



SEPTEMBER 2016

Stories of grace
in real life are
beautiful and powerful.

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Confessions and Grace

The return address read: 302
Corrections Drive, Newport, Arkansas.

“I’m sitting here listening to sad music and people watching. It is really bizarre and interesting to people watch in prison. The cast of characters include “A”, a strange little crack-head who runs the “in house laundromat” in exchange for commissary pay. “B” who has facial hair and does haircuts. “C” is the local thief who sneaks around stealing people’s stuff and she has no clue that I am watching. “D” looks like Harry Potter. She is tiny, short, completely innocent looking. She robbed a Waffle Hut with an AK 47. Overkill I would say. “E” is just a completely normal drug user just like me. She was an adopted child and her child is in DHS custody. I wonder what I am doing here? These people are crazy. One thing I am learning: I will never have anything until I go “to Nineveh.” How many times have I told you I’m supposed to be telling my story to younger versions of me? Maybe I’ll just do that.

I’ve lost all my kids and it hurts really, really bad. I guess the pain became too great this time because I feel completely broken inside. Lost. I’m better than being a drug addicted, miserable lost soul. I used to walk all over your property (Restoration Village) to find someplace to sneak off to and smoke a joint. God, what I wouldn’t do to walk that property one more time and think about the awesome memories of my life. Dislocated shoulders, zillions of happy children, 3 a.m. phone calls from a drunken resident wanting to know if the coast was clear to sneak back in. Taking my heavy metal C.D.s to the chapel to BLAST them as loud as possible and feeling like a heathen for listening to that kind of music in the chapel. I would make midnight runs up to the kitchen and eat all I could. How we would invent reasons to be ‘sick’ on Sunday mornings in order to get out of going to church. On New Year’s Eve, I was in my room detoxing when the sounds outside of my window sounded like we were being invaded by terrorists. It was your grandchildren running around the lodge banging on



Village News

Aim for Advocacy

We had an amazing inaugural Aim for Advocacy Event on Saturday, August 27th. Thank you to all of the sponsors, participants, and volunteers who helped us raise money in support of our Advocacy program.

Aim For Advocacy Sponsors

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Winchester



Restoration Village is proud to welcome, Luke Snyder PBR Ring of Honor recipient and Missouri Sports Hall of Fame Member, to our Aim for Advocacy Sporting Clays Fundraiser!



Helping Others Roll Along

Thanks to some wonderful benefactors who donated automobiles, we placed three worthy individuals into automobiles since July. One is now driving a Honda Insight with a bumper sticker on the back of her car that says “New Driver”; and another was presented with a 2003 Cadillac Deville a week before she graduated out of Restoration Village to her new beginning. It was particularly moving when another resident received an immaculately repainted, refurbished Chevrolet from the Bob Maloney Body Shop that she and her three children can use.

On their behalf we are grateful to those who gave the automobiles for us to team the gift up with a deserving resident or former resident.



Wishlist

One of the best gifts we can share with a new resident is to provide a mother and her children with new linens, blankets, pillows, and towels. I know that many of us look at these items and think, “that is going to be a lot of laundry” but for a family who has not had them before, it can be a symbol of the fresh start that they are beginning here at Restoration Village.

New twin sheet sets, warm blankets, pillows, and towels, are just a few of the items that we need regularly. We welcome your in-kind donations of local retail gift cards, shampoo and conditioner, body wash and lotion. You can always visit our Needs List on our website for the complete list of items. If you have something you would like to share or would like to plan a donation drive for Restoration Village, please contact Cynthia Cochran at cie@restorationvillage.net.

Sky Dive for Kids

For the past seven years the Children’s Advocacy Center of Benton County has held a Sky Dive for Kids Event to raise awareness and funding for their endeavors in advocacy, interviewing, and counseling with children of abuse. One of Restoration Village’s residents petitioned her friends, saved monies from her pay checks, and chose to conquer her fears and jump from a plane to aid services to children. Dorcus is shown here receiving her certificate of completion of the sky dive along with our daughter-in-law, Adrienne who raised funds and jumped for the second time. Our granddaughter, Rebecca from Lees Summit, Missouri also jumped this year as a part of her “bucket list” prior to beginning college. Way to go you three!



Bank of America

The staff and residents at Restoration Village would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our local Bank of America Merrill Lynch team for selecting the Village as a 2016 Bank of America grant recipient.



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pots and pans. I pulled up the windows and yelled out, "What's going on?" They beat them louder and ran off laughing. [Every year on New Year's Eve we have a Village tradition to run around the lodge banging on pots and pans to welcome the New Year].

One time I was watching another lady's oldest child when he threw a can of Vienna Sausages at me and beamed up beside the head. Nearly knocked me out. He was so angry! I'd Mr. David to come restrain him. I have so many memories!

Anyways, I make my parole plans in a couple of months, even though I won't get out for a while. I think you will find me properly meek and humble if I get to come back. Whew! I'm tired. Ready to get a little peace. Who knows, Ms. Beverly, maybe I can be a house-parent one day. LOL. God knows I know all of the tricks. I could whip 'em right into shape. No Sunday sickness!!! I don't always do the right thing, but I am fiercely protective of you and your family. I love you and Mr. David."

Grace cannot guarantee results or change. If it could, it would turn back into law. Law promises this for that – that's exactly why the law can't produce what it demands. Grace simply loves. Its reason for turning the other cheek is not because it guarantees that its enemies will no longer strike. It turns the other cheek because it loves its enemies more than it loves itself. **Stories of grace in real life are beautiful and powerful.**

But we must be careful not to turn them into something we try to reproduce. Often we are after the results, the change, the victory, or the testimony of the person. "Grace must always be seen as something we have received from God. We are the needy, the ones for whom the story is written; I have struck the face of God and I have been forgiven." (Julian Brooks, Mockingbird Blog, 8/4/16)

The writer who wrote the letter of confession of some of her misadventures at Restoration Village just might be on her journey that allows for grace to break through to her. In the meantime, we extend our arms to those whom we can accommodate with

the reality that our outstretched arms are like the symbolism of the Christ the Redeemer statue. We **do not have the nailed scarred hands**. But, **we do have scarred hearts**.

Watching the Olympics this past month a viewer would often see a camera view of the Christ the Redeemer statue high upon Corcovado Mountain overlooking the city of Rio, Brazil. The huge statue with outstretched and pierced hands of the Christ is more of an imagery of welcome, an expression of unconditional hospitality and an invitation of embrace, not a crucifixion.

Grace
simply
loves.

Restoration Village doesn't have a big statue out front, but we do attempt to exemplify the welcome, hospitality, and invitation for an embrace to all who enter. Despite our open arms, sometimes the end result is like that of John 6:66, "... the people turned away and deserted him," yet others embrace the welcome and new beginnings start.

Restoration Village has some rules of order, structure and accountability. Offering hospitality, our facilities and services to strangers in need, requires courage and challenges to our resources; we accept new residents with an anticipation that *they* have the desire to begin a new journey; and that they will abide by the spirit, traditions and rules of the community. Marginalized people, if they are to discover hope, need to experience and feel for themselves that they are loved and accepted. They need to sense that they are not being judged. They need to be listened to regarding their needs and emotional wounds along with encouraging them to discover their abilities and assume responsibility.

Restore Dignity | Renew Hope | Rebuild Lives

