



# MORNINGSTAR CHRONICLES

CARING AND SHARING  
THE LOVE OF CHRIST

VOLUME 14 NO. 2



★ Taking Care of ★  
God's Treasures



Marilyn Farmer  
Executive Director

Dear Friend,

How wonderful to know God loves you and considers you one of His treasures.

Every person He sends to MorningStar is more valuable to Him than all the gold and silver in the world.

So we are honored to care for His treasures and celebrate when each person overcomes trouble and starts to live right.

Thank you for supporting this work. You are greatly appreciated. You help people know how valuable they are to God.

May God bless you!

*Marilyn*



Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan, who cared for a man beaten by thieves and left by the side of the road.

Renato was beaten by drugs and left on the street with nothing. Then someone kind came along and helped him find MorningStar. He is healing, and grateful for the mercy and care he receives. **Thank you for helping Renato, by making it possible for him to find help at MorningStar.**

## “I WAS TOO FAR GONE...”

I grew up in a low income area with an alcoholic father. I began drinking at age 11 and joined the gangs. I nearly died from shootings and drug overdoses. I went to prison as a teenager and started taking heroin there.

When I got out at age 18 I tried hard to live right. I got married and had two children, a boy and a girl. I had a landscape business and my wife did accounting. We did well and bought a nice house. We were safe there, away from the gangs.

But even though we were doing well I couldn't deal with my childhood family issues. I let them drive me back to drugs and drinking. I got so bad my wife asked me to leave. I lived with my sisters and my mother for a while but they too turned me out.

I lived homeless on the street for six years. All I cared about was getting high. Sometimes I went six or seven days without eating, spending every penny I had on drugs. I would go to one treatment center after another but as soon as I got out I'd take drugs again.

The little I knew of God told me He didn't give me life to live in the

gutter and spend every penny on getting high. But I could not change. I got so tired of it and disappointed everyone I knew. One day I went to my mother and told her I hadn't eaten for six days. She wouldn't let me in the house. Instead, she lowered food to me on a rope out of her second floor apartment window. She didn't trust me for a moment.

I met a man called James who had found help at MorningStar. He told me I could get right with the Lord there. MorningStar took me in even though I told them I couldn't help myself at all. I was too far gone.

“... before when I hurt I would run from pain. But now I'm staying and making good decisions.”

I've been here for three months. This is the first recovery program I've been to that is based on faith. I feel better. I pray to the Lord and read the Bible. I meditate on Him through the day. The Bible teaches me the way to go.



Renato - healing and living a better life

I have bad moments where the old me comes out and I lash out. And sometimes when I go to church and see the families I miss my wife and kids and it hurts because I chose drugs over them and I have to forgive myself and it hurts me as a man. I remember when I worked and I came home and my kids would run to me.

But before when I hurt I would run from pain. But now I'm staying and making good decisions. I'm getting better. The Lord is helping me and the counseling here is helping too. I don't have to live to use drugs anymore. I really don't.

*Renato*

### Urgent Needs List

#### FOODS

- Canned Fruit
- Canned Vegetables (i.e. Green Beans, Corn, Carrots)
- Jelly
- Canned Gravy
- Pepper
- Paper Towels
- Napkins
- Sugar
- Flour

**Do you have extra's of these things, or have them around the house going unused? We can put them to good use right away. Thank you!**

- Coffee
- Canned Cream Soup (Mushroom, Celery and Tomato)
- Jell-O
- Rice
- Dry Spaghetti
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Juice
- Milk
- Mashed Potatoes
- Eggs

#### HYGIENE NEEDS

- Deodorant (Regular or Travel Size)
- Bar Soap (Regular or Travel Size)
- Shampoo (Regular or Travel Size)
- Disposable Razors
- Extra Long Twin Sheets

## MAGNIFICENT NEWS! COMMUNITY CAME TOGETHER FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL ICE BOWL COMPETITION

