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Kristina has finally beaten her addictions, thanks to friends like you.

# your mission messenger

ISSUE:  
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## “I Hated Myself” by Kristina

*Mental illness and addiction almost killed her. Your love brought her back to life.*

Drugs ruined my life. And they almost took it. But thanks to you, I’ve turned things around.

For a long time, I used both meth and heroin, often at the same time. As a result of shooting heroin, I developed a heart condition called *endocarditis*. I’ve had two heart valves replaced. One time in the hospital, they told my family, “We don’t think she’s going to make it.”

**“I’d probably be dead if it weren’t for the Mission.”**

I was only in my late 30s, but I always felt like I was at death’s door.

And I probably *would* be dead if it weren’t for the Kokomo Rescue Mission — and your support. The

Mission helped me to finally quit, to find a reason to live. Without them, I didn’t know how to do either. I couldn’t quit. I didn’t care about living. I hated myself.

Because that’s what the voices kept telling me.

### A Lifelong Struggle

I’ve always dealt with mental health issues. As an adult, I’ve learned what it is: *schizoaffective disorder*. But as a child, all I knew was what the voices told me.

I never liked myself. I always struggled with self-confidence. And I never wanted to be alone, which led me to have three kids by the time I was 19, and my fourth at 23.

And then my grandmother died. She was my whole life, and her death pushed me over the edge. She left me a \$14,000 inheritance, and I spent it all on drugs.

A lot of people do drugs because it numbs the pain of whatever they’re dealing with. For me, that was only

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# “Sick of Living That Life”

Thanks to you, Kevin has overcome alcoholism and found peace.

“I started drinking at 13,” says Kevin. “Now I’m 46.”

That’s a lot of years of drinking. Kevin says he was a “functioning alcoholic” all that time, holding jobs, getting married, having a family.

But “functioning alcoholic” is kind of a misnomer. No matter what adjective you put in front of the word, it still comes down to “alcoholic.”



Your support of the Mission helped Kevin turn his life around.

## An Encouraging Word From Van ...

In the winter, it’s easier to remember homeless people in our community. It’s so cold and dark and dreary. Overnight temperatures can sometimes be lethal.

Throughout the winter, particularly through the holiday season, giving to rescue missions like ours typically increases.

But now it’s summer, and it’s a good time to remind ourselves that just because it’s warm out, just because the weather isn’t as hard on our bodies, **there’s still great need**. It’s still unsafe to be out there without shelter and without sanitation.

People still need to come in from the elements and get fed, get clean, get rest — and get surrounded with love and safety.

Giving to homeless shelters typically declines in the summer, but I’d like to encourage you to remember us — to remember our neighbors in need of rescue — during these warmer months.

**They need you, and I thank you!**

Your servant,

*Van C. Taylor*

Van C. Taylor  
Executive Director

*“I feel like it’s one of the things God created us to do.”*

Kevin is the first to acknowledge that. “I was a hothead, not being able to think the right way.”

As a result, his wife split up with him, though his relationship with his adult daughter remains strong.

When Kevin’s drinking landed him in jail, that was the last straw.

“I got sick of living that life,” he says. “I wanted to change.”

He went to a rehab facility in Indianapolis, got sober and returned to Kokomo. The pandemic was still raging, and he had no place to go. Besides, he wasn’t yet ready for situations that might tempt him to drink again.

So Kevin came to Kokomo Rescue Mission to continue his recovery.

He had forgotten what it was like to be sober — and *stay* that way. He’s been straight now for six months.

“It feels great,” Kevin says. “It feels good to wake up every day and know that you have control over your own actions, instead of waking up to start drinking again.”

Kevin credits the Mission for his new lease on life.

“It’s a wonderful place,” he says. “This place can help you if you’re looking for it, and I was looking for it. It’s got a special place in my heart.”

**Thank you for giving the Mission a special place in your heart!**

## We Want You to Be Connected!

You can receive urgent messages, quick updates and fun videos by texting INVOLVE to 56525. You will receive occasional updates on our ministry. Join the club!

## Honor Loved Ones With a Tribute Gift

This summer, please consider making a **Tribute Gift** to the Kokomo Rescue Mission — a contribution in memory or in honor of a beloved friend or family member.

Tribute gifts can be a heartfelt way to remember family members who have had a meaningful influence on your life. Such gifts are really good for:

- ✦ Showing someone how much you care on a special occasion.
- ✦ Remembering a loved one who has died, to help preserve the person’s legacy.
- ✦ Honoring a person with a gift at the time of their birthday or a holiday.

You can easily honor your loved one by visiting our donation page at [kokomorescuemission.org/donate](http://kokomorescuemission.org/donate). Simply enter the amount you’d like to give, select “Tributes” under “Designation,” and write “in honor of” or “in memory of” along with the name(s) of those you want to include in the “Comments” section. *Thank you for your support!*

## Volunteer Spotlight

# “I Have to Serve”

*Ken shares your heart for helping others in need.*

Look at Ken standing there, holding balloons, a thank-you note and a plaque.

Kokomo Rescue Mission had just honored Ken, a faithful volunteer for 13 years, with a little going-away party, a celebration of his service.

“Everybody came out to say goodbye,” said Ken. “I don’t like to say goodbye. I say, ‘See you later.’”

Ken looks a bit self-conscious in the picture. He appreciated the gesture, but he doesn’t like being the center of attention. He prefers to focus on others — literally.

