



4604 W. Caroline Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705 – 301-937-0455

## January 2011

Happy New Year! Thank you for making 2010 an amazing year for Nick's Place. I want you to know how sincerely we appreciate the love, prayers and support that we receive from you. I pray that 2011 brings joy, peace and love to your family.

We finished the year on a high note. We had five, count them, five anniversaries to celebrate in December. We also had fun at our first annual holiday resident and alumni pizza party and Nick's Place Trivia Contest. One of our residents suggested that we host a monthly pizza and meeting event... so that's what we are doing starting this month. Our alumni play a big role in our success, and we welcome the chance to keep them involved in our mission.

We welcomed in the New Year by inviting friends and alumni to Nick's Place for food and games on New Years Eve. Our weekend manager, Perez, had a lot of fun cooking and baking for our guys.

In November, I was honored to receive the Bank of America Local Hero Award for work in our community. **The best part...was having 1/3 of the room filled with "my guys" there to cheer me on.** My friend, Gail Battle, shares her experience at this event with you later in this newsletter.

Finally, we were selected by Overhead Door Company, Mid-Atlantic Group as their cause to support for Christmas. They awarded us a corporate gift and the proceeds of their "casual" Friday fundraising drive. They created a fabulous video about Nick and Nick's Place that features me, Barry and our five guys who work for them. It was shown at the an-

nual employee holiday party so that others in the company understand our mission. We hope to soon have that video on our website. Speaking of the website, please check out the new photo gallery that was just added.

We are looking forward to accomplishing great things with our guys in 2011. You can count on us to continue to keep you informed.

### Current Residents

Tim D. - Tim was with us for almost ten months. He's moving to a private sober home and is excited about this new endeavor. He'll be coming back to Nick's Place to help our newcomers, just as it was done for him. I received this lovely message from Tim's mom, and with her permission, I'm sharing it with you. It says it all about what we try to do here at Nick's Place.

*Dear Rhea,  
Well we've come to another crossroad with Timothy and I want to take this opportunity to thank you and your husband for the wonderful work you did with our son during his stay at Nick's Place. He grew up in so many ways and we took your advice and let him do that on his own. It was nice to know that he had his "second parents" there and I truly applaud your mission to help these young guys along the road of life. I know he is a bit apprehensive about this next step but he told me he is more excited than scared. We continue to pray for him, for you and for all the young men who pass through your doors. We will be forever grateful for Timothy's*

*opportunity to spend over 9 months at Nick's Place and to benefit from your love and kindness. Sincere and heartfelt thanks from all of us . Pat*

Steve C. - Steve who was working at a popular bagel shop has traded in his baking skills to take a job in the accounting department of Overhead Door Company. Steve works a strong program and has stepped up to be a role model at Nick's Place.

Joe K. - Joe works at Einstein Bagel. He has learned the fine art of baking and also works in the customer service side of the business. We hope that Einstein will become another Nick's Place friendly employer as Overhead Door Company has become.

Rio W. - Rio just joined us on January 3rd. The first couple of weeks at Nick's Place are all about getting familiar with the routine and people. So far, Rio is right on track.

We are always excited to add new people to the Nick's Place family.

Please continue to keep all of our residents, former residents and their families in your thoughts and prayers. It is not easy to do what they are doing. It takes a tremendous amount of courage, determination and surrender to begin the process of recovery.

This picture was taken at Tim's one year anniversary. Tim is kneeling, far left...the one with the big smile on his face!

## Previous Residents

What's better than celebrating **five recovery anniversaries** in December?

Jason B. celebrated 7 years. He is married, has a daughter and a career in real estate. **Jason S.** celebrated 5 years, has a son and is studying in an apprenticeship program.

Baz F. has 2 years and is also studying in an apprenticeship program. Sean K. is the General Manager for Ledo's Pizza in Laurel. Sean was able to provide the pizza for our holiday party. So if you love great pizza, call Sean and tell him you're a friend of ours. Sean and his girlfriend have also just purchased their first home. Jeff R. purchased his first home in 2010. And Justin W., with guidance from Ed Muchene who teaches a Relapse Prevention Program for Nick's Place and a professor at Howard County Community College, has enrolled for the spring semester.