The Third Annual Ice Bowl was a huge success not only for the PDGA certified players but the Mission as well. On February 4, 2012, J-Town Disc Golf Hall of Famer Mr. Frank Grimes and the J-Town board members raised over \$8,000 for the Mission! J-Town has partnered with the Mission for the Ice-Bowl for three years. Each year the Ice Bowl competition grows. **MorningStar Mission is very grateful for J-Town Disc Golfers for their desire and commitment to make a difference in our community.**



**THANK YOU TO EACH AND EVERY PLAYER. YOU'RE IMPORTANT TO US!**





# HISTORICAL 1 MILE WALK-A-THON!

Take a walk to help support those experiencing homelessness here in Will county. This will be a one mile walk through the different locations of the Mission. We are looking for walk captains to gather teams and have their team members each raise pledges. You can pick up pledge forms at the Mission along with envelopes. **Sponsorship opportunities are available as well.** Contact the Mission at 815-722-5780 or [terri@morningstarmission.org](mailto:terri@morningstarmission.org). Hope to see you there!

**Saturday, June 2, 2012. All walkers all ages! Join us!**



MorningStar Mission cordially invites you to attend this year's Spring Fling Star Ball benefit!

The "Star Award" is given to an individual, business or family that has devoted their time to bettering the community in remarkable and outstanding ways throughout the year!

This Year We Honor

*Klint and Kay DeGeus*

Join us on Saturday, May 12, 2012 at the Renaissance Center in Joliet to celebrate!

Limited tickets available so call now to reserve a seat for this exciting annual event!



### Star Ball

Honoring Klint and Kay DeGeus  
Saturday, May 12  
Limited tickets available

### Walk A Mile in My Shoes Walk-a-Thon

Saturday, June 2  
Call Terri at 815-722-5780  
for more information

### Box City of Hope

Friday, September 21  
Register today!  
Call 815-722-5780 today for  
a Pledge Form.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
[morningstarmission.org](http://morningstarmission.org),  
(815) 722-5780,  
[info@morningstarmission.org](mailto:info@morningstarmission.org)

## 'A BLESSING' FOR HOMELESS VETERANS

Reprinted with permission from The Herald-News - Bob Okon

MorningStar Mission now has two houses for veterans and is working on a third.

"I think this is beautiful," said Lou Vargas, commander of the Illinois chapter of Disabled American Veterans. "It's a simple, three-bedroom house decorated with furniture from a resale shop. It beats the streets."

"One new resident of the Melchoir Street house had been living under an Interstate 80 overpass and had been homeless since returning from the Vietnam War in 1967," said Terri Micetich, Director of Development.

In January 2011, we opened our first veterans house on Melchoir Street. Jim Barnes, one of the first residents in the house that opened in 2011, called his home "a blessing." Barnes said. "I just wish they could have them for more veterans."

That effort is in the works. "I am bound and determined to find more houses," Micetich said. She is working on a third house and is in discussion with the owners.

"The need is widespread," she said, noting that about 30 percent of the nation's homeless are believed to be veterans. "That should not be,"



Photo by Matt Marton-Sun-Times Media

Micetich said. "We knew we needed to do something. They deserve so much more than living homeless in the streets."

**"They deserve so much more than living homeless in the streets."**

## JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE INTERIOR DESIGN STUDENTS TRANSFORM MORNINGSTAR MISSION HOME

Interior design students Kelly Cabay, Elizabeth Jessen and Mel Norton along with instructors Gladys Hughes and Patty Mackey volunteered to furnish and redecorate the new mission home.

While the 50-year-old home was in good condition with an updated kitchen and bath, high ceilings and small bedrooms posed some challenges, says Mackey.

"Time is a major challenge ... we only had a week to complete the project," says Mackey. "Also, we are working on as small of a budget as possible for bedding and things like that ..."

To accommodate the budget, the team utilized our mission's resale



store, The Treasure Chest II. The team also donated some items such as a dresser and window valances.

