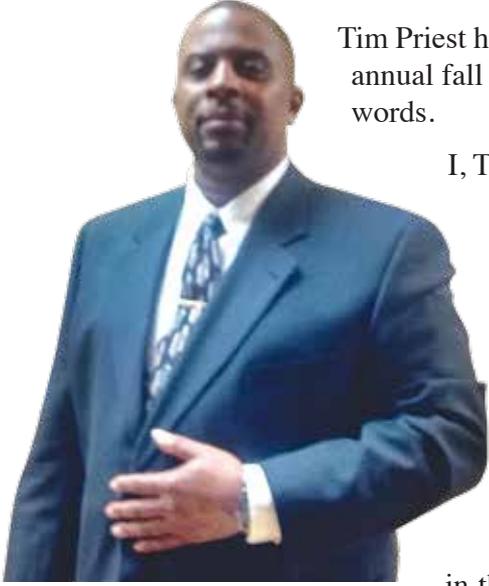


Looking for a Way Out...



TIM PRIEST

Tim Priest has been a resident at Refuge of Hope for the past five months. He recently shared his story at our sixth annual fall gala. His is a tale of alcohol and drug use during his middle age crisis. Here is Tim's story in his own words.

I, Timothy, would like to share my mistakes and triumphs during this spell in my life.

Alcohol and drugs seemed to be the best choice in my life to deal with the pressures of a relationship that was dwindling to the point of separation from my love of 16 years, along with two beautiful daughters.

Dealing with unemployment and bills piling up to no end, I couldn't see how all that was happening to me was my fault and I was looking for a way out or someone to blame. Days would pass looking for employment in the local newspaper to no avail. I would put it off for another day, just making my situation worse.

In July, 2015, I found myself homeless, no job, hungry, and my family turned away from me. The hardest thing to accept was that I chose the street life and associates that had no spiritual guiding in their lives. Finally I had a long talk and prayer session with my daughter's godparents. They gave me

continued on page 3

The giving of gifts is not something man invented. God started the giving spree when He gave a gift beyond words, the unspeakable gift of His Son. -Robert Flatt

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Christmas Day

HUMBLY CELEBRATING
THE BIRTH OF CHRIST
AT REFUGE OF HOPE

There is much hustle and bustle with all the preparations for Christmas at Refuge of Hope. For the month of December, we are planning and serving meals, sheltering the homeless, collecting and wrapping gifts and ministering to hurting people.

In reality that is pretty much what we do all year long but, you see, when you are hungry or homeless, being alone during the holidays hurts more. That is why Refuge of Hope goes all out to make sure every man, woman and child we serve feels like part of our family! Different treats will be passed out during the weeks before the big day, parents will be able to select some small items for their children to open on Christmas morning and there will also be a few surprises for the men and women residing in our shelters.

We begin the day with a special breakfast for residents served by loving volunteers, followed with the opening of presents and lots of fellowship around the dining room tables. Lunch and dinner will be served to the community later in the day so everyone will be active and busy with not much time to reflect on Christmas' past.

We are making new memories this year with a solid foundation that is built upon the birth of our Lord and Savior. He is the way to everlasting life and offers us the chance to rebuild our broken lives today. This Christmas is a perfect time to share Christ's love to so many hurting people.

Merry Christmas from the Refuge of Hope family!



The 6th Annual Holiday Gala...



Elec Simon at Refuge of Hope Gala.

was a lively venue of high-energy live entertainment as Elec Simon, formerly on tour with the off-Broadway show **STOMP**, performed and urged those in attendance to **STOMP OUT HUNGER!**

The evening included an island-themed dinner, an extreme cork pull, and fabulous auctions items including: a New York Stock Exchange Tour, an outdoor getaway at Cooks Forest State Park, and an adrenaline junkie Xtreme Xperience racing exotic supercars...and more! Funds raised support Refuge of Hope's work in feeding and caring for the hungry and homeless in our community. A special thanks to everyone who spent the evening with us. The planning is already under way for next year's event and YOU won't want to miss it!!

We thank our sponsors
for making our 6th Annual Holiday Gala possible:



DENNIS G. LIDDLE



Thank You!

Making a Difference

IT'S WINTER. YOU'RE HOMELESS. WHAT DO YOU DO? Brent stayed in a tent in the woods. Sharmaine lived under a bridge. Willie slept wherever he could find a spot. The good news is all three found a sanctuary at Refuge of Hope.

