

Rescue

R E P O R T



“It can happen to anyone.”

Anne and her husband, Phil, just moved into a small apartment in Lodi. It's not much, she'd tell you, but it's home. And home is something Anne doesn't take for granted.

Growing up in a well-to-do New England family, Anne set her sights on a warmer climate and attended college in Florida. But, she says with a laugh, “I always bring the cold weather with me.” She contracted pneumonia during an unusual cold snap and missed so many classes, she couldn't catch up. After a few years making a living in Florida, she moved to California to be with her sister “and look for a husband.” She met Phil and they've been together for 25 years.

The bottom falls out

For several years, Anne and Phil lived just like any other couple. Phil worked in construction and Anne took on various positions in nursing, accounting, and sales. Then the bottom fell out.

Anne and her husband both developed severe back problems that required surgery—Phil's from the strain of his construction job, Anne's from degenerative disc disease. Neither was able to work. With no income, their bills mounted and they could no longer pay their rent.



“Everyone thinks (being homeless) is because of alcohol or drugs, but that's not always the case. Everyone nowadays lives paycheck to paycheck,” says Anne. “To be homeless (in my family) is unheard of. But it happened.”

A downhill turn

They lived in Phil's truck until the registration came due and they were unable to pay. The truck was

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RON MARLETTE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”

—Galatians 6:9-10, NIV

A Time for Renewal

This Easter morning, up to 154 people will wake up to a world of possibilities in our new Bridge to Life Center. Completing Phase II of this multi-year project was a huge step forward—and we owe it all to generous friends of Mission **SOLANO**...like you!

I can't thank you enough for having touched so many lives with your generosity in 2009. The numbers alone speak for themselves: 96,000 meals served to hungry men, women, and children...17,000 nights of shelter provided to our homeless neighbors. And then there's the care you can't quantify, like offering hope, encouragement, and the love of Jesus Christ to people at their lowest ebb.

To meet the needs of everyone staying in the Bridge to Life Center in the coming month—to provide food, shelter, counseling, and other services—we need \$108,000. I hope you'll send a gift today to help the less fortunate of Solano County renew their lives and rejoin their community as full, active participants.

I think you'll be especially inspired by Anne's story in this issue of *Rescue Report*. Like Anne and her husband, hundreds of people right here in Solano County are just a paycheck away from being on the streets. I thank God for friends like you who help provide the resources for them to get back on their feet.

Please consider what you can give to make this Easter season special for our guests at Mission **SOLANO**. I wish you a joyous celebration of our Lord's resurrection!

Sincerely,

"It can happen to anyone." *continued from page 1*

impounded and they couldn't afford to get it back. "Once you lose your vehicle and you're homeless," Anne remembers, "everything goes downhill."

...So far downhill that the couple were reduced to sleeping under a bush and washing up at a local Starbucks. "I would always have my tea because I still had my dignity," Anne laughs. Then another couple in the park told them about Mission **SOLANO**.

Small steps forward

"Thank God! The Mission helped a lot!" Anne and Phil found jobs, saved some money, and moved into

an apartment. Three years later, recurring health problems and job losses forced them back onto the street. This time, they came directly to Mission **SOLANO** to get back on their feet. "It's like that phrase, 'One step forward, three steps back,'" she says. "It's mini steps forward, but we're getting there!"

It's been about two years since Anne and Phil last left Mission **SOLANO**. Today, the frightening experience of homelessness is just a memory. "When you realize that you're homeless, it's heartbreaking and mind-breaking," Anne recalls. "It's not the way I was brought up.

It's just a whole different life. It's very stressful."

Even though their trials are far from over—Phil is recovering from a minor stroke—Anne describes herself and her husband as "survivors" and she looks forward to a peaceful future. "I want us to grow old together, to be happy, healthy seniors sitting in our rocking chairs, watching TV... in our own place."

Because you care, people like Anne and Phil who have fallen on hard times have a chance to start again and enjoy the simple pleasures of life. Thank you for caring!

You Helped Build a Bridge to Life!

Mission **SOLANO** has come a long way in a short time: from sheltering homeless people on the floor of an old bus to cutting the ribbon on our Bridge to Life Center last November! Today, up to 154 men, women, and children are able to regroup, recover, and restore their lives in this second phase of our beautiful new facility, all thanks to generous and forward-thinking friends like you.



The Center provides long-term transitional housing for people who are serious about getting their lives back on track and breaking the cycle of poverty and homelessness. Built on three and a half acres, upon completion it will provide separate housing for men, women, and families plus buildings for day care, education, and chapel services.

Your support is still very much needed as we go forward. Please visit our website at www.missionsolano.org to take a virtual tour and find out what you can do to help. **Thank you for making Phase II a reality—now on to Phase III!**



Please **Pray** With Us!

We appreciate your prayers on behalf of Mission **SOLANO** and those we serve. Please pray for:

- Physical, mental, and spiritual health for all of our guests and residents.
- A generous outpouring of donated food and other goods from friends in our community.
- Continued financial support to help us meet the immediate and long-term needs of those we serve.
- God's hand to guide our staff, Board members, and volunteers.
- And join us in praise that more men, women, and children are being sheltered and cared for in our new Bridge to Life Center.



Mission **SOLANO** is planning an Easter feast for over 200 men, women, and children, and we need your help! Can you donate hams, fresh and canned vegetables, rolls, or other food items? And would you consider volunteering to cook, serve or clean up?

We'll also share the Easter story and the hope of Christ's resurrection with our guests. And, of course, we'll have an egg hunt and Easter baskets for all the kids! You can help by donating filled or empty baskets, wrapped candy, and plastic eggs to fill with candy.

For more information about helping with the festivities, please call the Mission at (707) 422-1011.

Easter Season **NEEDS**

Can you help out by providing any of the following? Drop off your donations at 740 Travis Boulevard during normal business hours.

Thank you!

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| ■ Food for the pantry (all kinds) | ■ Cleaning products | ■ Diapers |
| ■ Paper plates | ■ Toilet paper | ■ Razors |
| ■ Plasticware | ■ Paper towels | ■ Personal hygiene items (male and female) |
| ■ Napkins | ■ Socks | ■ Blankets |
| | ■ Shampoo | |

Food, blankets, and personal hygiene items are essential and always needed!

Mark Your CALENDAR!

More events and updates at www.missionsolano.org.

APRIL 4 (SUNDAY)

Easter Lunch, Basket Giveaway and Egg Hunt

Lunch and events are scheduled from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. See the article on this page for more information.

JUNE 28 (MONDAY)

Annual Golf Tournament

Come join us for our Annual Golf Tournament at 12:00 p.m. at Green Valley Golf Course.

Visit www.missionsolano.org.



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