Mackey says the experience has been rewarding in more ways than she could have imagined and hopes there will be many more projects like this down the road.

"Not only has giving back to the community been rewarding but as an instructor it has been as well, helping our students meet challenges in a positive way," Mackey says. "At the end of the day, watching the home transform into a comfortable and beautiful living space that we all can be proud of was the most rewarding."

**"... the experience has been rewarding in more ways than she could have imagined ..."**



As posted in Joliet Junior College website [www.jjc.edu](http://www.jjc.edu)

**With the help of JJC students interior design skills, the community, and you, MorningStar Mission has been able to provide safe, clean, and warm housing for the Veterans who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Thanks to you!**

News clippings on our latest home for veterans!

# A STORY YOU MAY NEVER FORGET



Barbara sits in her room at MorningStar and looks out of the window. She loves the peace and quiet and seeing God's beautiful creation.

She is safe and she is free. We expect her future to be joyful but the first half of her life was a storm.

Barbara's father was a Black Muslim. She was told white men were devils. You couldn't mention the name of Jesus Christ in the house except in derision. So when she came across a preacher on the television early one Sunday morning she was curious what he had to say.

He said that Jesus gave His life for us so we wouldn't have to go to hell.

That was news to her. She longed to know more, so she rose early each Sunday to watch. One morning she felt a big presence behind her. It has her father. He rebuked her and told her to never watch it again.

But a Godly seed was already sown in her heart.

In grammar school a friend taught Barbara Gospel songs and invited her to church. Secretly she went. When she was 18 and legally free to choose her own religion she declared she was follower of Jesus Christ.

**"But in my heart I am a Christian."**

Telling her father was hard. He called her a traitor to her family. But she had great peace. "As long as I stay under your roof, I will obey you," she said. "But in my heart I am a Christian."

She was shunned at home. A few months later she left for college.

That was a confusing time. She saw Christians in all kinds of denominations who couldn't agree about much. She doubted if she really knew God at all.

Thankfully a friend came along who

shared her faith, founded on the Bible that God reveals Himself to those who seek Him. And that settled it for Barbara. Her faith was affirmed. She never again doubted that God was with her. She was strong, and she needed to be! Harder times were coming from an unexpected place.

A godly man courted her. He was a respected Christian, or at least claimed to be. They married and Barbara thought her life was settled.

She wrote a book about her release from Islam to Christ and called it "Submission – The Key To Real Power." Islam means "submission". But that submission had been forced on her without option. As a Christian she was free to serve and she dearly wanted to help others find the same freedom.

To her surprise her new husband said, "Who in their right mind would listen to a woman?" Strange words from a Christian man, and shocking to Barbara. She had felt like a slave in Islam, but now she discovered she

was married to a man who dominated her even more. He controlled all the money and all the speech. He would have controlled every thought if he could. And he did it all in the name of God.

After fifteen years Barbara eventually broke free. She sought out help from counselors who helped her get away and stay with relatives for a few years and then to the safety of MorningStar.

She has five children ranging in age from 5 to 15. As the abuse at home became worse and worse the children suffered through it too. When Barbara left home the children went into custody. Gradually she is getting them back as she recovers. Two of them now live with her at MorningStar.

Today, from the stability and safety of MorningStar she looks back and thanks God.

Yes, she is thankful.

She could focus on her painful

journey, but she doesn't.

She could get down about her health – the stress of trying to appease her controlling husband led to a stroke that permanently damaged her foot and ability to walk.

On top of this she was recently diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis.

**"... I was determined these trials would make me - not break me ..."**

Instead of feeling sorry for herself she sees God, triumphant through her troubles. "I was determined these trials would make me - not break me!" she says.

God blessed her indeed. Her five brothers and sisters she grew up with each have become Christian.

"God is a self-revealing God," says Barbara. "It is His work. He showed Himself to them."

Wonderfully, her father also became a Christian, before he died.

As for her husband, God's wrath came down on him. His sin increased and he was convicted of homicide. Now he is serving a long prison sentence. Perhaps God will be merciful to him as well.

