

CONNECT



“I’ve done my fair share of taking in my life,” Doug admits. **“I’ve found it is much better to give!”**

THE TOPIC OF GIVING AND TAKING comes up when Doug, a graduate of the KCRM Men’s Center resident recovery program, is asked if he is looking forward to Christmas. He replies by talking about Lent.

“During the season of Lent we give up, we sacrifice, as a way to acknowledge all that Jesus gave up for us,” he says. “I’ve done my fair share of taking in my life. I manipulated my family, stole a lot from my mom ... I can’t even put a dollar amount on it. Now I realize it is much better to give.”

For most of Doug’s life, he hated Christmas, really hated it. “It was the time each year I was the most suicidal,” he recalls. “I wasn’t able to participate financially or emotionally. I had so much turmoil inside I couldn’t connect with people.

“But not long after I came to KCRM I gave my life to Jesus,” Doug continues. “It was during the Easter season and both at my church and in class at the Mission I began to learn about what different holidays really mean — Easter, Lent, Christmas. I began to realize how blessed I am, how much I’ve been given. After all I’d taken from people, I found the real joy was in giving my life away.”

Doug spent nine months in the recovery program at KCRM facing the reasons he had become a meth addict and alcoholic. He faced his pain over an abusive and distant father, and found healing; in turn, his relationships with his mother and his own son were healed, too.

“I was able to let the child inside me heal, and I found out what kind of a man God had created me to be!”

Doug has discovered he is a man who loves to serve. “I got to go on a mission trip to Africa and share my testimony and teach about witnessing. I didn’t want to come back!”

Doug began this holiday season helping distribute Thanksgiving meals to shut-ins with KCRM and is celebrating Christmas with his new wife, Deann, and his nine-year-old stepdaughter. For Doug, the joy of giving has only begun!



A
GENEROUS,
Wonderful
THING

BY REV. JOE COLAIZZI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TARA RICHARDSON, KCRM's food service supervisor, had a look of urgency as she suddenly entered my office. "You've got to come see this!" she exclaimed.

Following her into the dining hall, I found residents and food service staff sorting donated groceries that covered a long row of tables. "Can you believe this?" one of them asked, grinning from ear to ear.

I'd seen the dining hall filled before with donations for our freezers and pantry, often delivered by a local company, church or group who'd held a food drive to bless our city's homeless and poor. But I don't think I've ever heard the room abuzz quite like this.

Standing by the wall, a young man quietly observed all the activity. "Joe, this is Grant," Tara said. "He bought all of this and brought it down here!"

Grant lives in Independence, Missouri ... and that's about all I learned about him that day. He let us take a photo and mention his name in this newsletter, but he didn't want to talk about himself.

"I gave because I felt a prompting," he admitted. "I guess you could say it was from God. Giving like this is a good thing to do."

I have a confession: Although much of my life has been devoted to serving at KCRM, I've never been comfortable asking people to donate. I don't want to bother them ... I know they must get tired of being asked ... I have a lot of excuses!

Then someone like Grant comes along and dismantles all my arguments with one quiet statement:

"GIVING IS
a Good Thing **TO DO."**



Grant, front left, with Joe, Tara and residents.

Friends, Christmas offers the perfect opportunity to demonstrate this truth. In fact, over the years I've met many donors and volunteers at KCRM who, like Grant, seem as blessed in the giving as we are in the receiving.

I can't count how many of you have said to me over the years, "Joe, we love what you do at KCRM. Don't hesitate to tell us what you need."

So without apology, I invite you to read this holiday issue of **CONNECT** and help collect the items we need for the more than 160 Christmas packages we'll assemble for our guests and residents. And I ask you to consider making a financial gift to KCRM as we close out a rewarding and challenging 2017.

Thank you for your friendship and generosity to KCRM ... and may you have a very merry Christmas.

WHAT DO YOU SAY, KC? During this season of giving, let's "remember the poor" like Galatians 2:10 encourages us to do!

Join KCRM as we bless our neighbors in need with gifts of hope this year. Each man and women who stays at KCRM over the holidays will receive a brightly wrapped present with gifts both fun and practical. (It's thrilling to see the joy that comes over people's faces when we place that present in their hands!)

Please take a look at our gift list and consider making a donation. Whatever you do, our guests and residents will be truly thankful. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Kristen Ray at (816) 421-7643 or kray@kcrm.org to get started. God bless you this Christmas season!



