



## Spring 2014 Newsletter

*“After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.”* —Nelson Mandela

Dear Friend of Repairers,

Join us as we honor all mothers and fathers during this season of love and gratitude. Rather than sending you a beautifully designed card with a brief message, we want to offer you a detailed, and we hope uplifting, update on our work with Milwaukee’s poorest of the poor, many of whom are mothers and fathers themselves.

**Inspiration** - We want to start by thanking the many who have used their own special actions to celebrate with and remember us in their prayers, service and donations these past several months of 2014. Your endeavors have not only been noticed and appreciated, but they have deeply touched the hearts of Repairers of the Breach members, volunteers, visiting guests, staff and board. A visit from members of St. James and Good Shepherd parishes in Menomonee Falls to wash the feet of our members on Holy Thursday was simply awe inspiring.

**Emergency Warming Room** - Yes, it is true that our warming room was open overnight 51 times during the recent brutal weather (including two Sunday nights—the center is typically closed on Sunday). This is in addition to our ongoing ministry of providing the only daytime drop-in refuge and resource center in the region. As for so many, our operating expenses have doubled. Your financial donations this past severe winter were a Godsend, and we thank you. You, indeed, helped us save lives.

**Our Expanded Program For Veterans** - We are extremely grateful that Mark Foreman, an outreach volunteer from the Milwaukee Homeless Veterans Initiative, continues to work with veterans each Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Mark’s successful outreach meets the special needs of our veterans in several ways: by creating meaningful social connections with other veterans, by hosting lively and supportive discussions on challenges veterans are experiencing and by providing direct help in obtaining needed assistance. Mark is enlarging the scope of his program by partnering with VA HUD/VASH staff (Department of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing). They will serve with Mark every first and third Wednesday of the month and will include an RN, social worker, and peer support staff. Their collective focus will be on connecting our veterans with service providers (medical, psychiatric, substance abuse and vocational guidance) and exploring housing options.

**Nutritious Food** - We promised to focus on providing more nutritious food for our members in 2014. Thanks to your help, we are succeeding! Our Brown Bag Lunch program coordinated by Mary Ann Davel of St. John Vianney Parish continues to provide excellent balanced nutrition, as do several noon lunch meals that students, parishes and individuals bring and help serve. Bless them! As we now concentrate on offering nutritious breakfasts, we need milk, boxes of cereal, oatmeal, honey, juice, coffee, cream and fresh or canned fruit to add to the new healthier breakfast menu we are serving as often as we can. These donations truly make a difference! Your immediate response to donating specific basic supplies cut our costs to purchase them by 50% during April of this year.

**Free Health Care** - Our free clinic continues to thrive and be an active beacon of help and hope to those struggling with basic medical needs. Here, too, because of its success and its convenient location, many more poor and homeless persons are seeking medical help. We need more volunteer doctors, nurses, medical students and adult volunteers to address this growing need. If you want to offer your services or donate supplies for the clinic, call Carolyn Slater at 414-342-1065, or e-mail her at [mc.repairers5812@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mc.repairers5812@sbcglobal.net).

**Literacy Center** - Thanks to the diligence of Rebecca North, the Literacy Committee and our partnership with Milwaukee Achievers, the Jim Heidenreich Learning Center is up and functioning very well. Program Coordinator Sister Kathy is pleased about the number of members who are asking to be tutored. Because of this success, however, she needs more tutors to help those who are saying, "I want to get my GED," "I want to read better" and "I need help." If you are interested in helping and are available on either Monday or Wednesday mornings, please fill out the "Get Involved" form on our website ([www.repairers.org/get-involved.html](http://www.repairers.org/get-involved.html)), and let Sister Kathy know how to contact you.

**Board of Directors** - Through our new Boardstar process, we continue to achieve one of the important goals within our strategic plan, which is to add new members to the board of directors. Monique Taylor and Dan Williams are the most recent additions. They are both very motivated and bring strong professional values along with extensive expertise in finance, human relations, supervision, fund raising and community outreach. We now have three new board members. If you are interested in becoming a candidate for the board, please e-mail Joyce Roesler directly at [jr.repairers5812@att.net](mailto:jr.repairers5812@att.net). Your interest will be welcome, and you will be contacted immediately.

**Financial Health** - As part of its normal and necessary due diligence, the board of directors requested and received an analysis of our financial status from our executive director, Pastor West, and two financially knowledgeable board members, Pastor Frank Bryson and Dan Williams. Now that we have a precise picture of our financial status, the board will proceed to work with appropriate people using this data to plan a budget and make informed decisions.

*Now we are asking you to once again open your hearts to the neediest among us. Financial donations received will be appreciated and well used, in any amount you can afford.*

These days, there are so many more people to help, and there is so much more work for us to do. As always, your prayers, kind messages, suggestions and personal visits are enormously encouraging to us all. Come visit us soon.

Sincerely yours,



Joyce Roesler  
Board President



Rev. James W. West, Jr.  
Executive Director