

Connection



Christmas came early for Terry this year. But the story of *this* Christmas gift goes back many years ...

Terry's daughter Shannon was just a baby when he left her and her mother to join the military back in 1971. After his tour of duty ended, Terry joined a gang of outlaw bikers in California and Shannon was forgotten as he immersed himself in a culture of drugs, violence and crime. By the time Terry was 48, he'd spent more than half his life behind bars. Thankfully, God pursued him faithfully all the way to the Kansas City Rescue Mission.

Terry gave his life to Christ at KCRM. After graduating our recovery program in 2000, he got his bachelor's degree at Wichita State University and became a licensed substance abuse counselor. Then in 2003, he asked Bev, a former KCRM volunteer to be his wife. Life was good — he was so blessed — now if only he could reconnect with Shannon ...

But by 2010, Terry and his daughter had avoided each other for 16 years. "We parted on very angry terms," Terry says today. Shannon resented him for abandoning her as a child and she had no idea he had left the gang life behind to live for Christ. Bev had prayed diligently for seven years that father and daughter would reconcile, but the situation seemed almost hopeless.

Then in September 2010 Terry got a phone call. The voice on the other end reached out hesitantly. Shannon had heard from a relative that Terry had changed and she wanted to find out for herself. The two arranged to meet in Omaha a few days later.

"Shannon and I set aside our issues for that first meeting," Terry says. "Holding her in my arms — that was a true gift. Now I can be the dad I should have been all those years I was gone."

It didn't take long for Shannon to realize her father had changed for good! "She told me, 'Dad, you are the most wonderful man I've ever met,'" Terry recalls tearfully. "Obviously she saw Christ in me. Next to my salvation and my wife, this is the most wonderful gift I've ever received."

In a recent email to Rev. Joe Colaizzi, Terry says, "Tell the men at the Mission that as a graduate of KCRM's program, I not only believe we can change our lives, but God will bless us with more than what we can see or imagine."

Merry Christmas Terry, Shannon and Bev!

Christmas Wish List

Help the homeless year-round with a gift toward these needs. Contact Julie Larocco, (816) 421-7643 or jlarocco@kcrm.org to learn more.

- \$3,200 for upgraded security system
- \$1,675 for clothing for homeless men
- \$195 for software to organize study materials in our library

Overheard...

- **In a note from a homeless guest:** Thank you for your assistance getting my medicine. I really wish I didn't have to ask anybody for such things. You made it easy and I am grateful for your kindness. Sincerely, JSB
- **In a conversation with KCRM nurse, Liz:** "You helped me out real good. And, Jan (case manager) helped me apply for social security and got me shoes and a place to live."
- **From a volunteer:** "I told [my son] if he has another good week in school we will do something fun. So he says, 'Yeah, like we could go to KCRM.' I was super proud that he would want to volunteer as an incentive for doing well in school. He loves coming there!"



Connecting with Joe Colaizzi

There's a sad old Christmas song that was recorded by Nat King Cole in the 1950s titled "The Little Boy that Santa Claus Forgot." It tells the story of a little boy too poor to have any Christmas presents who, on Christmas morning, watches the other little boys play ... "then wanders home to last year's broken toys."

Almost 60 years later, that melancholy little tune still strikes a chord. We feel the pain of that little boy, fictitious or not, and want to reach out to him. We want to give him a happy Christmas.

There is something about the holidays, especially Christmas, that touches the child in each of us.

Sometimes I look at the grizzled, grimy faces of men shuffling into our evening chapel and deep inside I can see a little boy. Some look me in the eye, some don't. Some look haggard, others seem wary or even embarrassed to be there. Many — most — are genuinely grateful for a place out of the cold, a hot meal, a refreshing shower, a clean, warm bed.

But in almost every one, deep, deep inside there is a "little boy that Santa Claus forgot" ... a little boy who still feels abandoned and afraid.

This Christmas my prayer is that we can reach out to these precious men, and the little boys that live inside them, and tell them they are not forgotten. Jesus loves them and He is the best Gift of all.

Merry Christmas, friends. As you celebrate with those you love, may you experience the warmth of God's never-failing love.

An Early Christmas Present!