*Tim D. first-year anniversary*

I certainly don't want to forget Oscar P., who also celebrated five years clean and sober on January 14<sup>th</sup>; great way to start the New Year.

Andrew M. and his girlfriend Kristen taught the first meditation class to residents of Nick's Place. I love that our guys show their appreciation by giving back to Nick's Place. The meditation work goes hand in hand with our Stress Management series taught by Dr. Wendy Buskey.

These guys represent just some of the accomplishments of Nick's Place residents. When I see so many gathered for an event or anniversary, I can't help but feel the power of Nick's life and death and the opportunity to serve that landed in our lap in the worst possible way. Is there any doubt that recovery is possible? These guys demonstrate that recovery is possible for everyone, including young people. They now have the chance to accomplish and be anything they can dream!

### **A Night to Celebrate - by Gail Battle**

This was a night to celebrate. My good friend was receiving the Bank of America Local Hero Award. This is a recognition that few leaders of non profits receive. I was so proud of her and of her accomplishments. Local hero award

While preparing for the event I began to reflect on how I met Rhea. It was just a few weeks before her son's death that I began to work with her. Though I had only known Rhea briefly I felt compelled to go to her son's funeral. Being a mother of two boys, I remember thinking that I would want the support of my co-workers during this painful time. I kept thinking, "How would I ever get over this, if this was my son". But Rhea took a tragic situation and turned her love for Nick into something fruitful.

I have seen Nick's Place grow over the years but never spent much time getting to know the young men who passed through this home. Tonight as we entered the Bank of America facility I t was moved to see over 20 young men show up to acknowledge Rhea's commitment to them. They were so proud of

Rhea and talked about how she had helped each one as an individual.

After the awards, I spoke in depth two young men who are currently living at Nick's Place. Both told me of the opportunities and struggles they were facing on a daily basis. I was quite proud of one of the young men who spoke of the need to leave early because he started work at 4:30 A.M. I was quite impressed that he realized the importance of getting enough sleep to do his job. Most men his age would not be thinking of the consequences of staying out to late on a work night.

Another young man talked about the work opportunity he was given upon his entering Nick's Place. Thanks to Nick's Place he had successfully worked his way up the corporate ladder to a management job. He was very excited about this opportunity. He spoke of the day where he would be able to take care of himself and know he would be OK. He said it is Nick's Place that gives him the courage to believe this will happen.

This night was very emotional for me. In fact, it brought tears to my eyes when the men of Nick's Place cheered on Rhea when she received the award. To see so much love and admiration from these men shows that the investment we make towards this program is worth its weight in gold. I congratulate Rhea and all the young men who commit their lives to changing themselves and others.

### **Final Thoughts**

We are excited about starting 2011 with new initiatives and ideas that we believe will make our program stronger than ever. If you have an idea that you would like to share with us, or if you'd like to volunteer to teach a class as part of our Relapse Prevention Education Program, please feel free to contact me.

Maybe you can suggest to your employer something similar to what Overhead Door Company did, using "casual Friday" as a fund raising drive. And don't forget employer matching gift programs as a way of

doubling your gift amount. You can also sign up for monthly giving through our website using Network for Good.

I can't thank you enough for being a part of the success of Nick's Place and our guys; they are really special and demonstrate their gratitude for a new life. We absolutely, without a doubt, can not do what we do without your prayers, support and encouragement. God bless you and your families and please continue to keep our guys and their families in your hearts and prayers.

**P.S. We would love to send your newsletter by e-mail. This allows us to get information to you more quickly and it saves us money!! If this option sounds good to you, just drop me an e-mail at [rheamcvicker@verizon.net](mailto:rheamcvicker@verizon.net) and I'll add you to our e-mail list.**

**Nick's Place is a 501 (c) tax exempt organization. We rely solely on contributions and grants. We are now registered with the United Way of the National Capital area and will soon be participating in the Combined Federal Campaign.**

**Please keep us in mind for an employer matching gift programs and be sure to tell your friends about us! If you'd like to make a contribution you can do so by mail: Nick's Place, c/o Rhea McVicker, 4604 W. Caroline Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705 or by visiting our website [www.nicksplace.org](http://www.nicksplace.org) and click on the donation tab. If you'd like to contact me our number is 301-937-0455.**



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