

A NEW DAWN

A PUBLICATION OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY RESCUE MISSION
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Coachella Valley Rescue Mission's Ninth Annual Backpack Giveaway

Mid June while families were planning graduation parties or their summer vacations, Coachella Valley Rescue Mission was gearing up for the Annual Back- to- School Backpack Drive.

The staff of CV Rescue Mission prepared letters to be sent out to our donors, designed flyers, and contacted merchants who would display CV Rescue Mission's collection boxes, and contacted hair dressers who offer free haircuts to children beginning school in the fall.

August 20, CVRM hosted the annual backpack give away at Martin Van Buren Elementary School and was able to provide new backpacks filled with school supplies to the expectant children who came through the line. It is the goal of CVRM to help as many families as possible in this difficult economic environment.

Two weeks before the event CVRM had 300 backpacks, last year we gave out 2500 and the need for services has risen by 27 % this year. The staff contacted local news



outlets both TV and radio, e-blasted donors, and prayed. Once again it all came together beautifully because the community came together in a wonderful spirit of generosity along with a host of dedicated volunteers who gave unselfishly of their time, resources, and energy.

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*Renewed hope, new life, a fresh start,
a slate wiped clean.*

Juan Shares His Story: My New Reality

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I grew up in a two parent home with a mom and dad, siblings, and several foster children. I was a fairly good student and participated in sports, soccer and skateboarding being among my favorites. I even hoped that one day I could excel in skateboarding and perhaps participate in competitions.

On a non-descript day everything changed. Life as I had known it disappeared. My dad suffered a major heart attack and passed away at 48, I was 12. I had had a good relationship with my dad and his death was devastating to me.

It was shortly after this I began to question my origin. I finally got up the courage and asked if the person I called mom was really my mother. Her reply was, “are you sure you are prepared for the answer.” I learned on that day I had been adopted at birth, my biological mom was a prostitute and had given me up for adoption in the hospital.

I had always had this underlying feeling that I didn't fit in. My adopted family was black and my adopted dad was light skinned like me, so it was not something I dwelt on until his death and I met other members of the family, none of which looked like me.

It was at this point I began a downward spiral making a series of wrong decisions. I dropped out of school and eventually ended up in jail. I got on my knees and prayed that God would give me another chance. That prayer was answered at the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission. I was dropped off and entered into the New Life Program. I graduated May 12, 2011 after spending an entire year working on my issues, building a relationship with Jesus, and planning for my future.

During that year many amazing things have occurred. I found my biological aunt, who directed me to my biological mother. We have spoken on the phone for the first time in 23 years. My aunt told me I have two sisters one older and one younger, I got to meet them a few



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months ago. I got a copy of my birth certificate and found my ethnic heritage to be Hispanic. I am working to get visitation with my 2 year old son. I have found a church which I fellowship at regularly and am currently employed at CV Rescue Mission.

My reality has been changed again for the better as I look forward to the future. I have a desire to continue my education. I have a strong interest in psychology, photography, and the entertainment field. I am not sure what door God might have for me but I know He has a plan for good. †

Volunteer Spotlight: Dennis Silva

Dennis Silva is a successful business man in the Coachella Valley. He has served at Victory Christian Center for 24 years with 12 of those years as head usher. He is an affiliate member of Victory Christian Ministerial Association and is recognized as being a licensed minister.

His ministry, “Knowing Jesus Ministries,” has grown over the years where he guest speaks and along with his team is able to minister to half way houses, sober living and does prison ministry at Larry Smith Facility in Banning. His mission statement that he encourages all to consider is, “Learning the Way of Love through Jesus our Life Coach.”

Dennis was invited to Coachella Valley Rescue Mission to fill in a chapel service for a friend who was unable to fulfill his commitment. He has been a CVRM volunteer for six years.

Three years ago, he created a curriculum which he teaches every Tuesday with the CVRM clients “12 Principles to a Greater Destiny”

However, Dennis didn’t always have a relationship with Jesus. Unknowingly his life without Jesus led him to a place where he had no desire to live. 30 years ago he himself was rescued from a live style of drugs and alcohol. Living on the streets of Palm Springs feeling, empty, hollow, insignificant and without hope he yelled out to God; “God! If you are real; do something with me!”

God listens to hurting hearts just like the blind men in Matthew 20 who cried out, “Have mercy on us, O Lord Son of David!” Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him. “That was my story, I was blind and now I see!”

By seeking Jesus through his word Dennis learned the importance of renewing the mind because he

remembers how his own transformation occurred. He has dedicated himself to continually exchange his thoughts for those of Jesus as spoken of in Romans 12:2. And be not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of you mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Dennis stated, “I am truly thankful for the opportunity to give back as Jesus has given to me. I’m greatly enriched as I prepare to teach the Word of God.” †



“That is my story, I was blind and now I see. I am truly thankful for the opportunity to give back.”

- 43% of volunteers, volunteer after being asked by someone in the organization
- Volunteerism is at an all time high
- Women represent 29.3% of all volunteers
- Men represent 23.2 % of all volunteers
- Religious organizations benefit most from volunteers

Volunteer Facts

A Message from Darla

Dear Friend,

As the season of giving and thankfulness nears, I am reminded of how fortunate I am. Maybe you are like me and enjoy the opportunities around the holidays to be with loved ones and enjoy the best parts of the season together.

However, for many people in the valley, the holidays are a time of struggle rather than blessing. Their battle for the basic necessities of life – food, shelter, and care – does not relent over the holidays. In fact, it is even more important to reach out during this time.

CVRM is dedicated to “serving the least, the last, and the lost” – those who should matter the most, especially in this season. With your help, this Thanksgiving we will feed 32,500 of the valley’s homeless – and all for \$1.88 a person!

The holidays are a time of celebrating great blessing – with your help, they can also be a time of meeting great need.

God Bless,



Darla Burkett
Executive Director



Holiday Needs List

Turkeys
Hams
Bacon
Sausage
Pancake mix
Boxed stuffing
Instant mashed potatoes
Sweet potatoes
Canned vegetables
Jellied cranberries
Brown sugar
Syrup
Butter
Paper goods
Plastic ware
Marshmallows
and Grocery store gift cards



Upcoming Events AT CVRM

Nov. 23 ■ Thanksgiving Eve Lunch ■ CVRM (2 pm)
Nov. 24 ■ Thanksgiving Breakfast ■ CVRM (6 am)
Nov. 24 ■ Thanksgiving Dinner ■ CVRM (4 pm)

Mark your calendars and stayed tuned for more detailed information on these upcoming events.