After receiving a very generous gift from a local private foundation to purchase a new walk-in freezer, shelving and other improvements for our kitchen, several very special KCRM supporters jumped in to raise the remaining \$4,000-plus needed. In September, the new freezer was assembled to the cheers of our staff and volunteers; soon after, additional improvements made the kitchen even more cost and energy efficient.

KCRM is deeply grateful to volunteer Donna Vinson, **Genesis 10/Bank of America, CenturyLink 5454 Building Community Relations Team, Westside Church**, the **Thomas S. Watson Family Foundation** and individuals who gave to the project in honor of loved ones.

Take Note! We value volunteers and donors who support projects enhancing KCRM's services and effectiveness. To partner in a project, call Julie Larocco, (816) 421-7643 or jlarocco@kcrm.org.





“Christmas is the season for kindling the fire of **hospitality** in the hall, the genial flame of **charity** in the heart.” — *Washington Irving*

This Christmas, our staff and volunteers will hold services to honor Christ’s birth, present fun programs, movies and activities, and serve special dinners and holiday treats — all provided through your compassionate hearts and hands. Around 175 homeless guests and C-COR residents will receive practical and just-for-fun gifts from you, our loving friends.

To be part of this heartwarming time of hospitality and charity, call (816) 421-7643 or email jhansen@kcrm.org. We look forward to sharing Christmas with you and our homeless guests.

Gifts for Homeless Guests

KCRM volunteers are preparing 175 handmade bags that will contain gifts for our guests and C-COR residents. Can you help with new items from this list? Bring donations to 1520 Cherry Street, Monday-Friday, 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Thanks!

- Christmas card with hand-written note
- \$5 phone card
- \$5 McDonalds card
- \$3 bus day-pass
- Small prayer or devotional book
- Crossword or Suduko book
- Packaged candy
- Pocket planner
- Thermal socks and underwear
- Notebook and pen
- Ski gloves
- Scarf and stocking cap
- Rain poncho
- Travel mug
- Package of three handkerchiefs
- Deck of playing cards

Gifts for Residents

Each of the 40 men in our C-COR and Transitional communities will receive the gifts above, plus the following. Would you like to donate one or more of these new items?

- Sweatshirt or hoodie (L, XL)
- Polo shirt (L, XL)
- Bound journals
- Collapsible laundry basket
- Wallet
- Hardback devotional (such as Oswald Chambers “My Utmost for His Highest”)
- \$10 AMC Theater gift card (or single movie pass)



The Season of Giving

October through December are important months for KCRM! During these three months, the Mission raises almost 50 percent of our annual budget, helping sustain us throughout the year.

This year, we must raise \$1.1 million by December 31, 2010. Please prayerfully consider how you can help us reach this goal. To learn more, contact Julie Larocco at (816) 421-7643 or jlarocco@kcrm.org. Thanks and have a blessed holiday season.

A Christmas Call

For John, a homeless guest at KCRM, Christmas Eve was an anniversary of suffering. It had been years since he’d had the nerve or the money to call his daughter who lived several hours away, and he was too ashamed to call collect.

On this particular Christmas Eve, John sat in KCRM’s dayroom wishing the holiday was over. That’s when the Herring family walked in with their personal cell phones and offered each homeless guest a chance to call loved ones. “It’s a Herring family tradition,” a family member says. “We do it to give back.” John decided to chance his daughter’s anger and give her a call, and it turned out to be life-changing! “I hadn’t seen her in 20 years, but there she was on the phone forgiving me and telling me she loved me,” he says. “She even set up a time for us to get together!”

We’re grateful to the Herring family for their Christmas tradition of compassion. Such simple acts — calls from a cell phone, decorated cookies, homemade greeting cards — mean so much to homeless men at KCRM. For some, the gift can be life-changing.

“remember the poor” — Galatians 2:10

Holiday Volunteer Activities

Listen up! You can bring a meaningful and memorable Thanksgiving or Christmas experience to the homeless of Kansas City! No matter what your skill, gift, income level or time available, KCRM has compiled a variety of volunteer activities and projects that need your special touch.

Contact Juliann Hansen, jhansen@kcrm.org or call (816) 421-7643 to get involved. Or, visit kcrm.org for a complete list of holiday volunteer needs.

