

A NEW DAWN

A PUBLICATION OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY RESCUE MISSION
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A Celebration to Break Ground



Supervisor Jon Benoit is the keynote speaker as we celebrate a milestone in the steps toward a new facility.

On Wednesday, December 8, we broke ground on the new \$10 million facility thanks to our family of donors. Our new facility will double bed capacity from 75 to 150, double the size of the cafeteria, and provide larger facilities to provide more faith-based education and job training.

The ground breaking event displayed an incredible outpouring of community support. Hundreds of donors, supporters, and business partners were in attendance. It was truly a blessed and joyous occasion!

“Every day our needs grow and to have a milestone celebration like this gives us hope for the tomorrows to come,” Executive Director, Darla Burkett, said.

CVRM’s current facility, built in the 1930s, has served the mission well, but long ago reached its lifespan. The new facility will allow CVRM to serve more people in need than ever before.

Approximately 1,400 people in the Coachella Valley live on the streets. Of those, 60% are women and children. There are about 280 homeless children in our Coachella Valley.

Fundraising for the new facility began in 2007 and to date, \$5.4 million has been raised. “We want to enter into our new facility with no mortgage,” says Development Director Greg Fisher. †

*From Left to Right: Brian Orr, (Orr Builders)
Pete Del Rio (Chairman of the Board for CVRM)
Supervisor John Benoit, Darla Burkett (Executive
Director of the Mission), Phillip Smith (Architect),
Ron Kuch (Architect)*



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From Life-Long Struggles to A Future of Hope

Gail's difficulties in life started at an early age, and the path that lead her to CVRM and it's help was rough.

Gail came to the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission with two black eyes, broken ribs, and physically and emotionally bruised and battered. The abuse began at a very early age and continued throughout her early adult life. She had grown accustomed to being abused. As Gail related the story she said, "I thought it was my fault and I deserved to be treated with rage, vile words, and mental and emotional abuse." If I would have been more compliant; I pushed their buttons.

Gail's father was an alcoholic and was violent and ugly to her mom. After Gail's mother divorced her dad, he kidnapped Gail and her brother and refused to let them see their mom. Gail missed her mother desperately and cried every night to be with her. Finally, her dad relinquished and returned her and her brother to her mother's custody.

A step-father entered the picture, and there were some good moments but lack of income continued to create instability. Gail and her brother were shuttled back and forth between dad and mom. The one constant in her life was abuse from her father.

Living with her dad as a pre-teen she rebelled against his harsh, overbearing control. Gail's brother had already embraced drugs and alcohol and soon after Gail followed suit.

Over the next several years, Gail's life continued to spiral out of control. It went from one abusive relationship to another: using heavily, in rehab programs, out of rehab, clean, sober, addicted. After one very bad relationship and serving some time in jail she was paroled to her dad's house. She enrolled in school and finished at the top of her class as a dental hygienist.

There were times of normalcy as she worked two jobs and took care of her home and children but they were



short lived.

After moving to the desert her gall bladder ruptured and during the extended period of recovery she required heavy doses of medication which triggered her addiction. At that point things went from bad to worse and in quick succession she lost 4 members of her family. Gail's brother died from a drug overdose, her beloved grandmother passed away, her Uncle Bobby died of stomach cancer, and her dad died from an alcohol binge 3 days after burying his mother.

Gail inherited a large sum of money from her father and wasted the majority of it on drugs. She ended up sleeping in her car with her two small children Child Protective Services got involved and her children were removed and put into foster care.

She has been at CVRM for 6 months, and has worked very hard to comply with all the legal issues. Gail is clean and sober and has been granted custody of her 2- and 3-year-old son and daughter who have joined her here at CVRM. Gail stated emphatically, "I have a network of people here who surround and support me, I feel the love. Even after I graduate the program I will continue to come back and give back to those who have been so instrumental in my recovery."

Gail's goal for the future is to finish her program at CVRM, obtain employment, and make a secure home for herself and her children. She states, "I want the simple ordinary things like attending church as a family and sharing dinners around my table with my children. I am forever grateful!" †



Donor Dollars At Work for CVRM



We provided thousands of hot meals for Thanksgiving, and now we're preparing for the Christmas holiday!