Brent, Sharmaine and Willie have stories that we unfortunately hear all too often at Refuge of Hope. Men, women and children who daily are hungry, homeless and living in poverty right here in Stark County. Our goal is to serve those in need, without interruption, 24/7/365. YOU help turn that goal into reality.



Brent

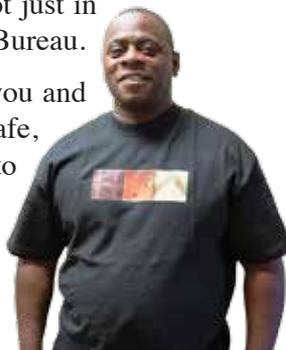


Antoinette & Sharmaine

Make no mistake, the need remains great. As this is written, 1 in 4 children and 1 in 10 senior citizens in Stark County go to bed hungry every night. 1 in 6 residents is food insecure, that is they do not have regular access to nutritious, affordable food. You may be surprised to find a friend, neighbor or even a relative in this

population. 30 percent of those living in Canton exist at the poverty level or below and Stark County is 1 of the 10 most depressed counties not just in Ohio but in the United States according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Helping those in need has a surprisingly simple answer – you and me. We can provide hot, nutritious meals to the hungry, and safe, warm, sober shelter to the homeless. We can provide hope to those in our community who have so little. Bottom line, it's about us stepping up, people helping people, in their time of need. Can we count on your generous financial support for Refuge of Hope not only this Christmas season but the whole year through?



Willie

Together we can make a difference.

THANK YOU FOR BLESSING Refuge of Hope

From all of us at Refuge of Hope, a very special thank you to all of you who have been so generous to Refuge of Hope in 2015. If we need something, God has blessed us to receive it through you. Your prayers and donations prove to those we serve that they matter and there are people in this community who care about them. If there was a way to recognize each of you individually in this edition of the newsletter, we would do it. But since we can't, please know we are so grateful to be recipients of your caring and thoughtfulness.

We look forward to partnering with you again in 2016 to fight against hunger, homelessness and poverty in Stark County.

Yes, I want to support people like Tim Priest and help Refuge of Hope provide hot, nutritious meals and safe, sober shelter to our hungry and hurting Stark County neighbors!

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 your donation receipt.

Thank you for your generous compassion!



The employee civic fund programs from Progressive Chevrolet and Progressive Dodge Chrysler voted to generously support the men, women and children served at Refuge of Hope this year. This is a long standing tradition from this corporation and the employees enjoy giving back to their community in this way. Progressive staff members, along with representatives of various non-profits, including Refuge of Hope, display donation going to help people in need.

Looking for a Way Out... cont.

a heartfelt and straight talk about what I was doing to myself and my kids.

As much as I wanted to disagree and blame others, I shut my mouth and accepted what I had coming. I felt so ashamed and shed many tears for what I had done to my family.

My selfishness and no relationship with my Lord and Savior had me at the lowest level of my life and I seriously contemplated harming myself. God's love and mercy led me to the crisis center in Canton, then to the Refuge of Hope, where I found I am not alone.

God has shined His light through Refuge of Hope's staff members who have shown me unconditional love without judgment. God has opened avenues for employment and spiritual healing while working with ROH's food and clothing ministry allows me to stay busy and involved. Most importantly, it keeps me focused on God and I know He will deliver me out of the muck and mire.

If it wasn't for Refuge of Hope, I probably wouldn't be sharing such a personal testimony to you readers. So, continue to pray for all of us at Refuge of Hope and I'll pray for you as well.

Tim Priest



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THANK YOU!

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

SAVE THE DATE!

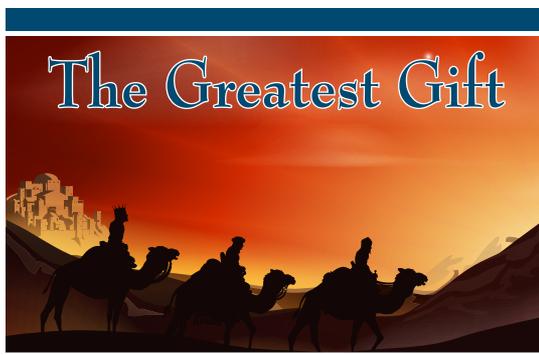
April 12, 2016 is the date for our Anniversary Banquet at the Hartville Kitchen!

Mark your calendars now; this will be an event you will not want to miss.

