



# 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.

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## From the Director's Corner

December 2013

In our on-going quest to add helpful ingredients to the menu of ideas and strategies to help those that are suffering from addictions, I came across an intriguing concept. "Think of the pathways in our brains, in our thinking patterns, as deep gorges like the Colorado River coursing down through the Grand Canyon," my friend said. "These are very powerful streams. It takes a lot to avoid being swept away in them even though we know where the stream leads."

I began to think about this in multiple layers. We all struggle with something. I know that I often become frustrated to find that once again, month after month, year after year, I tend to find, after some initial efforts in trying to change something – a habit, a thought pattern, an outlook – that I've fallen back in the same "rut" – swept down the Colorado River again.

In the study of addictions, brain research shows that it is important to **do** something – **anything** - that will break the train of thoughts following a craving –



### JOIN US!

December 19, 6:30 p.m.

Quarterly Celebration

Participants of the Quarter Dinner

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

East Pine & Academy Streets

Georgetown

The quarterly dinners are a time for fellowship, good food, sharing ideas, but most of all supporting The Way Home participants as they continue their journey.

St. Paul's Parishioners will cook a turkey dinner and distribute gifts to the participants.

If you wish to participate, please call The Way Home office (302) 856-9870.



### A New Home For The Way Home

The mailing address and the phone numbers are the same but The Way Home has moved to the second floor of the brick building behind the Grace United Methodist Church on the corner of Market Street (Route 9 East) and King Streets in Georgetown.

Stop by and visit!



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**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

the pattern and focus immediately to avoid being swept down that river. That can be literally *anything* – jump up and down, say a prayer, make a phone call, go for a brisk walk – whatever serves to get a person in a different frame of mind.

I thought about things that I could put in my psychic “survival kit”, or what I call my “snake bite kit”, to provide the counteractive antidote or medicine to use in case poisonous thoughts or impulses come across my mental and spiritual screens. I placed the image of a favorite childhood stream in my kit – a gentle, sun-dappled stream in the woods where my best friend and I played for many carefree hours. I placed images of my grandmother's hands braiding my hair, kneading bread, and folded in prayer, in my kit. I included a favorite psalm and the sound of a beautiful wind chime that hangs by my back door, sending its graceful notes out with the slightest breeze.

Everyone is facing different challenges but many of these share common elements. I invite you to think about what you might want to include in your own “survival kit”, especially now, as the light is diminishing, and as we near the Christmas season. This can be a particularly difficult season for many of us. Christmas can trigger painful memories. The holidays may not be so jolly when, instead of a turkey dinner, there is a bologna sandwich, eaten alone.

Then again, there is a spiritual richness in solitude that can be found nowhere else. I have talked with people serving time in prison who tell me of enjoying the spirit of God while in their quiet cell and rejoicing in solitude. The late Henri Nouwen, renowned writer and theologian, wrote eloquently about solitude in The Way of the Heart. He points out that we enter into solitude to meet our Lord and to be with him alone. “Only in the context of grace can we face our sin; only in the place of healing do we dare to show our wounds; only with a single-minded attention to Christ can we give up our clinging fears and face our own true nature.” Nouwen reminds us that only Christ can overcome the powers of evil; that through Christ we can survive our trials, as painful and difficult as they are. Christ is with us in the midst of our struggles. Only with attention to God can we “let our compulsions melt away and begin to experience the freedom of the children of God.”

May this season with all of its mystery and beauty, struggle and solitude, joy, and pain, be a time of true growth and lasting joy for us all.

Faithfully,

Barbara Sophia Del Mastro



## Profiles in Courage

“When I look back, I had no hope,” Howard Dennis, one of the first Way Home participants 15 years ago, reminisces. The oldest of three brothers and four sisters, he self-titles himself the “black sheep” of the family. Although his mom and dad guided him, he was a typical teenager. He attended a neighborhood church but wasn’t open to any spiritual messages. “I was ‘hanging out’ with guys two times my age. I was sneaking out to get alcohol or drugs. I saw crimes and knew it wasn’t right. I always told myself that one day I would get out of that environment, but couldn’t.”

Howard was introduced to Barbara and Tony while incarcerated at Sussex Correctional Institution and he faithfully attended a Bible Study facilitated by St. Martha’s Episcopal Church parishioners from Bethany Beach. “It was so easy for them (Barbara and Tony) to love me and they drew me in,” he explains. Before his release after his last prison term, Howard heard about The Way Home and requested participation in the program. Before release, he met with Tony and Barbara first two times a month and then one time a month to keep focused. “They encouraged me, loved me, and prepared me for life on the outside. We prayed in the prison. We prayed in the office. I knew God had a plan and it all started at SCI.”

