

Rebuilding a Shattered Life



RACHEL FIKES & FAMILY

IMAGINE... packing clothes for you and your children knowing you will be traveling across several states to basically start life over again all the while looking over your shoulder for your husband who will be irate when he discovers his family has finally escaped his cruelty.

These are certainly not the ideal traveling plans for this time of year, but for her safety and that of her five children, Rachel Fikes, knew she had to make some difficult choices. The alternative? Possibly pay the ultimate price of losing her life the next time her husband's attacks sent her to the hospital.

Now safe and rebuilding their lives together, Rachel and the children are in counseling to help them understand all that has happened these last few years. It is a good start and they are working through all the challenges together.

Rachel was referred to Refuge of Hope for a hot meal for her family. "I remember the first night they came in to the dining room," said Jo Ann Carpenter, Meal Ministry Manager. "All six of them looked lost and a little afraid. We welcomed them in, fed them and gave them extra food to take home. They have been here every meal since and now are part of our Refuge of Hope family!"

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FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN,

UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN

Isaiah 9:6

REFUGE *of* HOPE

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Christmas Day!

HUMBLY CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF JESUS AT REFUGE OF HOPE

At 6:00 am, volunteers will arrive to prepare a special Christmas breakfast for the men who reside in Refuge of Hope's Shelter. After breakfast, everyone gets to open presents. Some men will be visiting with family, but most will spend the day here.

"The Meal Ministry volunteers always go the extra mile for the men on Christmas," said Scott Schnyders, Shelter Manager. "There is always a nice breakfast, this year roast beef for lunch and Christmas dinner will be shared with the community. But it is not always just about the food. We will have gifts for the men and activities for them throughout the day. Playing Wii, watching movies, chess games and more, just like most families."

The men had a pizza party, decorated their Christmas tree, and helped volunteers decorate the dining room. They also enjoy being a part of the process of helping with the many kinds of donations that come from generous donors this time of year. It is especially a blessing to see them laughing and talking as they help put food in the pantry, knowing the many meals it will provide. As they sort through the clothing donations they are always on the lookout for items we can distribute through the Meal Ministry to the children!

Homeless yes, but not alone. Remembering how Jesus was born in a manger, basically homeless like them, can be an encouragement in their lives. Staying at Refuge of Hope during the holidays is certainly not ideal, but the men are surrounded with staff and volunteers who love them and share the good news of what this season really is all about - Jesus coming to earth to teach us how to love each other; to provide us hope in what we see as hopeless situations; and to offer us the chance to receive His gift of salvation to transform our lives. This is the message for all of us this season!

