

the BRIDGE

Building bridges of hope



SUMMER ISSUE 2017
OLD SAVANNAH
CITY MISSION

I want you to know how much your donations mean to someone like me

MMy name is Richard. If you ever have a moment to pray for me, I would appreciate your thoughts and your prayers as I get my life back together here at Old Savannah City Mission. Before I came to the Mission I was living in the woods behind Wal-Mart. But I wasn't really living: I was just existing. I guess I was the ultimate camper. However, I wouldn't suggest it as a year-round activity. In the woods

it's cold, hot, dirty and bugs are biting you all the time. It's no way to live. In the past few years, so many parts of my life have fallen apart. I got a divorce, which just about destroyed me. I wrote some bad checks, and did two years in jail for forgery. The only good thing about being behind bars was I read the Bible every day, kept a journal and made some good friends. It was also about the only time I didn't have access to alcohol.

From a life of hopelessness to one of hope and joy

And then, through God's mercy, I found Old Savannah City Mission. I'm now clean and sober. I'm a believer. What I'm learning in these amazing classes is helping me apply God to my life. I have become a student of God's

“**The Gospel and Jesus Christ are at the center of my life.**”

Word. In the past, I was nothing but a sad face completely devoid of hope. Today, you see a different person. I even have a job at the Mission's Bargain Center, where I do anything I can to help. Because alcohol is no longer a part of my life, I now realize how much I love helping people. I want to thank you for your donations of time and money which give me a golden opportunity finally to make something of my life. The Gospel and Jesus Christ are at the center of my life. Thank you again for rescuing me . . . *and for giving me hope.*



"The Heat Is On"

While we look forward, with great anticipation, to spring here in Savannah and at Old Savannah City Mission, summer is a far different story. High humidity, high temperatures, gnats and mosquitos all indicate that we are living in the Deep South. Unlike in the song "Summertime," life for our homeless population (our friends and neighbors) ain't easy; it is tenuous at best. It is not the cold, but the heat that is extremely dangerous and life-threatening.

It is bad enough that food is becoming more and more expensive; however, utility bills hit the roof in the summer months and rocket sky-high. We could not pay our electric bills to keep our lights on and the air conditioning running, without the support of generous donors like you. In Savannah, "The Heat Is On."

It is our prayer that you remember in the Bible, that we are to be our brothers' keeper — that Jesus said that the poor we would always have with us. With that in mind, during the ensuing, dreadfully hot summer months, please remember the plight of those who are less fortunate than you and be a blessing to them. You will be truly blessed knowing that you have helped so many others who are in need.



An Encouraging Word from Brother Bill

"God bless you for standing alongside us as we continue to be good stewards of your donations."

Dear Friend of Old Savannah City Mission,

Thank you for being such a vital part of this ministry of rescue. You and I both know when we plant a seed in the garden, that seed soon takes on a life of its own. Some seeds do well. Some seeds don't make it. But the job of the gardener, the farmer and any other seed planter is simply to plant the seed. And this is what you help us do day after day, year after year when you support Old Savannah City Mission. You plant seeds of hope in the hearts of our friends and neighbors. You then trust us to water those seeds with compassion, and fertilize them with expressions of God's love until, hopefully, that seed comes to fruition and our friends become the people God intends them to be.

We have been hope dealers for more than 20 years

For more than two decades now, Old Savannah City Mission has been a beacon of hope for the needy in Savannah. Our doors are open 24/7. Our arms of love embrace all who cross our threshold. However, there are still too many people in our community who do not know about this ministry of hope and rescue. That's why we encourage you to help spread the word about what is available to folks who have lost their way . . . people who need physical and spiritual assistance to help them get back on their feet. Now, during these critical summer months we especially need the support of friends of the Mission . . . because poverty, homelessness and personal loss never take a holiday. God bless you for standing alongside us as we continue to be good stewards of your donations. Thank you for being one who cares.



Blessings,

William Stiles, Executive Director

New Life . . . New Hope . . . an

People who struggle to find their next meal, who are alone, afraid and without a friend in the world need to be rescued every day. That's why pain, fear, alienation from a living God and every other terror of life demand a spiritual response from the staff at Old Savannah City Mission.