An amateur filmmaker, Ken made two short documentaries about the Mission in recent years — one about a canned goods drive and one about the annual Walk a Mile event. (*The websites for both are at the bottom of this story.*)

Shining the spotlight on others has been Ken’s MO since he first started volunteering at the Mission in 2008. He’d lost his job at the beginning of the recession, and a friend got tired of him grumbling about his plight.

“She put it to me straight,” Ken remembers. “She said, ‘Either you’re going to stay home and feel bad for not working, or you can go volunteer. You can look at your own problems, or you can help others.’”

Ken took her advice — and immediately became a key player on our team of volunteers. Over the years, he worked in the



*We showed our appreciation for Ken in a big way!*

warehouse, made deliveries, helped in the kitchen . . . whatever was needed. He also befriended many of our guests, encouraging them in their journeys to healing.

He remembers the first day he volunteered.

“I was serving lunch,” he says. “We were moving like clockwork, so busy. But everybody who worked there took the time to thank me.

“Immediately, I felt a sense of belonging. After that, I couldn’t stop. *I have to serve.* I just love doing it. I feel like it’s one of the things God created us to do.”

Ken kept serving even after he became employed again — at the Chrysler plant — and plans to keep volunteering after beginning a new job in Cincinnati.

“Leaving Kokomo Rescue Mission is bittersweet because they are like family,” he says. “It’s hard to walk away from that. But I’m grateful for what I had there.”

***Interested in volunteering at the Mission? Give us a call!***

*Ken’s short documentaries can be found online:*

*Canned Good: <https://youtu.be/LijQqPqOVIA>*

*Heart & Sole: Walking the Mile: <https://dai.ly/xhq4vi>*

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# “I Hated Myself”

partly true. Because when I was strung out, the voices only got louder. I would just sit and cry for hours.

This kept up for 16 years. The only times I was sober was when I was in jail or prison. My kids, meanwhile, were being cared for by other family members.

I wanted to quit badly, but I wanted the drugs badly too.

This isn’t my first time at the Mission. Several years ago, I was ordered to come here when I was on probation. But I didn’t want anything to do with it. As soon as I got out, I went right back to the drugs.

But something must have stuck with me. Because a year ago, when I decided I’d had enough, I came back here . . . on my own. Not because of a court order but because I knew that if I was going to change, this was the place to do it.

And I was right.

They’re wonderful here. There’s always someone here to listen. I’ve learned to stop hating myself, and start loving myself again. And they helped me find a good doctor, who has put me on the right meds for my mental illness. The voices haven’t stopped, but they’re much quieter. I don’t notice them as much anymore.

My relationship with my kids is stronger, and they tell me they’re proud of me. And now I’ve got two grandchildren. That motivates me to stay sober too.

***I’m so thankful for Kokomo Rescue Mission. I don’t know where I’d be without them.***

# Birthdays, Shoes, Beef and More!

Visit our website for the latest news on these and other upcoming events.



## Community Birthday Party, Date TBA

Many of our Mission guests have never had a birthday party thrown for them. So one day a year we hold a special birthday party to celebrate everyone's birthday. The day's festivities include decorations, cake, ice cream and special gifts. Local churches partner with us, recording everyone's actual birthday with the promise that someone will be thinking about them and praying for them on that special day.



## Back to School Shoe Program, July 19–July 23

Remember the first day of school, with your new clothes, shoes and supplies? Many kids don't know that feeling, but the Mission helps solve that with this special event, providing new shoes, socks, underwear and gently used clothing for children in qualifying families. We are grateful for Crossroads Community Church, GM, individual donors and churches that participate in our "Undy Sunday" donation day (Date TBA) to make this program possible.



## 4-H Beef-Up, Date TBA

At the local County Fairs' hog and steer auctions, animals raised by 4-H students are purchased by individuals and businesses with the purpose of donating them to the Mission. These valuable donations provide protein for those we serve in our shelters and community through our nutritional ministry. We appreciate donors from Carroll, Clinton and Howard counties.



## 5th Sunday Re-Stock the Mission, August 29

On fifth Sundays throughout the year, we ask for supplies to help us re-stock items used daily at the Mission. Items most needed are paper towels, toilet paper, facial tissue and powdered laundry detergent. For a list of current needs, visit [kokomorescuemission.org](http://kokomorescuemission.org) under "Immediate Needs."

▼ ▼ PLEASE CUT OFF THE REPLY FORM BELOW, AND RETURN WITH YOUR GIFT. THANK YOU. ▼

**I WANT TO TRANSFORM LIVES THIS SUMMER**

**YES**, Van, I want to help homeless, hungry and hurting men, women and families today and through the summer season. Here's my gift of:

- \$21.70** to provide **10 meals** and other assistance.
- \$32.55** to provide **15 meals** and other assistance.
- \$65.10** to provide **30 meals** and other assistance.
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ to provide as many meals and as much care as possible.



Kokomo Rescue Mission  
P.O. Box 476  
Kokomo, IN 46903-0476

Please charge my:  VISA  MC  Discover  AMEX

AMOUNT		
ACCOUNT NUMBER		
EXP. DATE	CCV	
NAME		
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP
EMAIL		

Please make your check payable to Kokomo Rescue Mission. Thank you!  
To give online, visit [kokomorescuemission.org](http://kokomorescuemission.org). Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law.

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