

January 2012



REST

REGIONAL EMERGENCY SHELTER TEAM NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our first REST e-newsletter. We are sending this to you because you have shown an interest in what REST is accomplishing or because you have rolled up your sleeves and volunteered your time, resources and energy to making REST's second year a success. Many of you have been with REST from the very first night our doors opened last winter. So we can't thank you enough for what you have given. We hope you find this newsletter filled with good information about our communities' homeless issues and what REST has been able to contribute in providing emergency shelter services.

The Need for REST

Community Homelessness

As REST works through its second winter season, it's important to step back and understand why this organization of over 150 volunteers is needed. Based on the latest available statistics (January 2011), there are over 750 people (483 in 2010) including 93 households with children (87 in 2010) who are either in emergency housing, homeless or what is termed as "precariously housed" in the Yuba Sutter region. People who are termed as "precariously housed" reside in vacant buildings, cars or dwellings where more than one family coexists.

These numbers are acknowledged by many to be understated but the conclusion can be clearly drawn that the homeless challenge for our community is growing. What's more, except for women escaping domestic violence

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Volunteer Spotlight: ***Ronnie Amaro***

Choosing the first REST volunteer to spotlight is an easy choice. Ronnie Amaro has been one of the most dedicated supporters of REST, working as an overnight supervisor for 31 nights in the 2010-11 sheltering season. He is at it again this winter working at least two nights a week.

Ronnie has an inspirational life story - growing up in Ontario, California, he lost both of his parents at the age of 14. Ronnie bounced around and finally found himself in the Yuba Sutter area in 1986. At 23 years of age, he was a homeless recovering addict living in the river bottoms during a rainy and high water winter season.

situations or those eligible for substance abuse rehabilitation programs, there are currently no shelter alternatives for homeless single women. The opportunities for families with children is equally grim.

The Creation of REST

REST was incorporated in October of 2010 as a stop gap measure to address this crisis. During the winter season starting in late November and extending 19 weeks into April, REST through its hosting church partners offers up to 30 beds and evening meals every night.

Working closely with and receiving the important support of the Hands of Hope shelter, REST also provides guests with a light breakfast, shower and a carry out early snack each day.

What's Been Accomplished

In 2010-11 sheltering season, guests coming to REST filled 1,873 beds. We saw 27 different minor children including several less than a year old. Nineteen different families and 43 single women were also provided a safe, warm place to sleep and nutritious meals. So far, despite an unusually dry period, the numbers are up through mid-January of this season as compared to the same timeframe last year. A special concern is that we have already sheltered 20 minor children with a majority of the winter season still ahead.

What's Ahead

In the near term, REST continues to need volunteers to work as overnight supervisors, intake and morning portal staff. If your schedule precludes your involvement at this time, please remember REST in your prayers. Looking out at the longer term situation, REST is discussing the possibility of a transitional shelter for families in partnership with St John's Episcopal Church in Marysville. We will be keeping you updated about these discussions in the weeks ahead.

Our Host Churches

A Good Samaritan friend encouraged and challenged him to make something out of his life. Still homeless, he secured a job at a local Jack in the Box and his upward climb began. Now at 50 years young, Ronnie with his wife Cheryl are proud homeowners in Live Oak, living in that community for 13 years. Over the years Ronnie has raised 10 children, six of which are adopted.

REST is not Ronnie's sole passion; he also hosts a "Fathers First" study at his home every Wednesday evening and spends at least one other night a week ministering at the Yuba County jail.

Ronnie explains his involvement as filling "a need to let the homeless know that there is hope and a path to get back into life. You don't have to live like this." Ronnie believes in compassion coupled with accountability. He describes his attitude as a "helping hand but not a hand out." Ronnie says many have a heart for the homeless community but are often hesitant to get involved because of uncertainty about what to do or how to help. His advice is to "just jump in and follow your heart. Don't think about it, just do it.

**Working Together To
Provide
Emergency Shelter 7 Days a Week**



St John's Episcopal Church - Marysville
St Andrew Presbyterian Church - Yuba City
Church of Glad Tidings - Yuba City
**River Valley Christian Fellowship Church -
Yuba City**
Cornerstone Church - Yuba City
Seventh Day Adventist Church - Yuba City
First Presbyterian Church - Marysville
First United Methodist Church - Yuba City
St Isidore Catholic Church - Yuba City
North Valley Calvary Chapel Church - Yuba City

We Need Your Help

If you know some one who might be interested in learning about REST and homeless issues, you can help by forwarding this newsletter to them. Just click the "Forward email" link below. If you would like to volunteer yourself, please call us at 300-4351. We welcome everyone's help. All volunteers are provided with training. We greatly appreciate all the donations our local businesses have made in support of REST. If you would like to make a donation, of any size, we greatly appreciate it. REST is a non-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible. Donations can be sent to REST, P.O. Box 688, Yuba City, CA 95992.
THANK YOU!

**WARMTH
NOURISHMENT
COMPASSION**

Pray for the homeless. Pat them on the back."
Ronnie's dedication is truly an inspiration to all of us.

[Forward email](#)