



September 2010 – Update

News from Rhea

I hope everyone had a great summer visiting friends, taking vacation and enjoying the outdoors when it wasn't so darn hot.

Once again, the guys from Nick's Place, Rob, Tim, Dwayne, Daniel and Steve all participated in the central Maryland annual crab feast. In past years, Nick's Place residents have manned the grill and this year was no exception. It's a great way to meet new friends and share recovery.

Just in the past few days, Barry and I attended a birthday party for my dear friend and board member, Eva Bowie. In lieu of gifts, Eva asked her guests to make a donation in her honor to Nick's Place. It was a very generous and thoughtful gesture that gave us the opportunity to introduce new people to Nick's Place. Several of the guests, made it a point to thank me for what we are doing and share their story of one of their family members.

The United Way of the National Capital Area has approved Nick's Place to participate in its campaigns. Please ask your friends and family to choose Nick's Place, member #9659 when making their decisions to support the United Way.

After ten years of steady use, Nick's Place got a face lift, thanks to a Capital Improvements Grant from Philip L. Graham Fund. We were able to completely redo the kitchen which allows for more work and prep space; one bathroom downstairs, replace the downstairs flooring and install a new energy efficient boiler and water heater. And, it looks like we may still have enough for a new roof. The kitchen was done by Kevin Mack who is a friend of one of our board members. Kevin and his team understood how important it was to stay on deadline and keep our kitchen operational. They did an excellent job. We are thrilled and so are our guys.

Finally, I just wanted to briefly tell you about the newest member of the Nick's Place team, Barry Davis. Barry has counseling experience and eighteen years clean and sober. He has established a great rapport with our guys and has been busy helping our new residents secure employment. (That's not an easy job in this economy). Barry jumped in with both feet and has proven up to the challenge. I'm hoping to tell you more about his experience at Nick's Place in our end of year newsletter.

Current Residents

I am happy to report that our guys are doing well in their jobs and in their job search.

Steve C. is working at a popular bagel shop. We've been the beneficiary of lots of delicious bagels that they allow employees and non-profits to take at the end of the day.



Rob S. and Tim D. continue to be employed at a garage door company here in Beltsville, Md that has been a great friend to Nick's Place and is always ready to give our guys an opportunity. I recently met with the owner who bragged about all the Nick's Place residents who have been employees over the years and what wonderful employees they are.

Daniel has secured a job at a local "friendly" ice cream and diner shop. He works along side another Nick's Place former resident.

Dwayne continues his search for work and in the meantime is volunteering at an the non-profit ARC thrift store in the area and is working on projects with my husband Barry, around Nick's Place.

The guys are also putting together a video for Nick's Place to be submitted to the Catalogue for Philanthropy (CFP). Nick's Place was chosen in June by CFP along with 69 other small Washington based non-profits as one of the best in Washington. We were judged on program and cost efficiency and program impact. CFP has given each selected non-profit the opportunity to create a 30-60 second video about our program. If selected, we will have the opportunity to have our video professionally produced and it will be featured at the November 8th kickoff event in Washington, DC. The theme is the power of "ate" using words that end in "ate". For example, celebrate, congregate, initiate, there are many, many "ate" words that can describe our program. I asked the guys if they'd like to participate in creating something. I heard the first draft yesterday.

Here's what Rob had to say about the process.

"It's amazing how much talent lives at Nick's Place. Tim and I sat in his room free styling trying to find the perfect lines for the video. For those of you not savvy to rap slang terms, we were going back and forth rapping different possible lines to a beat on his stereo, creating what would become the script for our video. One of us would fill in that perfect word that the other couldn't seem to create. The end result was so awesome I still get a sense of pride hearing or reading it.

We wasted our talent for so long it was a blessing to be able to utilize it for something positive and productive. Nothing could have been more rewarding then to give back to a place that has given me everything I have and made me the person I am proud to be today. Not to mention how great a time I had working on this video! It's another reminder of how talented and creative we are at Nick's Place and how bright are future is if we continue doing the right thing. Just wait until you see the end result! We are a family and with each other the possibilities are limitless. Pretty soon you'll see us on the big screen!"

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 take a tremendous amount of courage, determination and surrender to begin the process of recovery. I'll let you know in our year-end newsletter if our video made it to the finals! Even if don't, you'll be able to see it on our website.

Former Residents

Tony W. who was mentioned in an earlier newsletter has secured a job that utilizes his recent degree in Economics from George Mason University. Tony had the opportunity to meet with Rick Powell the President of PMG in Columbia, Maryland before he started his interview process. Rick acted as a mentor as such to help Tony prepare.

Baz F. was recently passed the test and was accepted into the Sheet Metal Workers of America apprenticeship program.

Sean K. is now General Manager for an East Coast pizza franchise. Sean has extensive restaurant

experience. He has also just purchased his first home with his girlfriend.

Bubba S. recently celebrated one year clean and sober with his family in attendance. Congrats to Bubba.

Andrew M. recently celebrated four years clean and sober and was promoted at his job which means he now is in charge of his own installation truck.

Jeff R. recently bought his own home and two of our former resident are his roommates.

All of these accomplishments demonstrate that recovery for young people is possible and reaps tremendous rewards and growth. We continue to be very proud of our young men and their achievements.

Final Thoughts

Each time I have the opportunity to fill you in on our latest news, I realize how fortunate we are to have so many friends who care about our program and are happy for our success and the success of our young men.

Next month, we will be starting our 11th year of serving young men in recovery. It is still challenging, rewarding, frustrating and exciting. We could have never imagined all this project held for us. As I have said many times before, I only wish there had been a Nick's Place for Nick.

I hope that you will share Nick's Place with your friends, families, faith community and work colleagues. I know that when one of my friends has faith in a program it holds a lot of weight with me. So, don't be shy about spreading the news. **And, don't forget to tell everyone that there is another way to contribute to Nick's Place through the United Way, member #9659.** Many workplaces also have matching gift programs that can double a contribution. Please forward this e-mail to someone you know. It's easy, just use the forward e-mail function below.

Finally, if you'd like to be a resource to Nick's Place by cooking a meal, mentoring a resident or teaching a class on your career, please contact me at rheamcvicker@verizon.net or 301-937-0455.

I'll be sure to let you know the outcome of our video and you'll be able to see it on our website.

Until then, thank you again for all you do for Nick's Place.

P.S. We are now sending newsletters by e-mail via Constant Contact. It is cost effective for Nick's Place and it allows us to communicate more frequently with you. I'd love to add you to our e-mail list. Just contact me at rheamcvicker@verizon.net.

