

# h REFUGE of HOPE MINISTRIES

## Ed Wyngerter: Hope When You Least Expect It!

Sometimes when you just feel like you can't go on any longer, hope knocks at your door. Such was the case of one man who stayed at ROH's homeless shelter. Meet Ed Wyngerter.

Ed's mother was out of his life when he was three years old and he was raised by a domineering father with whom he did not have a close relationship. At 17, Ed dropped out of school and joined the Navy. After serving four years, Ed eventually became a salesman and he was transferred to California. While there, he became addicted to crystal meth. "Everyone I ran with was doing it and I joined in," Ed said. He eventually lost his job and moved back to Canton.

Ed married and had a daughter, Jade. He didn't realize then the major impact she would have in his life many years later. Ed held numerous jobs losing most of them due to drugs and alcohol. Unfortunately, his wife also used and Ed now realizes drugs and alcohol were the major connection for them. Eventually they lost their house and finally divorced.

After losing more jobs, Ed found himself living in his van which he parked around the city to avoid the police. "I finally had enough and decided to kill myself," Ed remembers. "I swallowed a bunch of sleeping pills, washed them down with tequila and begged God to let me die. I was bitterly disappointed when I woke up the next morning."

But that day hope, in the person of Ed's daughter, Jade, came knocking. She found his van and pounded on the door. She told him she wanted to have children and if he didn't get his act together, he wouldn't be around to be in their lives. She got Ed's attention.

Ed stayed at ROH for 5½ months and determinedly set about changing his life. He was held accountable at ROH and quit using drugs and alcohol. Asked by a ROH volunteer to attend church, he went without being forced for the first time in his life. He said it felt comfortable and right.

The same volunteer offered Ed a job, which he holds to this day. He has now been sober for nearly three years and is off all public assistance. And, the biggest blessing of all – one day after his first anniversary of sobriety, Jade gave birth to her first child, a daughter she named Alivia Grace.

His granddaughter's name continually reminds Ed that through God's grace, he is alive to be part of her life. "Though it has taken most of my life to understand it, I feel God has a purpose for me. I'm anxious to see where He is going to take me next," Ed said.

Ed Wyngerter abused alcohol and drugs for 40 years. He should be dead. Instead, he is a shining example of the redemptive power of God's grace and love. And, he's experienced a valuable life lesson for all of us...it isn't how you start your life that counts but rather how you finish.



*Ed at Rivertree Church to give his testimony and share how Refuge of Hope helped him change his life.*

## Duane Wykoff, CEO, Notes:

**Newsletter change:** You've no doubt noticed the new look for Refuge of Hope's newsletter. The package has changed but the product remains the same. No matter the format, we want our newsletter to keep you informed about what is happening at Refuge of Hope. But there is also another reason for sending it to you. More importantly, we want to give you an intimate look into the lives of those who daily live in dire circumstances and who come to us seeking a helping hand up. *We want you to witness firsthand how your prayers and donations are changing lives and giving people hope for a better tomorrow.*

## YOU Made A Difference In 2015!

**WOW!** Together we helped provide safe shelter, hot meals and other vital services to hundreds of men, women and children in our community!

In 2009, we began a tradition in the Meal Ministry of serving every person with love, compassion and respect. This philosophy has spilled over into every aspect of service provided at Refuge of Hope.

Look at the results of your prayers and financial support for 2015 –

- ❖ Over 89,000 nutritious meals were provided to hungry people who live in poverty
- ❖ Over 17,000 nights of safe, sober housing for homeless men and women
- ❖ Over 90 men moved into permanent housing from our shelter
- ❖ Over 33,000 volunteer hours of service

Each number is a real person - a homeless man who overcame addiction and is now living in his own apartment; a family who was able to meet their monthly budget by coming to share meals in the meal ministry; the faithfulness of hundreds of volunteers.

Refuge of Hope is Stark County's Rescue Mission. We are here to serve those who desperately need meals, shelter and HOPE! Lives have been changed, hearts have healed and the gospel has been proclaimed all through three little words that carry a big impact... love, compassion and respect.



A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.