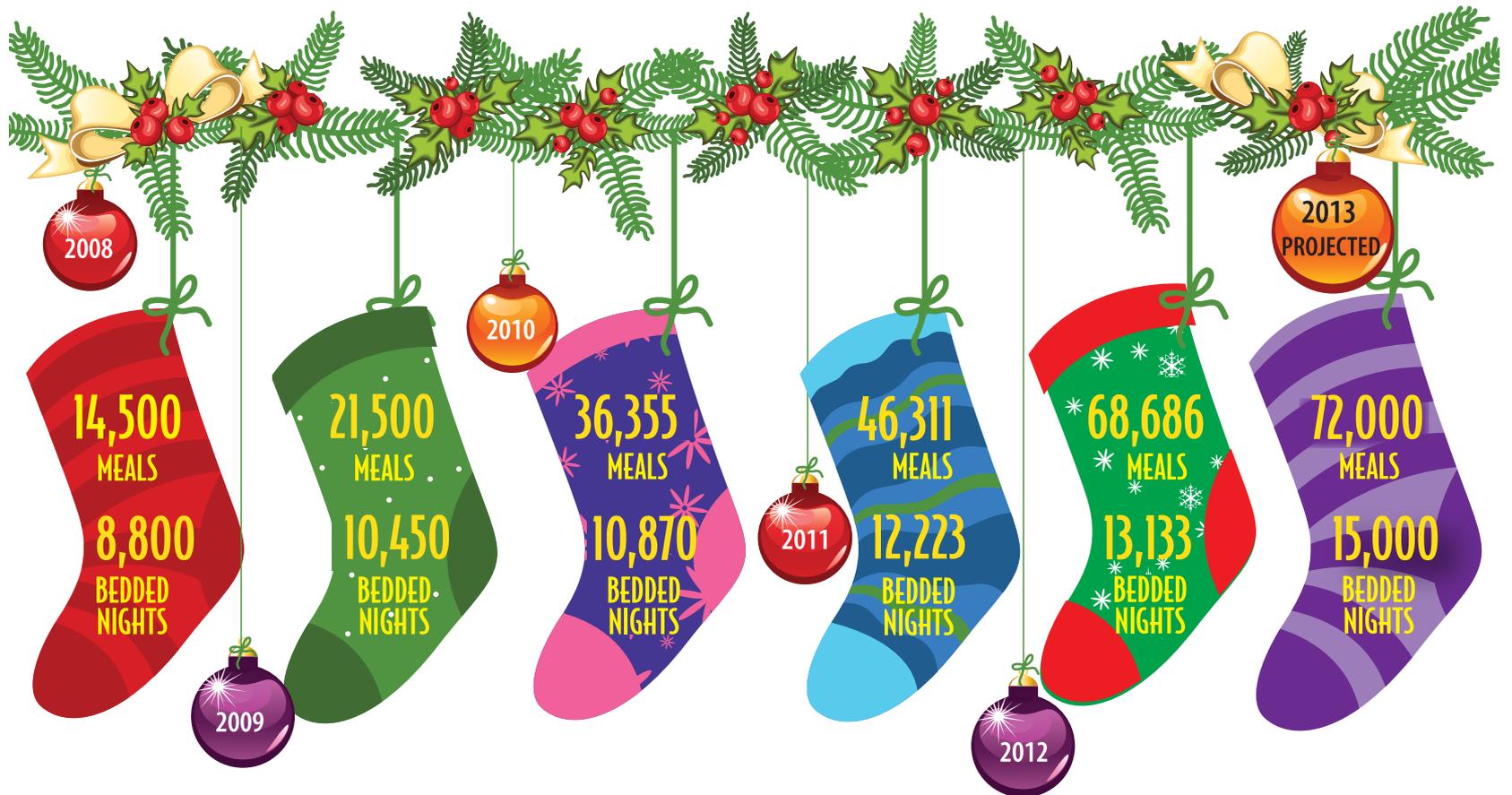
From the Refuge of Hope family to yours we pray you have a blessed Christmas!

The Christmas Story: Luke 2:8-14

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.



Jesus is the Reason for the Season



The increase in number of meals served and bedded nights provided at ROH are a strong indicator that the need remains great in the local community.

MEN'S SHELTER: RE-LAUNCHING LIVES



Helping homeless men re-launch their lives can be quite the roller coaster ride soaring to highest of highs and plummeting to the lowest of lows. This is the world Men's Shelter Managers Simon Horn and Scott Schnyders live in every day at Refuge of Hope.

While the work can be agonizing, difficult and, at times, overwhelming, there are also those times when you just know that all the effort is worth it, according to Horn. "We want to give each man staying at our shelter every possible opportunity to get their lives back on track. When that happens, it is uplifting and deeply rewarding," he said.

Simon became Men's Shelter Manager over a year ago when Scott, who previously occupied the position, moved out of state. A year later, Scott had the opportunity to return to Canton and was rehired at ROH. Scott and Simon are now working together to increase services being offered to homeless men who come to the shelter seeking help. The plan for 2014 includes adding educational components centered on life skills, spirituality, and world views that hopefully will be life changing for many of the men.