We are filled with gratitude for your help in making the holiday time special for so many in our community who lack basic resources. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to our big hearted, benevolent donors who have been so gracious again this Thanksgiving. With your gifts of turkeys, potatoes, stuffing, pies and all the trimmings our donors allowed us to feed hundreds of families a bountiful Thanksgiving meal.

The Coachella Valley Resue Mission gave out over 250 gift baskets filled with everything a family would need for their dinner and prepared and served close to 3000 traditional Thanksgiving meals through the holiday weekend. The recipients were filled with food and gratitude.

Last year because of our donors' generosity we were able to bless many hundreds of families and children

for Christmas. One adopted family had an out of work dad, a pregnant wife and two small children. They had not planned on much of a Christmas celebration but our CVRM donors stepped up. They bought personal items for mom including bath products, a robe, and clothing. They purchased items of clothing and comedy videos for dad who was suffering from depression. The children were blessed with numerous toys and clothing. In addition, donors loaded the family down with a beautiful basket of groceries. Our donors are known for their generous giving and this was a case in point!

We are currently collecting new unwrapped toys for children who will come to CV Rescue Mission on December 20, to meet Santa.

For more information or with questions, please call Linda @ 760-347-3512x221. †



A MESSAGE FROM DARLA

2010 has been a year of blessings and challenges. We're blessed to have received so much support for our new, larger facility. Our family of donors has been generous with their time and money. And yet, a tough economy has meant that more people than ever are in need of our help.

To date, the demand for our services, including food, safe shelter, and clothing is up 45% this year! And we're seeing more families than ever who are barely making ends meet. Many of them may be homeless without your kind and loving support.

2011 will be a year of opportunities. So much progress has made raising money for our new facility and yet we have much more to raise. We were blessed to have been able to serve so many people in need and yet there will be so many more people to help.

Because our family of supporters are so committed and generous, we look forward to serving our fellow man, to helping the homeless get off the streets, and to spreading the Gospel in both word and action.

My deepest appreciation,

Darla Burtlett
Executive Director

Meet Our Volunteers



Our volunteers contribute so much to CVRM – we couldn't do it without them! So, we are beginning a new feature in our newsletter that highlights the contributions of our volunteers.

Veronica is a 27-year-old single mom with four beautiful sons and has been coming to volunteer at the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission for a year and a half. She first was assigned here through the G.A.I.N. Program which assists single moms with housing. The G.A.I.N. Program asks that she give 20 hours a week but Veronica gives many more hours than those required.

At CVRM Veronica has worked with several kitchen supervisors and has gleaned from each of them. She loves her job working in the kitchen and has learned different ways of cooking and has gathered many delicious recipes. In addition, she has gained knowledge which helps her prepare healthy balanced meals for her own family.

As a single mom with 4 kids her income does not stretch far enough to allow any extras.

"The Mission has helped me with furniture for my home, presents for my children at Christmas, food when the cupboards are bare, encouragement from the Bible when I am discouraged and provided many friends."

"The mission has helped me far more than I have helped them. I have a greater appreciation for those who are hurting and homeless. I have renewed my connection with my church. I have gained self confidence all of which has been a result of my time here as a volunteer." †



East Meets West Catering Prepares a Feast

Generous businesses and people in the Coachella Valley donate their time and talents in special ways to make for meaningful holidays!

On Thanksgiving Day, Thursday November 25, chef Aaron Kiefer of East Meets West Catering and his team provided a full catered Thanksgiving dinner to a family in need.

"We were pleased to be able to provide Thanksgiving dinner for a family in need and allow them to enjoy a "normal" Thanksgiving day of food, football, and holiday cheer."



The family blessed to receive this meal was one of the many families who have sought help from the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission to make ends meet in this difficult economic climate.

Thank you Aaron for your kindness and generosity! Blessings to you, your family and to all of CVRM's supporters. †