Upon release, The Way Home provided a basket filled with necessary items and a small monetary amount and Barbara and Tony transported him to probation. “I was supposed to be on probation for three years but I got off after 16 months for good behavior.”

After his release, Howard returned to his parents’ home in Selbyville. “I was taking baby steps.” His brother helped him get a warehouse job as a forklift driver. “Many times, ex-offenders are labeled by society, so I struggled at first,” he continues. “I’ve had several jobs and one of my goals is to further my education and one day to have a degree in Human Services. God allowed me to speak at two St. Martha’s services. He allowed me to see things I was avoiding. God used me since then in many different churches to present my testimony. Another one of my goals is to speak in middle and high schools especially to encourage young male students.”

Also after his release from prison, Howard met his wife through a family member at church where she is a credentialed pastor and teacher. “I feared she would not have me but I prayed, ‘Lord with a prison record and a struggle with alcohol and drugs, please lead me.’ I shared with her my past and she accepted it. God can do anything but fail!” They have been married for 13 years and have two daughters, one son, and six grandchildren. “We are buying a house and doing ministry together. This is way beyond me!”

“However, I always knew once I got out, I had to go back and share my testimony. I decided I wanted to go back to prison – not for an infraction – but to speak to prisoners and share my testimony. I knew God had a plan and it all started at SCI.” Howard has ministered for approximately 11 years at the Poplar Hill Pre-release Center at Eastern Correctional Institution in Salisbury, Maryland, near where he lives. “Society has a way of looking at it [his ministry] as a jail house religion and that inmates drop the Bible when they get out. Contrary to what people think, I have experienced during my time as a volunteer at ECI, that countless lives are being restored to their families. Many times, I hear from some of the inmates or run into them on the ‘outside.’”

He started as a deacon, and is now an elder at New Dimensions Family Ministries, and is preparing to become a minister in addition to his part-time prison ministry. “I never thought I would have a place and a position in that church. I could never imagine where God has taken me today in ministry. God showed me the gift of prayer behind the walls of SCI. This is how big it is: God showed me in a dream there may be a time when I may be in other countries. This is an anointing gift from God. Also, I will never forget The Way Home.

My vision is to lead men. I believe if men’s lives are transformed, families and society and the workforce, will also benefit. I hope to be a servant of God. My ministry now is to give back to society to show people there is hope after prison.”



## MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

“Most people create things in their life – the things they say they don’t want in their life. For instance, the behaviors in jail won’t help ex-offenders reintegrate into society because those behaviors are opposite of behaviors accepted in society. In other words, what kept them safe ‘inside’ [jail], such as being tough, untrusting, unfeeling, or guarded, can make it more difficult to reintegrate.” These are statements that Ira Kalbrosky, a recent member of the Board learned almost 20 years ago and has integrated into his life and the lives of many men.

This is just one tenet of a program called The ManKind Project, a global nonprofit organization where men facilitate groups mentoring men through life’s passages. Since 1986, the Project has empowered men to missions of service and has supported men to make a difference in the lives of other men, women and children around the world. The sister organization for women is called “Women Within” and “Young Warriors” is for adolescents.

Born in Brooklyn, Ira lived in Bucks County, Pennsylvania and worked as a sales person selling computer hardware and software for 25 years. He has been married 32 years to “the love of his life,” Beverly, and has two daughters, Jessica and Amanda. He was part of a group that facilitated a counseling program with inmates at Graterford State Prison in Pennsylvania. He is now a partner in Kalbrosky Associates in Ocean View, Delaware.

In 1996, Ira was invited to take the “New Warrior Training Adventure” offered by the ManKind Project. The weekend is described as a life affirming event honoring the best in what men have to offer the planet as well as self-examination of their lives. Men are encouraged to recognize their powerful brilliance while being willing to look at and take full responsibility for the pain they might have created and suffered in their lives and the lives of others. Men are asked to stop living vicariously through movies, television, addictions, and distractions and step into their own adventure in real time surrounded by other men. After the weekend, men are invited into a 10-week integration process and beyond to learn how to integrate what they have learned into their lives. Ira has been very involved ever since 1996 and has just successfully completed a three-year training process to become a certified leader.

