

Please know that
you are truly appreciated.

Thank You!!!!



HELP WANTED

The Way Home is always looking for individuals willing to:

Mentor a participant. - Visit someone in prison who receives few visitors. - Help with on-going workshops.
Help with transportation. - Help organize a clothing/coat/necessities drive.
Serve on one of the Way Home committees.

Work with your church or civic organization to hold an annual fundraiser or give an annual pledge
to The Way Home.

Help with job search/job contacts for The Way Home participants.

Pray for former prisoners and all who live and work in correctional institutions, and the community.

To Volunteer, call The Way Home Office at (302) 856-9870



**The Way Home
P. O. Box 1103
Georgetown, DE 19947**

Return Service Requested.

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Georgetown, DE
275