MEN'S CENTER GIFTS

All MC Clients:

- Ski gloves
- Backpacks
- Zippered sherpa-lined navy hoodies
- Black thermal underwear sets
- Pens
- Travel kits (including multi-tools)
- 30-count bags of cherry cough drops
- Camo flashlights
- ID holders/wallets for lanyard
- Lanyards
- Sweatshirts
- Slip-on galoshes
- Large Christmas stockings
- Lip balm
- Small lotion
- Small Gold Bond foot powders
- Pocket-size facial tissue
- Travel mugs
- New Testaments

C-COR Residents:

- \$25 Walmart gift card
- *Experiencing God* Devotional
- *Life Recovery* Devotional
- Sweat pants
- Watch
- Mini games/cards
- Nice pen

WOMEN'S CENTER GIFTS

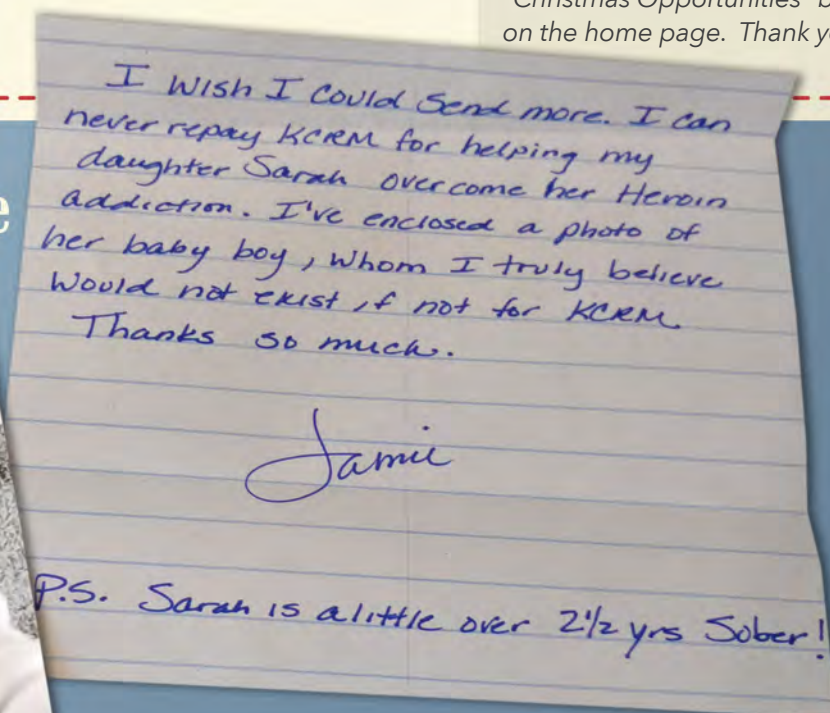
- \$25 Walmart gift card
- Pajamas
- Jacket or coat
- Sweater
- Hat and glove set
- Slippers
- Jewelry
- Adult coloring books
- Pen or colored pencil sets
- Mini games/cards
- Tote bags

LOOKING FOR MORE?

You can also help KCRM obtain items and equipment we need to serve and bless our guests and residents all year through!

Go to kcrm.org and click on the "Christmas Opportunities" banner on the home page. Thank you!

This Is *Why* We Give



GIVING
Big
AT YEAR'S END



For information about giving to KCRM, contact Chief Development Officer Julie Larocco at 816-421-7643 or jlarocco@kcrm.org.

I JUST CAN'T HELP IT! As Christmas passes and the end of the year creeps up on me, I wonder if I've given enough of my personal resources to make a God-led difference in the world and to meet my own financial goals.

Several years ago, as I was grumpily making my annual "gift" to the IRS, it occurred to me that if I'd been more proactive I could have made the same gift to a favorite charity before the end of the year. That made me change my habits immediately, giving more to causes before December 31 instead of writing a big check during the tax season.

When you choose to make a tax-deductible year-end gift to KCRM, here are some things to consider:

- Your unrestricted gift to the general fund allows us to use your dollars where they are needed most.
- Designate a donation to any area or project at KCRM; we'll make sure to use those funds exactly as you've requested.
- Contribute to KCRM's Endowment Fund, and help provide financial stability throughout your lifetime and beyond.
- KCRM is a member in good standing with the Better Business Bureau, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions and the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability. The Mission has maintained a 4-star rating on Charity Navigator for four years.
- KCRM does not sell, trade or rent our donor mailing list; your personal information is safe with us.

"WORDS CANNOT EXPLAIN...."

OCTOBER 7, KCRM Women's Center residents participated with hundreds of other volunteers in The Whole Person's "Planting Independence – One Yard at a Time" initiative. The project provides general yard clean-up for elderly and disabled people who own and rent their homes, helping them avoid fines from their community where they live.

"Words cannot explain how grateful you made me feel," said the Independence homeowner served by our residents. "God bless you!"



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