



THE PRODIGAL SUN

The Newsletter of Prodigals Community

Summer 2009

Community Celebrates as Residents Step Up

"I could not believe it was happening. Time had flown by! I sat there remembering my first Monday night service and thinking, 'That's what I want,' and through God I had received it. The energy in the room was so amazing, something I had never felt before, a feeling of achievement, honor and serenity. I will always cherish that experience and remember that we do recover. I give thanks everyday to God for putting my feet on a rock which I call Prodigals Community."
--Anthony M.

On Monday night, May 4, 2009 Prodigals Community residents, staff, volunteers and friends celebrated as three residents "stepped up" from the New Salem program: Anthony M., Kenneth R. and Eric W.



Kenneth, Anthony and Eric step up

Anthony went on to share more of his experience while at Prodigals: *"On October 16, 2007, I walked through the doors of Prodigals Community. At that moment I knew I was home. My addiction had taken me to the darkest places and Prodigals Community is where I finally began to see the light. The journey through the program as a resident was not easy but this is where I began an intimate relationship with God--something I never had before. I would look forward to Monday nights and the spiritual*

boost I would get to help get me through the next day. This is where I started to meet the Alumni of Prodigals Community. I would hear them share their gratitude in the service and I saw how they had completed the program; it gave me so much motivation to do the same thing."

Board Chair, Bill Steele, welcomed the crowd assembled to celebrate the achievements of the residents. During the service, Education Coordinator, Rev. Patty Suggs, presented scholarship awards to alumni Elaine Dessel and James Asbury, and Executive Director Jeff Coppage gave the address to the graduates. The Prodigals Alumni Association welcomed the three members. Love's United Methodist Church sponsored a reception following the service.

Volunteers Make It Work for Residents Hundreds Provide Support, Services and Encouragement

Prodigals Community could not exist without the hard work and dedication of literally hundreds of volunteers. Whether tutoring, bringing a

Monday night meal, serving on a committee, performing property repairs, or leading a retreat, volunteers provide invaluable services that foster the recovery of our residents.

A current resident spoke about the value of volunteers at Prodigals: *"Having volunteers here shows me that people care and want us--addicts--to overcome addiction and survive. (It) lets me further know... that I am worthy of love, and fighting for my own life becomes more likely when mixed with our rules and procedures and my commitment here..."*

Over the past year in particular the community has been blessed with a multitude of willing volunteers and gifts, often showing up just when the need was greatest.

(Continued on Page 3)



Enonee Baptist Church youth help with office work.

"I never took care of my health the way I should have before coming to Prodigals. I became enrolled with Healthcare Access and started going to regular checkups with a doctor. During one of my checkups my doctor saw a growth in my colon which ended up being cancer. We detected the cancer early and I had surgery quickly to remove the tumors. The doctors removed all of the cancer and said I was lucky to have found it in the early stages. I believe if I wasn't part of the Healthcare Access plan, I wouldn't have been seeing a doctor regularly and would still be unaware of the fact I had cancer, or dead."

-Eric W.

Facing the Challenges

Jeff Copping, Executive Director/Pastor

Saying "Thank You" is inadequate. I hope that each of you realize that men and women are literally alive today because of you.

Eric's testimony about his cancer (page 1) is powerful. After years of drug abuse, he re-discovered a reason to live in our New Salem program. The rigorous accountability and the generous opportunity he found here helped him to obtain restored health, responsible decision-making, and a marvelous re-awakening to God's Grace. God is good.

During his medical treatment, Eric needed extended recovery time. He was moved to a private room and given the daily attention needed by caring peers, staff, and

several incredible volunteers. Today Eric is fully employed by one of our former PPS customers who treat employees like family. He has good health insurance. He is a proud New Salem alumnus.

Eric is not alone. A January 2009 poll showed that 80% of those who recently participated even 90 days in the New Salem program are today drug-free and employed. The quality of our services is exceptional.

