

# CONNECT

## IT'S TIME TO SHOW UP

**WHEN BRIAN WAS READY FOR HIS LIFE TO CHANGE**, he came back to KCRM. He had been to the Mission many times before as an overnight client. He had been to other shelters over the years, too. Brian knew all these places well.

He knew these shelters well because his drinking ... *"I always got into trouble by rewarding myself, thinking I could maybe have just one, but it's like eating a Lay's potato chip,"* Brian says ... had ruined relationships, good jobs and places to call home over and over.

He didn't want to eat and sleep at a shelter — nobody does — but when he needed help he turned to KCRM. "I've had a lot of things stolen at other places and didn't feel safe," Brian says. "But when I came to KCRM, it was so clean, and I felt secure. You have to take a breathalyzer each night you come in," he continues, "so that helps you stay accountable to be sober, and you know that the men around you are also clean and sober, so you can rest a little easier. And at KCRM they treat you like a human being, they are kind to you."

Then Brian grins. "And they DEFINITELY have the best food at KCRM!"

### WHY DOES KCRM INSIST ON **QUALITY** MORE THAN **QUANTITY**? JOE COLAIZZI ANSWERS INSIDE.

Because Brian was such a hard worker when he was living sober and able to do well in his life, he tended to view his stints at homeless shelters as individual setbacks, and not as evidence of a deeper issue. "I didn't want to believe I had a problem," he admits. But several months ago Brian once again hit bottom. This time he chose to face his life head on.

"I decided I wanted to complete something," he says. "I wanted to do something positive and not just join a program to get off the street. I wanted to clean up my act and commit myself to change. I wanted to show up and do something good for my life."

Like all of us, Brian is a work in progress. He used to come to KCRM for a safe, clean place to sleep and for good food, but now he shows up to each class, each counseling appointment and each chapel service determined to complete what he's begun, to find freedom from his past, and to build on his hope for a happy and productive future.



# QUALITY MATTERS

REV. JOE COLAIZZI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**I WAS ASKED RECENTLY IF KCRM** should offer the variety and quality of relief services we do. After all, isn't the goal rehabilitation? Where is the incentive to change if KCRM offers so many handouts?

These are good questions.

KCRM's mission statement sheds light on why we do what we do: ***Kansas City Rescue Mission is a Christ-centered community offering freedom and hope to the poor and homeless, empowering them to reach their full potential.***

First, we are unapologetically a ***Christ-centered community***. Certainly this means we believe and teach a relationship with Jesus Christ is vital to living life to

The ***freedom and hope*** highlighted in our mission statement don't begin in a classroom — or even in the chapel. They begin at our front door, where emblazoned are the words, "There Is Hope for All who Enter Here." ***Freedom and hope*** begin with a warm hello from someone who looks you in the eye. ***Freedom and hope*** begin when a plate of hot food is set before you by a smiling volunteer, when someone remembers your name, when someone asks about your story — and really listens.

A typical conversation between overnight guests and KCRM Men's Center staff or volunteers goes like this: "Who are those guys with the name tags around their necks? Are they on staff? I think I've seen a



its full potential, but it also means we are committed to seeing people as Jesus sees them — as priceless persons, each one unique, with a value beyond the sum of personal failure or societal stereotypes.

To be a Christ-centered community means we begin with compassion. We may have effective programs for addiction recovery, life skills and personal betterment, but the incentive to engage in these programs is inspired by genuine concern for a person's most basic needs. The adage is true — people don't care how much we know until they know how much we care.

In my 34th year of ministry at KCRM, I'm still surprised when someone like Brian (cover) says that what drew him to return to our Men's Center was "they treat you like a human being." How could we, with integrity, do any less?

*couple of them out on the street before."*

*"Those guys are in C-COR, our Christian Community of Recovery. They live here while they are working on straightening out their lives."*

*"You know, I think I'd like something like that. Who can I talk to?"*

At KCRM we emphasize quality in our relief services because each person who turns to us is worth our best effort, every night. We may not be the biggest shelter in town, but that isn't our goal. Our goal is to show broken people, through compassion and excellence, how valued they are ... and to empower them for a life of wholeness and hope.

Would you join us in this important effort?