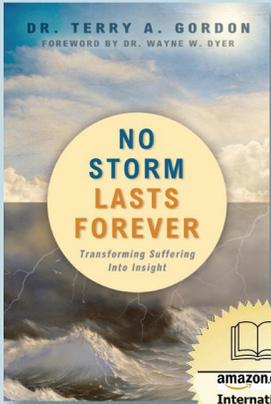


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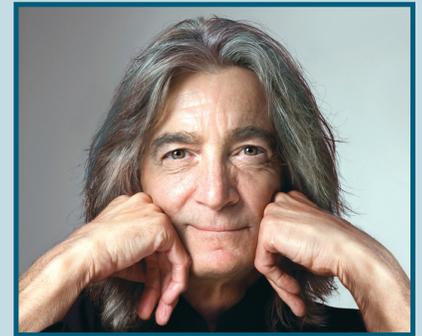
# 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet • April 12, 2016 - 6:00 P.M.



We are pleased to announce that Terry A. Gordon, author and retired Cardiologist, will be our keynote speaker on April 12 at the Hartville Kitchen. In a recent blog post from his website Terry said, "There are no mistakes, no missteps. Life's events only become calamities if we allow them to become so. If you can look at challenges as a normal part of life, they can actually be the driving force of change."

Change and life's challenges are some of the issues we help men and women address daily at Refuge of Hope. A transformed life requires diligence and hard work to overcome addictions, loss of job, or illness.

You will also hear a personal testimony from Refuge of Hope Staff Member U-Londa Hicks. Her story will take you on a journey of volunteering through community service at Refuge of Hope, being hired and how she was inspired to change her life for God!



Please make your reservations now by calling Jo Ann Carpenter at 330-280-2153 or emailing her at [jcarpenter@refugeofhope.org](mailto:jcarpenter@refugeofhope.org).

There is no charge to attend the banquet on April 12. You will have the opportunity at the end of the evening to financially partner with Refuge of Hope as we work together to change lives through meals, shelter and hope!

## We Don't Solicit Door to Door!

If someone knocks on your door asking for a financial donation for Refuge of Hope, please know it is a scam. We never solicit from door to door asking for cash or for any type of donation. If you are asked to make a donation of any kind to Refuge of Hope and you are not certain if the request is legitimate, please call us at 330-453-1785 before you give. Unfortunately, there are many scam artists who prey on the generous spirit of those who are eager to help people in need. We don't want you to be the victim of such fraud. Be safe, not sorry – if you aren't certain, call before you give.

*Words To Live By:*  
 "You either get bitter or you get better. It's that simple. You either take what has been dealt to you and allow it to make you a better person, or you allow it to tear you down. The choice does not belong to fate. It belongs to you."

- Josh Shipp

**Yes! I want to help men like Ed by providing hot, nutritious meals, safe, sober shelter and other vital needs! Your gift today will make a difference to hurting men, women & children in Stark County!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

### How you can contribute to Refuge of Hope Ministries

\$50.00     \$100.00     \$150.00     Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card:     Visa     MasterCard     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.*



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**For your convenience, Pay-Pal on-line donations are accepted on our website:**  
[www.refugeofhope.org](http://www.refugeofhope.org)

# Local College/High School Students Serve In Meal Ministry

Refuge of Hope collaborates with Kent State University, Malone University, Stark State College, Walsh University, and local high schools by actively offering individual and group service-learning volunteer opportunities to their students.

Service hours allow students to apply their academic training and compassion in a “hands-on” community setting to gain a “real life” understanding of the people we serve right here as a local community partner.

For us, the students come in bringing fresh energy, lots

of smiles and laughter. They often leave us with their eyes opened, their minds turning and coming back with a fresh passion of ideas to make a difference in our community.

“I love their enthusiasm and the moments when they say, ‘Wow! I had no idea!’ through their experience with us,” shares Dawn Bowman, Director of Meal Ministry.

*Service learning projects help college students understand that hunger, homeless and poverty are major concerns in Stark County.*



*This is a way they can give back to their community when they help serve a meal and spend time with our dinner guests.*