The challenges are also very real. Medical crises have hit multiple residents and staff. Like everywhere else, the economic crisis has hit hard. Revenue from our job-training businesses is down. Some churches are decreasing financial support. We have decreased our monthly expenses 30% from last year's budget, largely through reductions in staffing and pay rates.

In 2007, we overcame financial challenges through a remarkable outpouring of community support. A renewed effort is needed in 2009 to sustain this life-giving ministry. If you normally wait until the holidays to send a donation, will you consider donating sooner? Will you request support for Prodigals Community from your church, employer, family, or friends? If so, we'd be glad to provide development materials. Perhaps you can help recruit volunteers or schedule a program at your church. We need to raise \$70,000 in the 3rd quarter of 2009. We think gratitude will make it happen.

We are so grateful for each church, individual donor, volunteer, and prayer partner that sustains the life-transforming ministry of Prodigals Community!

Staff News

New Staff Welcomed to Community

Prodigals Community is blessed with a dedicated, committed staff. In the past year we have welcomed many new staff members: **William Rhodes** and Alumnus **James Asbury** began work last fall as part-time substance abuse counselors; **Sally Dudley Harper** joined the staff in January as part-time Development Director; **Rev. Patty Suggs** has served in several capacities in recent months, including her current position as Education Coordinator; **Barry Leonard** began work in May as part-time janitorial crew supervisor; **John Neal** and **Jack Rainville** have been serving as contract paint crew supervisors. We welcome them!

The community has also been blessed with having **Ed Finertie** serve for the past year as a full-time volunteer through the United Church of Christ. This is Ed's second volunteer assignment at Prodigals. Keep coming back, Ed! **Mary Christian** and **Lee McKeithan**, alumni/ae of the New Salem Program, began serving as volunteer resident assistants recently.

The past year has also brought many changes. **Katharine Martin** left her position as Church Relations Assistant at the beginning of the 2009. **Katharine** continues to serve as a regular volunteer doing spiritual direction with the female residents and leading all residents in the weekly Spiritual Disciplines group. **Don Moore**, former Executive Director, served as Education Coordinator for many years and retired in January. Unfortunately, our revenue decrease led to the elimination of the PPS Manager position. We are grateful to **Donald Batten** for serving so faithfully in that position. **Erik Bush**, also an alumnus, recently left the staff after serving as Resident Assistant. **Barbara Calvin**, live-in resident assistant, leaves in August to begin chaplain residency at WFU/NC Baptist Hospital. We are grateful for the hard work and faithfulness of all of these people during their time on staff.

Other staff news: **Ron Jefferson** is recuperating at home after undergoing cancer treatments; **Chuck Malone** is serving as Resident Life and Operations Manager; **Chuck** is back at work after recent surgery; Congratulations to **Barbara Calvin** who graduated from Wake Forest Di-

vinity School in May with a Masters in Divinity degree; **Jeff Copping** was received into the Moravian ministry at a special service held in July at Konnoak Hills Moravian Church.

Prodigals Board Members

2009 (term ending)

Shirley Abdullah
Betsy Brown, Secretary
James Gore
Jennifer Hill, Treasurer
Hank Keating
Leigh Thompson

2010

Jonathan Freeman, Vice Chair
Harriet Rhodes
Bill Steele, Chair
Donese Stultz

2011

Deanna Leonard
Beth Parks
Karl Sjolund

Volunteers (continued from page 1)

Although this list is only partial, we especially want to thank the following volunteers and organizations:

◆ **The Steele family-Bill, Sandy, Ken, and Scott** for countless hours of support to the community;

◆ **Calloway, Johnson, and Moore** for a thorough evaluation of our facilities;

◆ **Mr. and Mrs. John Sullivan** for the donation of two pieces of real estate;

◆ **Dr. Joseph Adegboyega** for his donation of professional services;

◆ **Mike Livengood and George Shouse of Trinity Moravian Church** for upgrading the handicap ramp into the sanctuary;