With the large number staying at the shelter, it is difficult for one manager to give each man the individual attention he needs. With Scott and Simon working together, that situation can be remedied. "We want to make certain men staying with us are doing all they can to help deal with issues that caused their homelessness in the first place," Schnyders said.

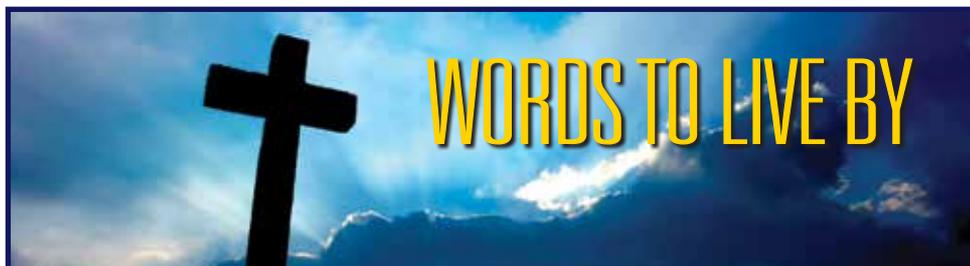


Speak with Trent, Walt, Milo, Brian or many other homeless men who will explain the role ROH played in helping them re-launch their lives. Doing so will help you gain a better understanding of what it means to men who feel all hope is lost only to have their lives transformed in ways they never previously thought possible.

ISAIAH 9:6-7



For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.



*"Want to keep Christ is Christmas?
Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty,
welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies
and do unto others as you would have done unto you."
- Steve Maraboli*

Yes, I want to help men, women and children this Christmas Season! Please use my gift to provide hot, nutritious meals, safe shelter and hope to our neighbors in Stark County.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

How you can contribute to Refuge of Hope Ministries:

\$50.00 \$150.00 \$100.00 Other: _____

Credit Card: Visa Master Card Expiration date: ____ / ____ / ____

Card Number: _____ Signature: _____

Thank you on behalf of those who benefit from the work of Refuge of Hope Ministries made possible through your generous gift. Tax deductible information will be mailed with donation receipt.



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For your convenience, Pay-Pal on-line donations are accepted on our website www.refugeofhope.org

DID YOU KNOW...?

- That donations must be postmarked on or before December 31, 2013 to be credited for 2013.
- The most meals served in a month in ROH's Meal Ministry was 7070 (October, 2013) That Refuge of Hope passed out blankets, coats, and long sleeve sweaters to guests on two different nights
- For four consecutive years, we have served more meals by the end of September than were served for the entire previous year.
- Poverty, hunger and homelessness never take a day off....neither do we at ROH - we're open 365/27/7!

Current Needs List



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We Need Your Help!



MEN'S SHELTER:

Socks, liquid laundry detergent, dryer sheets, reading glasses, shower shoes, stick deodorant, men's underwear, non-alcoholic cold and cough syrup, aspirin and ibuprofen

MEAL MINISTRY:

Please call Jo Ann Carpenter
330-453-1785
to see what the most immediate need is for the week.

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"I was prepared to beg for food for my children if I had too," Rachel admitted. "But all we had to do was be seated and we were served like we were family! My doubts were relieved about how I would provide my children with food, but Refuge of Hope provides complete meals with plenty to eat every night."

With her children enrolled in school, Rachel is will be going back to finish college so she can support her children on her own. Some of her doubts and fears have subsided, but she will always be looking over her shoulder just like the day she left her abusive husband.

Rachel's request, "Please pray for me and my kids to find peace in our new life here. And please continue to support Refuge of Hope so they will always be here for families in need. We have a long road before us and now we have Refuge of Hope to help take away anxiety I had about nutrition for my children. We really have been blessed by the staff and volunteers."

We were able to provide Rachel and her family a complete turkey dinner for Thanksgiving which they used on Sunday when we do not serve. On Thanksgiving Day, all six of the Fikes family was here for dinner and to give thanks for all that God has provided for them since coming to Canton.

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