- Coordinate a drive for turkeys and hams, or other foods you'd find on a traditional holiday table. We can provide a speaker to motivate your group or give you a tour when you bring your donation.
- Organize a gift drive for items listed on page 3. Or hold a “casual day” or “jeans day” to raise money for warm socks, scarves and gloves.
- Make Christmas candy, cookies or other treats for homeless guests in our dayroom. Bring them any time after December 1.
- Adopt a C-COR resident's child or children; call for specific information.
- Bring decorations and deck our halls ... and dining hall, dayroom and other common areas the week after Thanksgiving!
- Bring a group and spend time with our homeless guests on Christmas Day. Oversee movie time, help in the kitchen and wherever else you are needed; 2-3 hours shifts, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Compassion, Kids and Christmas

We've learned over the years that kids who learn compassion become giving adults. Make this lesson a family experience: While Christmas shopping, allow your children to choose socks, underwear, gloves, and other practical items for homeless guests at KCRM. When you drop off your gifts, bring the kids to meet some of the men they are giving to and take a tour. Contact Paul Masao, (816) 421-7643 or pmasao@kcrm.org to schedule your family field trip and answer your questions.



Leave a Christmas Legacy

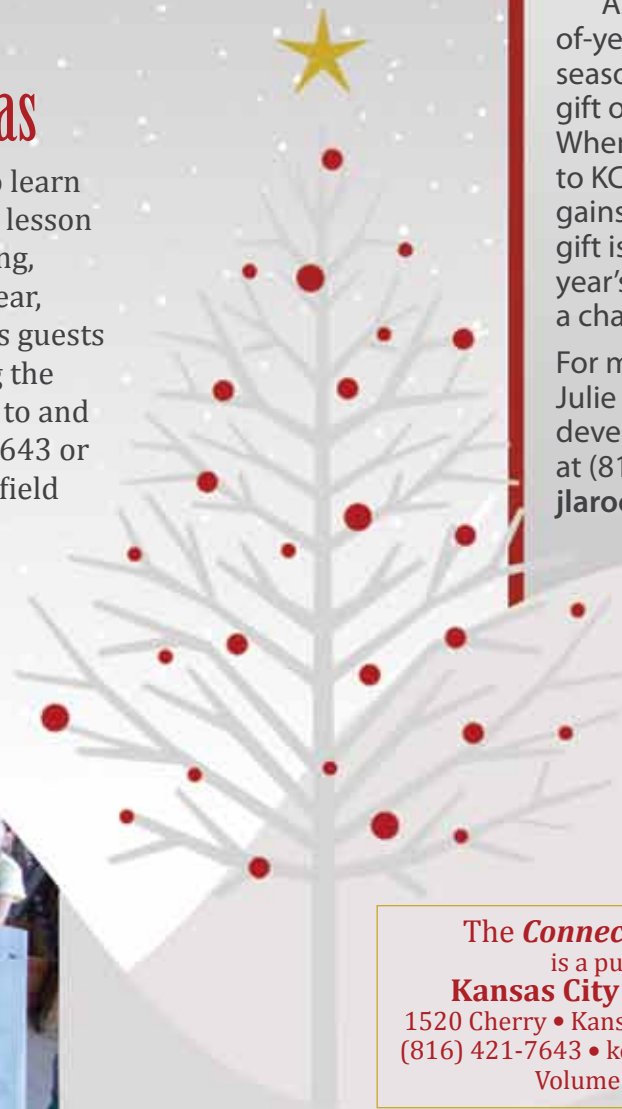


Consider a Christmas gift that will benefit you, your family and the homeless by visiting your attorney and making a will this December!

- Your family will appreciate the fact you've protected your estate and provided for their needs.
- You can provide for KCRM's outreaches to the homeless after your death, just as you have in your lifetime.

As you look toward end-of-year giving and the tax season ahead, consider a gift of appreciated stock. When transferred directly to KCRM, you avoid capital gains tax, and because the gift is complete before the year's end, you also receive a charitable tax deduction.

For more ideas, contact Julie Larocco, chief development officer, at (816) 421-7643 or jlarocco@kcrm.org.



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