Jason Brittingham cleans up

◆ **Bethel UMC, Konnoak Hills Moravian Church, and Arbor Acres Retirement Community** for the use of their facilities for resident and staff retreats;

◆ **Julie O. McElmurray** for leading a spiritual retreat for the Prodigals sisters;

◆ **Ray Martin** for the new community dog, **Sasha**, and the installation of an invisible fence;

◆ **Ardmore Baptist, Calvary Baptist, Highland Presbyterian, Pinedale Christian and Enonee Baptist** in Travelers Rest, SC for providing work teams to improve our facilities;

◆ **Campus Kitchen and Agape Faith Church** for providing meals every Sunday evening;

◆ **Tawanna Foster and Health Care Access** for providing ongoing medical care for Prodigals' Residents;

◆ **North Carolina Baptist Men's Dental Bus** for providing dental care to Prodigals residents;

◆ Prodigals Community is also grateful to have received grants recently from the **Winston-Salem Foundation**, the **Blessings Foundation**, and the **Richard J. and Marie Reynolds Foundation**;

◆ All those who support us with prayers, finances and donations.

Prodigals	YTD	7/31/2009	
	Actual	Budget	2009 Budget
Revenue	\$207,677	\$280,135	\$539,175
Expenses	\$301,789	\$310,221	\$539,175
	(\$94,112)	(\$30,086)	

Mark the date now! Saturday, September 26, 6:30 pm

Prodigals Dinner/Silent Auction/Musical

Maple Springs United Methodist Church, 2569 Reynolda Road
 Silent Auction, Dinner by Chef Leigh Thompson
 Presentation of Neil Maxey's musical "Prodigals-Stories of God's Love"


Tickets available online at www.prodigals.org or by calling 785-0770

Prodigals Property Services Does the Job "Untapped Goldmine..."

Prodigals Property Services is the business service and job training division of Prodigals Community. Residents benefit through on the job training which is always supervised by a professional crew chief. Through this important channel residents generate nearly 40% of the overall funding for Prodigals Community. As a result of the recent economic downturn Prodigals Property Services has suffered a significant decrease in

revenue which in turn threatens the financial stability of this important ministry. Please consider Prodigals Property Services when you or your company is in need of excellent and affordable painting, janitorial services, car detailing or day labor. PPS is bonded and insured. PPS customer Madeline Harold says, "*Prodigals workers are an untapped, affordable goldmine... pleasant and hardworking. I am looking forward to working with them again!*"

Call Sally Harper at 336-785-0770 for further information.



Be an angel!

Can you help with the following needed items?

- Used cars for graduates and for car sales
- Used truck or van for PPS paint crew
- Commercial grade stepladders
- Set of used lockers (like in schools)
- Computers (1.7 mhz or greater)
- Powerpoint projector

— ALUMNI/AE NEWS —

Prodigals Community Alumni Association spent a weekend in May at Laurel Ridge to plan for the group's future growth. **Harriett R., Kim D., Dennis W., and Donald B.** attended and came away with four major goals for 2009. Thanks go to Tom Stocking, Executive Administrator of Agape Faith Church, who donated his time to assist with the planning.

Truddie S., alumna of Prodigals New Salem program, passed away May 20, 2009 after a period of illness. A memorial service was held Saturday, May 30 at Faith Community Church in Greensboro.

Two Prodigals alumni, **Anthony M.** and **Thomas G.**, are working for Old Salem, Inc. **Eric W.** works for West Third Street, Inc.

Kenny W. was recently featured in an interview on WFDD. Kenny owns his own business--Flashlight Car Detailing.

Elaine Dessel and **James Asbury** were recipients of Prodigals scholarships in 2009. Elaine is a student at High Point University. James attends GTCC.



Alumni/ae take a break at Laurel Ridge.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Monday, September 28

- Board Meeting

Saturday, September 26, 6:30 pm

- Dinner/Musical/Silent Auction Fundraiser for Prodigals at Maple Springs UMC on Reynolda Road

Monday, November 2, 7:00 pm

- Fall Step-Up Service

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