And that's why we appreciate you, a valued partner of Old Savannah City Mission. Because of your ongoing generosity we are able to share with our residents Christian love, compassion and a listening ear. We recognize summer is a time when friends of the Mission go on much-needed vacations, and we are glad you are able to take time to get away with your family. At the same time, we also encourage you to remember



I now know peace . . . even in the storms of life

My name is also Richard, but that's about the only similarity between our two stories. I came to Old Savannah City Mission after serving more than 17 ½ years in prison. While behind bars I didn't read, and, in fact, I did nothing to improve my life. All I did was gamble, cheat at cards, sleep with my boots on (because I never knew when I would need to fight again) and keep doing "stupid" time. That's the only way I can describe my almost 20 years in prison. For me, life behind bars was simply survival. Someone asked me recently if I had become institutionalized. I answered, absolutely yes. When you can't even

dream about your own home anymore, you know you're institutionalized. Even after my release, I would keep all my stuff under my bed. I kept watching my back. I even kept doing push-ups, just like I did in the prison yard. Only now, am I beginning to sense what freedom is all about.

The devil lost a good soldier when I walked away from my life of sin

That's why I thank God for Old Savannah City Mission. My addiction to crack cocaine is a thing of the past. Prison and despair are no longer parts of my life. All I can say is the devil lost a good soldier when I walked away from him and *into the arms of Jesus*. I'm just grateful God didn't let the devil kill me. One thing I'm most thankful for is that my mom finally got her son back before she passed away. For too many years, I was not a good son to her at all. But in the end we did a lot together, and I can't wait to see here one day in heaven. Thank you for keeping the doors of Old Savannah City Mission open for someone like me. I will be grateful to you for the rest of my life.



It takes more to plow a field than merely turning it over in one's mind. And it takes more than the best of good intentions to carry on the ministry of eternal recovery at Old Savannah City Mission

- Thank you for going beyond good intentions
- Thank you for putting your heart into this ministry of compassion
- Thank you for standing with us during the summer months and throughout the year
- Through your volunteer and ongoing financial support lives are being transformed daily
- Your generosity reminds our entire staff that real love gives, and then looks for ways to give even more to those who struggle with life itself

Thank you for helping to make this world better for those who come through our doors. And as you give, we know you, too, are reaping the rewards of knowing you are doing the right thing. God bless you for being a partner who invests in the lives of those in need. Thank you for going beyond good intentions.

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homelessness refuses to take a holiday. During the summer months our doors remain open to any and all who need a loving touch and an opportunity to begin a new life.

God bless you for your continued support

You have reached out in Christian compassion to so many of our friends during the last few months, something for which we are so grateful. Now, we come to you again because you know the needs of those who are addicted and homeless never cease. To send a generous summer donation at this time, please use the remit slip enclosed. You may also give your gift on Old Savannah City Mission's secure website www.oscm.org. Thank you.

“We appreciate you, a valued partner of the Mission.”



Local Business Celebrates Small Business Month by Giving Back

Every year since 1963, the President of the United States has issued a proclamation announcing National Small Business Week. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) recognizes the critical contributions of America's entrepreneurs and small business owners from across the country. More than half of Americans either own or work for a small business, and they create about two out of every three new jobs in the U.S. each year.

In Savannah, Cox Termite & Pest Control made a difference in the lives of our neighbors in Savannah who are hungry, homeless, and/or at-risk of homelessness by providing a nutritious low-country boil. A Southern staple, the low-country boil

provided all the ingredients that are essential for a well-balanced meal in one dish.

Cox Termite & Pest Control of Savannah has been a family owned and operated business in Savannah since 1969. Now owned and operated by the third generation, President Chris Cowart and Vice President Kim C. Potts, are learning the lessons taught by Wendell Cowart (their father) proved the importance and value of "giving back" to those in need in the community where they live and work.

Old Savannah City Mission thanks Cox Termite & Pest Control for nearly 50 years of operation, and for being a small business partner, meeting the needs of the most vulnerable citizens in our community.

Four Things to Remember . . .

1. One of the true measures of our character is the size of our love for people in need.
2. If the task is once begun, never leave it 'til it's done. Whether the labor be great or small, we must do it well or not at all.
3. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.
4. You can accomplish more in one hour with God *than one lifetime without Him.*

Hopefully these thoughts resonate with you today and every day as you live your life in service to family, friends, and to those in need. God bless you and thank you for your ongoing, generous support of Old Savannah City Mission.



My Summertime Gift

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YES, Brother Bill, you can count on my ongoing support during these critical summer months. **Here's my gift of:**

- \$20.50** to provide **10** meals and other assistance
- \$30.75** to provide **15** meals and other assistance
- \$61.50** to provide **30** meals and other assistance
- \$ _____ to provide as many meals and care as possible
- Please bill my credit card: VISA MC AMEX DINERS

ACCOUNT NO. _____ EXP. DATE _____

NAME _____ SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Old Savannah City Mission
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► Please mail this completed form with your summertime donation, or donate online at www.oscm.org. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.