



the ROCKFORD RESCUE MISSION
rescuer

Many of our residents and guests receive specialized trauma care to heal their spiritual and emotional wounds. Your gifts and prayers make it possible. Page 3



Trauma and Our Community

Reflections FROM THE CEO

Dear Friend,

This issue of The Rescuer turns attention to something our community is confronting together: trauma. The word means more than we might think.

Literally, trauma means “wound.” The ancient Greeks reserved the word for physical injury, but in modern times trauma refers to many kinds of hurt. It can be experiencing or witnessing anything from abuse, violence, disasters or war, to the death of a loved one, abandonment, divorce, or a global pandemic... the list goes on and on.

Our guests and residents here at Rockford Rescue Mission know trauma all too well. Some of their more common experiences are homelessness, poverty, addiction, child abuse and domestic violence. Often, a person has experienced multiple traumas. The pain accumulates to a point where they can't deal with it on their own.

I'm so glad that Winnebago County is becoming a Trauma Informed Community. Rockford Rescue Mission has been at the table with others taking part in training, headed by the Winnebago County Health Department. We have signed on to eleven core values, all aimed at educating our community about trauma's impact and integrating this knowledge into our care. The goal is to become a community that “recognizes the collective impact of adverse experiences and fosters resiliency and well-being in its residents.”

CEO Sherry Pitney and Men's Life Recovery Advocate Alice Sorenson (left) celebrate with Men's Life Recovery resident, Chris, as he gave his testimony.



One important outcome of this training is to reduce something called re-traumatization. That's when a person has to relive their pain by, say, telling their story to multiple agencies trying to help them. It wears a person down.

A Trauma Informed Community doesn't put someone through that. Instead, together we provide ways for trust and a sense of safety to grow. Rockford Rescue Mission connects guests with others who are trained to help people recover from specific types of trauma. We also host forums and training to educate and inform our faith-based friends.

A community's understanding and response to trauma influences our collective health and well-being. I'm proud to live in a community that recognizes this. As a Christian ministry, Rockford Rescue Mission embraces the county's approach as a great way to extend the love and care of Jesus to people who are hurting.

It's what restoring people to wholeness is all about.

Partners in Hope,

Sherry Pitney
CEO

P.S. If you want to know more, visit winnebagotraumainformed.com.



How Your Gifts Are Changing Hearts & Lives

OCTOBER 2019 - MARCH 2020

Food



103,781
meals served

Shelter



33,124
nights of lodging

Medical Care



2,302
clinic appointments

Spiritual Guidance



378
spiritual decisions

Advocacy



4,261
total sessions

Clothing & Personal Hygiene



131,896
items distributed

Education & Career Assistance



446
Works!
Center participants

Turning Trauma to Healing and Wholeness...

Two stories of lives restored

Tiffany & George



Tiffany and her 8-year-old son, George, are two of the 685 women and children who stayed at Rockford Rescue Mission's Women's Crisis Center in 2019. Sadly, Tiffany's story of trauma is all too common. Trapped in a toxic relationship, her life was threatened at the hands of her fiancé. "All of a sudden he had me on the floor and was choking me in front of George," she says. Tiffany knew she had to leave. But she didn't feel strong enough to do it on her own. She was relieved when her adult daughter told her about Rockford Rescue Mission. "She said it was a nice shelter... a place that could help make me strong." When Tiffany and George arrived at our Crisis Center, she said, "I was welcomed with open arms, and everyone has been so loving." But her pathway to independence hasn't been smooth. She struggles to find a place to live because of the information required, documents she left behind when she was forced to flee her home. "And I don't have a car and the bus schedule doesn't always coincide with my appointments, so I have to arrive hours early sometimes." While discouraged with the process of finding a home, Tiffany believes Rockford Rescue Mission has given her a new outlook on life. "I am loved here. I can breathe again. I am not only protected by the staff when I walk through these doors, but also by God. I am thankful to be here but ready to find a home. Someone else in need or danger needs my bed here."

Matt As a junior in high school, Matt joined the Army Reserves to escape the mental and verbal abuse he received at home. But in a military environment, he faced different kinds of challenges. "It was tough... real tough," he recalls. For relief: "I got really good at drinking." His alcohol abuse continued when he returned home. After he was awarded a sizable insurance settlement from a car accident, addiction consumed his life.

"I quit my job and started partying until the money ran out, and I ended up homeless and panhandling. It got pretty rough, pretty fast," he says about his emotional, physical and spiritual spiral to rock bottom.

Finally, after several suicide attempts, a social worker guided Matt to Rockford Rescue Mission for the long-term help he needed to end his self-destructive habits. In our Life Recovery Program, his faith is growing through fellowship with other guests and trauma-focused guidance from our Mission staff. Now he finds joy in helping others overcome addiction.