In 2015, Refuge of Hope has helped more hurting people than ever before! It takes all of us as community working together to impact and effect change in the lives of so many hurting and hungry people!

If you attended the Twice the Blessings banquet this year we are asking you to host a table for next year! Remember there is no cost to attend this banquet for you or your invitees. There will be an opportunity at the end of the evening for you and your guests to financially support the men, women and children at Refuge of Hope!

So make your plans now to attend, consider who you will invite, and call Jo Ann Carpenter at 330-280-2153, to reserve your table today. Remember, our Stark County neighbors need us to work together to help them overcome broken lives and offer them the chance at a new beginning and fresh start.



Holocaust concentration camp survivor, Corrie ten Boom, said "Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that He gave His only Son. The only requirement is to believe in Him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life." Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. He is not only the reason for the season but the gift that keeps on giving for eternity. Do you know Him as your personal Lord and Savior? If not, wouldn't this Christmas season be the perfect time to accept His perfect gift of eternal salvation.

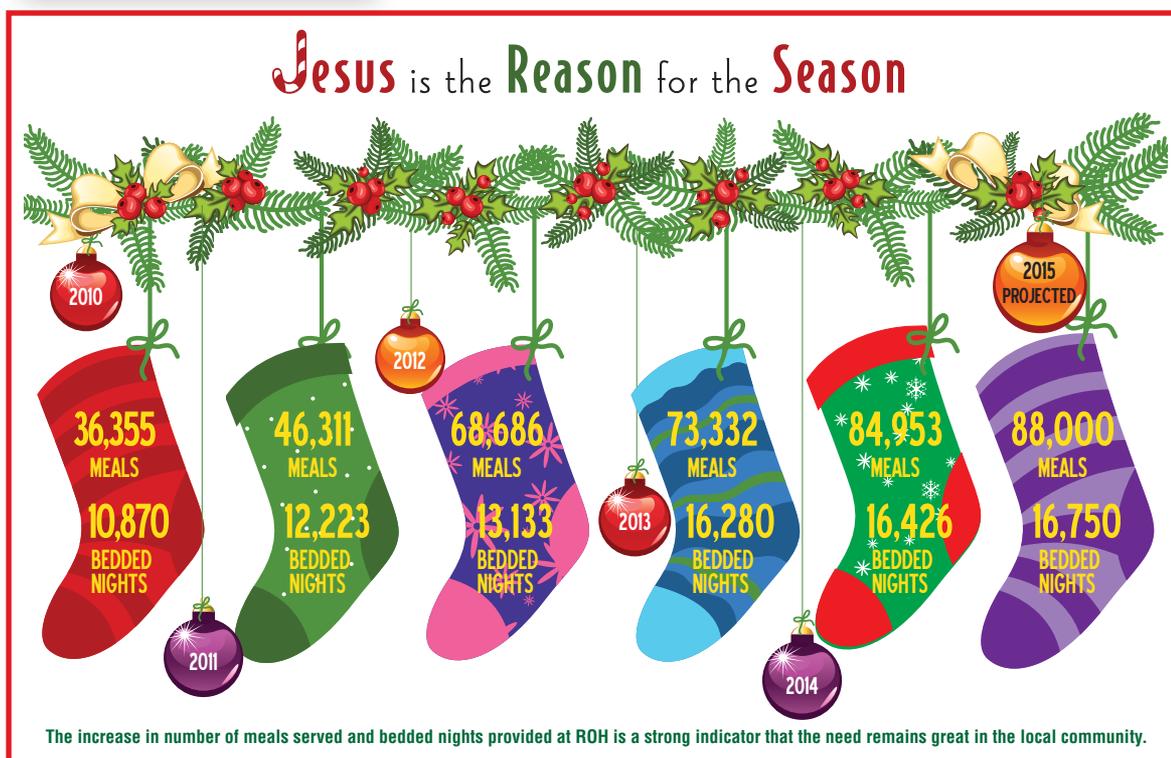
Wishing you and your family God's riches blessings during Christmas and throughout the New Year!



Thank you to The Sisters of Charity Foundation for generously providing the funding for an AED and an upgraded First Aid Kit for Refuge of Hope!

Refuge of Hope staff members receive hands on training from Stat Services on how to properly administer CPR and use the AED.

Refuge of Hope is sincerely grateful to The Sisters of Charity Foundation for their partnership in opening our Women's Emergency Shelter on December 1. Working together we can truly make a difference in the lives of men, women and children in our community!



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