“My vision for The Way Home is to expand our present services which are successful and create support groups for participants after release not only in an expanded geographic territory for men as well as for women and their families.”

Ira’s passion, energy, and purpose are unmistakable, clear, absolute, and focused. We are grateful to have him join The Way Home’s Board.



## YOUR GENEROSITY IS APPRECIATED

It is sobering to realize that one in every 28 persons in our state is under the Department of Corrections’ supervision. The yearly cost of incarceration for one person is \$33,000. Alternatively, The Way Home’s annual cost for case management services for one person is under \$6,000.

The Way Home is celebrating 15 years of steadily supporting ex-offenders re-entering society thereby enhancing community stability and safety. (See the sidebar on page 2 for the results of research completed by the University of Delaware in September 2012.) The Way Home continues to cut return-to-prison rates in half. Also, The Way Home was recognized by Delaware’s legislature and was commended with the presentation of a joint resolution.

There are many success stories; only a few are highlighted in this quarterly newsletter. In the words of one Way Home client, “The Way Home is the only program I have ever found that really works.”

Without the help of civic-minded people like you, The Way Home may not be able to make 100+ participant contacts each month or provide outstanding services to 60 to 70 ex-offenders and for another 100+ needing emergency services each year.

This year’s Way Home goal is to raise \$25,000 that will provide five new clients with a full array of housing, job search, and case management services following their release. Your gift – any amount you are able to give – will go a long way toward helping participants become productive, contributing members of society. It is a gift worth giving!

**Thank you in advance  
And have a Merry Christmas!**



## The Poetry Corner

### Morning

My dear cat, cuddled by the key board,  
Looking for all the world like a swaddled fur baby.

38 degrees on the porch – the house as cozy  
as homemade toast.

Yes, yes, now I remember those wild dreams  
Plans, loves, visions of joy.

Well, let me be true to this miracle  
Breaking each and every day –  
The great sun drawing in his breath  
From far reaches of space – those nebulae and star clusters  
That drift like smoke through our dreams –  
To sing out a new day.

Earth carpeted with rich hickory leaves,  
Garden wrapped in prayer shawls of muted light

Huge leaves of the Paw-Paw  
Still, golden, majestic  
Faithful Rosemary  
Ready for the cook in all seasons,  
The cactus,  
Her pale pink buds on the cusp of arpeggio –

Two gold-tinged clouds hovering above the trees  
The busy train, chugging  
Young squirrels playing tag in the giant oak –  
Beauty in all directions.

I wait,  
Unwilling to miss a morsel  
Of this morning feast.

Yes, I thirst for love.  
Today I come to know deep down again  
How this whole grant world is laced  
With springs of holy, loving waters.

How can my heart grieve  
In the midst of all this?

And now that star ascends  
Sparkling through the trees  
That holy fire  
Coaxing all to life  
That wordless song of light  
Singing in the new day.

Barbara Sophia Del Mastro



We are all on a journey – a journey of discovery. Our decisions affect the outcome of that journey. In most cases, we learn from those decisions and we choose the path to continue the journey...

### The Journey

Mary Oliver

One day you finally knew  
what you had to do, and began,  
though the voices around you  
kept shouting their bad advice—  
though the whole house  
began to tremble  
and you felt the old tug  
at your ankles.  
“Mend my life!”  
each voice cried.

But you didn't stop.  
You knew what you had to do,  
though the wind pried  
with its stiff fingers  
at the very foundations—  
though their melancholy  
was terrible.  
It was already late enough,  
and a wild night,  
and the road full  
of fallen branches and stones.  
But little by little,  
as you left their voices behind,  
the stars began to burn  
through the sheets of clouds,  
and there was a new voice,  
which you slowly  
recognized as your own,  
as you strode deeper and deeper  
into the world,  
determined to do  
the only thing you could do—  
determined to save  
the only life you could save.



**Thank You!!!!**

...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 centers of worship  
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.**

### Ongoing Support Groups

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

**To Be Updated**

Conflict Resolution Workshop – St Paul’s Episcopal Church, Pine &  
Academy Streets, Georgetown  
Saturday, – 9:00 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. Lunch & soup & bread supper provided.  
Call The Way Home office to register.

**To Be Updated**

Transforming Trauma Workshop – St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Pine &  
Academy Streets, Georgetown  
Saturday, – 9:00 a.m. to 6:15 p.m. Lunch & soup & bread supper provided.  
Call The Way Home office to register.

### **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

Visit The Way Home website at:  
<http://www.thewayhomeprogram.org/>

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

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