"One thing they teach you in the military is self-reliance – that you can do it. But by myself, I can't," he says. "At the Rockford Rescue Mission, I gave up trying to do it on my own, because it never worked. When I remove myself from the equation and put it in God's hands, it's a lot easier. I'm getting better and better and better with who I am."



Rockford Rescue Mission Plays Integral Role in Trauma Informed Community



Mike Hedrick and Pam Tomita, directors of our men's and women's programs, accepted Rockford Rescue Mission's certificate on Winnebago County's first annual Trauma Informed Community Day.

Rockford Rescue Mission is dedicated to being part of a Trauma Informed Community, equipped to provide specialized and faith-based care to those in our Crisis Centers who have experienced traumatic events in their lives.

Members of our program staff have participated in extensive training and received certification in Trauma Informed Care, Genesis Coaching, Mental Health First Aid, De-escalation, ARMS (Abuse Recovery Ministry Services), and Domestic Violence Her Journey coaching.

During our intake process, guests suffering the physical or emotional pain of trauma are interviewed in a private setting to preserve their dignity, and our advocates avoid repetitive questions that would require them to describe their painful experiences many times over.

The library in our Women's Crisis Center has been designated a quiet space and is filled with specially selected reading materials that focus on strength, healing, faith and topics many are facing such as abusive relationships and parenting.

Men and women in our Crisis Centers are encouraged to search for jobs and housing and are required to attend classes to reach their goals of growth and healing. Our facilities are set up so that if anyone feels unsafe, they never need to go outside to get to another department for classes or meals.

We also make special accommodations to ensure women who are coming out of human trafficking feel safe and secure.

We ask for your continued partnership and prayers as we continue to provide a safe haven of comfort and healing to those victimized by trauma.



Thank You



We're blessed by the long-term giving of these partners in faith who, over the last five years, have supported our mission to share hope and help in Jesus' name:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Belvidere, IL
Evangelical Covenant Church | Rockford, IL
Berean Baptist Church
Calvary Christian Church
City First Church
Faith Center
First Evangelical Covenant Church |
| Brodhead, WI
Living Word, Inc. | First Free Rockford
Forest City Fellowship
Grace Reformed Baptist Church
Holy Family Church
Kilburn Avenue United Brethren in Christ |
| Browntown, WI
Martintown Community Church | Liberty in the Spirit
Lincoln Wood Baptist Church
North Love Baptist Church
Northeast Christian Church
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Pelley Road Christian Fellowship |
| Byron, IL
Cornerstone Family Church | Riverside Assembly of God
St. Rita Catholic Church
Temple Baptist Church
Westminster Presbyterian Church |
| Caledonia, IL
Believers Bible Chapel | Forreston, IL
Forreston Grove Church
North Grove Evangelical Church |
| Davis, IL
Faith Community Church
St. Paul Church of Epleyanna | Kings, IL
Elim Reformed Church |
| Forreston, IL
Forreston Grove Church
North Grove Evangelical Church | Rockton, IL
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church |
| Kings, IL
Elim Reformed Church | Leaf River, IL
North Grove Christian Church |
| Leaf River, IL
North Grove Christian Church | Leeton, MO
High Point Baptist Church |
| Leeton, MO
High Point Baptist Church | Loves Park, IL
Forest Hills Evangelical Free Church
Journey Church Ministries |
| Loves Park, IL
Forest Hills Evangelical Free Church
Journey Church Ministries | Machesney Park, IL
Riverside Community Church |
| Machesney Park, IL
Riverside Community Church | Monroe Center, IL
Monroe Center Community Church
Union Church of Monroe Center |
| Monroe Center, IL
Monroe Center Community Church
Union Church of Monroe Center | Mount Morris, IL
Evangelical Free Church |
| Mount Morris, IL
Evangelical Free Church | Oregon, IL
Ebenezer Reformed Church |
| Oregon, IL
Ebenezer Reformed Church | Shannon, IL
Grace Fellowship Church of Freeport |
| Shannon, IL
Grace Fellowship Church of Freeport | Stillman Valley, IL
Congregational Christian Church
Kishwaukee Community Presbyterian Church |
| Stillman Valley, IL
Congregational Christian Church
Kishwaukee Community Presbyterian Church | Winnebago, IL
Winnebago Ev. Fellowship/Park Hills |
| Winnebago, IL
Winnebago Ev. Fellowship/Park Hills | Winslow, IL
Winslow Grace Bible Church |
| Winslow, IL
Winslow Grace Bible Church | |

Your gifts and prayers provide a safe haven and specialized assistance for men and women healing from trauma in their lives. God bless you for your ongoing support.