And now Barbara looks ahead. She feels completely free and ready to serve. She so much wants to help women who are suffering abuse. She knows there is help for them if they will take courage and seek it out. And she wants to be part of that help.

Many thanks to you for providing safe shelter and encouragement for Barbara and her family at MorningStar. One day we will see even more the blessings flow from her life as God powerfully uses her.



Barbara with two of her children.

**"Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean He no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?... No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us."**

Romans 8:35 & 37

# IN HONOR

Frank Schoener ..... Barb Graf  
 John & Janet Darlinger  
 Anthony Purkart .....Harvie & Mary Mills  
 Dr. Mohammed Ahmed  
 ..... Joliet Behavioral Health & Associates  
 Dr. Susan Ahmari.... Linden Oaks Medical Group  
 Dr. Timothy Doyle .....  
 Wunderlich M.D.  
 Dr. Syed Rahim  
 ..... Joliet Behavioral Health & Associates  
 Dr. Gilda Alcalá ..... G and L Alcalá Pediatrics  
 Dr. Jonette Belicena .... G and L Alcalá Pediatrics  
 Dr. Glenn Grobe ..... DuPage Medical Group  
 Dr. Courtney Wiseman  
 Pastor Fred DeJong  
 .....Christ Community Church of Plainfield  
 Pastor Ron Taylor .....Island City Baptist Church  
 Pastor Matthew Woodford  
 .....Springbrook Community Church  
 Peace Christian Reformed Church  
 ..... Dr. Joan Wise – Advanced Counseling &  
 Assessment Services  
 Pastor & Mrs. Loy Schlote  
 ...Our Savior Lutheran Church George & Lorraine  
 Mr. Merle Wolter - Confirmation Mentor  
 Mr. Mark Richardson-Sunday School Teacher  
 Mrs. Howard Hamilton-Sunday School Teacher  
 ..... Luke Sheppard  
 Mike Hansen-Michael W. Hansen PC  
 ..... Barbara Hinz  
 Michael Wild ..... Don & Sheri Pierce  
 Leonard Kiernan ..... Anonymous  
 Frank Anderson  
 Howard Reeves ..... A BEEP  
 Michael Dodge..... Mary Lazar  
 Edward F. Bagdon ..... Paula M. Fitzmaurice  
 Andy Carey ..... Vardal Engineering Company

# IN MEMORY

Bernie & Sandi Lowery ..... Debbi Sundquist  
 Pauline Krass ..... Wayne Krass  
 “Memphis” ..... Dana Tasharski  
 Bessie Chandler ..... Sandra Dillard  
 Steve Poleski..... Alayne Scott  
 Americo “Val” Vallera ..... Jeanne Keach  
 Charles Johnson ..... Joanne Steriotti  
 Joseph Steriotti..... Stephen G. & Anna Keller  
 Ruth Fery ..... Cheryl D. Nolden



## A Safe Place in the Storm

People come to the Mission weather beaten and weary.

Life can be harsh.

MorningStar Mission is a safe place to be loved ... to recover ... and to draw close to God. Thank you for caring and giving people a hand up in a time of great need.



“I, Jesus ... am the bright Morning Star ...  
 Whoever is thirsty, let him come;  
 and whoever wishes, let him take the  
 free gift of the Water of Life.”

*from Revelations, Chapter 22, Verses 16-17*



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~Volume 14 No. 2~

To have your name added or removed from the mailing list, contact Terri at 815-722-5780 or [info@morningstarmission.org](mailto:info@morningstarmission.org)

We never sell, rent or exchange our supporters' names.

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## MORNINGSTAR PROGRAMS:

180 Club • East Side Cafe • Treasure Chest • Jump on the Bus  
 • Shop with a Sheriff • Holiday Food Baskets • Stars of Hope •  
 New Day Drop In Center • Counseling Center • Women and  
 Family Recovery Center • Advance Transitional Housing