*Photo above: Rev. Joe Colaizzi enjoys lunch in the Men's Center dining hall with a couple C-COR residents.*

# WHY ARE WE HOMELESS?

Recently, we asked homeless men checking in at KCRM's Men's Center for shelter: "Bottom line, why are you homeless?" Here's what they said:

*"I got out of prison and had no place to go."*

*"Drugs. I came to KC to find work, and when I couldn't, I started using again."*

*"I have diabetes. I lost my leg and my job."*

*"I gave up on life and started using dope."*

*"I lost my job and can't seem to get myself together. I have depression."*

*"Alcohol. Well, and some drugs."*

*"I'm waiting for disability to come through."*

*"No one will rent me an apartment because I was a sex offender 35 years ago."*

*"I was injured at work, then lost my lease the same month when my building was sold."*

*My ex drained our bank account, and I don't have money for rent. I have to use the money I have to pay for my car and insurance."*

*"I got kicked out of my hotel. I got mental issues."*

*"My landlord thought I was being violent and evicted me. Actually I was having a seizure."*

*"I came to KC from California looking for cheaper rent but couldn't find anything."*

KCRM offers immediate relief to men who, for whatever reason, are struggling to survive on the streets. The donations you give – money, food, clothing or personal care items – make the difference! For information about our greatest needs, contact [jarocco@kcrm.org](mailto:jarocco@kcrm.org) or call 816-421-7643.

## TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND BLOW!

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT**, a little yellow and blue tool is part of the reason our homeless guests at the KCRM Men's Center feel safe and secure! Each night, up to 120 men blow into the breathalyzer, which measures their blood alcohol level – a determining factor in whether they can come in for a meal or a bed for the night.

"The goal is safety for everyone at KCRM," says Director of Shelter Services Larry Hansen (pictured). "It's one of the reasons men want to stay at KCRM. They are grateful that we really care about their safety. It's noteworthy that even those who don't get in understand and appreciate the policy."



Care to learn more about life at KCRM's Men's Center? Join us for our **Open House and Christmas in July** event! Turn the page to learn more.

# WHAT'S COMIN' UP AT KCRM!

## KCRM MEN'S CENTER OPEN HOUSE AND CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Sunday, July 29 | 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**GET YOUR FAMILY** outta the heat and into the coolest event this summer at the **KCRM Men's Center Open House and Christmas in July!**

Your special invitation to this event is included with this newsletter. Make sure to RSVP by July 26 and bring a gift for our Christmas distribution for the homeless, too!

This Christmas, we'll distribute gifts we collect in July and throughout the fall to around 160 homeless men who come to KCRM during the holiday season! Visit [KCRM.org/christmasinJuly](http://KCRM.org/christmasinJuly) to learn more and go to [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) to find Kansas City Rescue Mission's "Christmas in July" wish list. (Please note: Items on the list are suggestions only; you do not have to buy from Amazon.)



## KCRM TP TOWER COMPETITION AND RALLY

*A family-friendly event with great food, games and plenty of free parking!*

**Saturday, September 29, 2018  
1:30-3:30 p.m.**

KCRM Women's Center  
2611 E. 11th Street | Kansas City, MO

**IN A SINGLE YEAR**, KCRM's Men's Center and Women's Center use around 10,000 rolls of toilet paper – an expense of around \$6,000. That's why we hold our TP Tower Competition and Rally each year – to wipe this need and its costs off the budget for good!

Compete to collect the most TP in September, then find out who wins the fabulous *TP Trophy* (yes, it's a real thing!) during our rally, September 29. Other awards include *Highest TP Tower* and *Most Elaborate TP Sculpture*. Can't attend? Drop off your donation of TP any time in September at our Main Office, 1520 Cherry Street, KCMO. All TP will be used to provide for the homeless at KCRM and to meet the needs of low-income individuals and families in our community.

To learn more or to sign up to compete, call **Julie Larocco**, (816) 421-7643, ext. 141 or email her at [jarocco@kcrm.org](mailto:jarocco@kcrm.org).



**THIS YEAR, CHIEFS' MASCOT KC WOLF** aka Dan Meers joins KCRM for the TP competition! "I love KCRM and the ministry of hope and healing they bring to so many here in Kansas City," says Dan. "This is my first year to compete in the TP challenge and I fully intend to 'roll' over the competition."



The **CONNECT** newsletter is a publication of KCRM

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