Community Business Gets Involved

EXPERITY

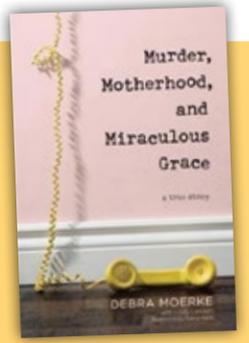
Rockford Rescue Mission is grateful for local business partner **Experity**, which not only allows its associates paid time off to volunteer, but also matches employees' financial gifts to our organization.

"Rockford Rescue Mission does important work that directly improves the lives of people in need in our community. Experity supports their mission and is proud to partner with them through our donations and volunteer support from our caring team."
 – Dr. David Stern, CEO



Friday, September 18, 2020 • 7 p.m.
First Free Rockford

Join in fellowship with other compassionate friends for this special evening that benefits our ministries for homeless and hurting women and children. Enjoy a light dessert, inspiring testimonies and a heartwarming presentation by author and speaker Debra Moerke.



Debra Moerke has served as Director of Women's and Children's Ministries at Wyoming Rescue Mission, as Executive Director of a Christian crisis pregnancy and counseling center, as a speaker for Wyoming's women's prison, and as a jail guard and chaplain. In 2017 she earned a certificate in Christian ministries from Gateway Seminary in California.

She and her husband, Al, raised six children and, over 18 years, took in more than 140 foster children. Her book, *Murder, Motherhood, and Miraculous Grace*, is based on the true story of her relationship with one special little girl named Hannah. It's a life-affirming testament to the power of unconditional love and relentless obedience.

We need you...



An important message about COVID-19

In one way or another, we've all been affected by COVID-19. At Rockford Rescue Mission, the impact is unprecedented: We're seeing more and more neighbors who, due to lost incomes, are turning to us for food and life essentials.

At the same time, we are concerned about the potential financial shortfall COVID-19 could have on Rockford Rescue Mission's

funding. Our Thrift Store was closed. Fundraising events have been canceled. Many who have supported us so faithfully are now struggling to pay bills and make ends meet.

In times like these, when no one is immune to uncertainty and hardship, we don't take lightly the necessity to ask our donors to do more. But

because the need is so great, our humble plea is that if you can, you would give extra generously today.

Please give as your heart leads you – to provide the critical care and services our struggling neighbors rely on. Working together, with God as our guide, we can bring strength and healing to this community we love.

Thank you!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Visit rockfordrescuemission.org for the latest information on these and other upcoming events.

To see the tour schedule, please go to rockfordrescuemission.org/tour

Executive Director Tour and Lunch

11:15 a.m.
 Rockford Rescue Mission • 715 West State St.
 To reserve your place or for more details, call **815-965-5332**.

SEPTEMBER 8
 Tuesday

Restoration Celebration

7 p.m.
 Rockford Rescue Mission

SEPTEMBER 18
 Friday

Women of Hope Gathering

7 - 9 p.m.
 First Free Rockford
 A special evening with speaker and author Debra Moerke

The Art of GIVING

One of the earliest charitable gift annuities happened in 1831 between Yale University and a painter named John Trumbull. At the time, Trumbull was widowed and poor, surrounded by nearly 100 paintings. He decided to donate them to Yale in exchange for a "competent annuity for the remainder" of his life. And the CGA earned its stripes in American history.

A CGA is a contract between a nonprofit and an individual who transfers their assets in return for an immediate tax deduction *and* an income stream for life. CGAs also:

- Provide the possibility of donating many types of assets
- Reduce capital gains tax liability
- Allow you to support Rockford Rescue Mission

One of the most remarkable things about John Trumbull isn't that he earned the title of "The Painter of the Revolution," it's that he did it with the use of only one eye.

Art critics believe this lifelong effect from a childhood injury is ultimately what influenced his detailed painting style. Today, millions of people continue to walk in Trumbull's shoes, creatively impacting lives through smart charitable giving.

For the full version of this article, request a **FREE** copy of "Start a Revolution in Giving" by contacting Ted Tomita at **815-965-5332** or tedtomita@rockfordrescuemission.org – or bless your family today with a God-honoring will at christianwill.org/rrm.

Please Help With Summer Needs



Lodging at Rockford Rescue Mission is up 20 percent over last year. That means our needs have increased dramatically as well. Please help by sharing toilet paper, laundry detergent, bottled water and other products our guests use on a daily basis. Visit

First Free Rockford donated their church's toilet paper supply during the COVID-19 crisis.

Visit rockfordrescuemission.org/give-help/current-urgent-needs for a list of urgently needed items.