

New Horizons Ministries

A NEWSLETTER OF HOPE TO FRIENDS OF NEW HORIZONS

MAY 2003



Happy 25th Anniversary New Horizons

By Susie Steinke

New Horizons has a rich history of stories and traditions. This fall, we turn 25 years old—years full of growing pains, God's provision and helping Seattle's homeless youth.



Father Don Ericson

New Horizons Ministries was founded by Father Don Ericson in 1978. Father Don lived at the Bread of Life Mission on Second Avenue, and served without salary as interim chaplain. He was also involved with Operation Nightwatch, an interdenominational organization of volunteer ministers who walked the streets at night in order to provide a Christian presence on the streets. God began to give Father Don a heart for homeless youth. He was struck by the fact that there wasn't anywhere for youth living on the streets to get services, and that the youth felt the adult shelters were not a welcoming or safe place. Father Don was a visionary and began developing a plan for a full-service ministry for street youth that would include food, clothing, counseling, referral services and transitional housing. Eventually Father Don moved on, but not before he created a volunteer base to continue the work (a board of directors and direct-service staff).

Now, in our 25th year, New Horizons *owns* its own building. We have morning and evening drop-in. We serve dinner 5 nights a week, and are open 4 mornings a week. We have 32 food groups that purchase, prepare, serve and clean up meals for the kids. We have a clothing room as well as showers and washer and dryers. We have 22 paid staff. We have an army of volunteers who donate their time to staff our drop-in & self-care center, do outreach, encourage the kids in their walk with and towards Jesus, build supportive relationships with the kids, oversee the operations and integrity of the ministry, facilitate Life Discovery experiences, provide job training, do our books, clean our building, help us raise money, pray without ceasing, be our advocate and much more. We have thousands of donors who give financially to ensure that New Horizons has a future to help youth living on the streets. We have resources, direction and vision.

Unfortunately, because we live in a fallen world, I think there will always be a need for New Horizons. As the past 25 years have demonstrated, the issues the youth face remain the same—however, each youth is unique, with their own life story and pain that brings them to the streets. The youth we serve are very much “teenagers” with all that implies—defying authority, trying to find themselves and how they fit into this world. They are abused and abandoned by parents and other authority figures and are continually looking for love and acceptance. In the 70's, they were baby boomers, not trusting anyone over 40. Today they are generation Y, not trusting anyone, period. They are artists, chefs, computer programmers, readers, writers, poets, singers, video game players, musicians, athletes, salespeople, animal lovers, encouragers, teachers and preachers. They are youth with potential that need a place of safety to explore these gifts that have been buried inside them. They need to know that they are special and that God does have a plan and purpose for their lives. They need people to be there for them in good times and in bad. They need a place to make mistakes and to try again. They need a place to call home. They need *us* to be Jesus' hands and feet.



2nd Avenue Drop-In Center

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NHM 25th Anniversary Continued...



1406 Summit - NHM's second drop-in

One of the things I've enjoyed most in my 11-plus years with New Horizons - in addition to working with the youth - is how it's a great example of the body of Christ working together. Community support and networking has been incredible. Whether it's for the agency, a youth

or an individual—we make needs known and people continually lend a helping hand. I'm still amazed at how much we accomplished in the remodel of our current building through volunteer work groups. We have furnished many apartments for youth with donations—not to mention stocked our clothing room. Through our community network, we just found someone who is willing to give a youth cello lessons - something this young woman says helps her remember better days. Over the years, individuals have expressed financial need, and soon after money has mysteriously appeared in their box as an anonymous gift, or a car was gifted, or notes of encouragement were found on their desk. I have been moved many times by Rita as she visits donors in their homes, consoles them in crisis, and visits them in the hospital. We have spent hours praying for youth, donors, the board, and staff—both paid and volunteer. We have seen and shared many stories of God's miraculous hand. We have celebrated births and mourned deaths. We have worshiped and toiled together. We have challenged and encouraged each other. We have hurt each other, sought forgiveness and grown. We have been able to learn more about the character of Christ because we have chosen to serve and love one another in the way of Jesus.



Take the virtual tour of our current drop-in center on our website, www.nhmin.org

Thank you for being a part of the blessing that is God's work in New Horizons. Thank you for being a part of our mission for the past 25 years—being in relationship with homeless youth, serving and loving in the way of Jesus, equipping youth to leave street life.

The New Clothes Dance by Susie Steinke



I sat there, in the self-care center, chatting with kids as they came in and out of the clothing room. It reminded me of a dance of sorts. They would try something on and change their minds about what they were looking for. As they twirled in and around the clothing room I wondered what they were specifically looking for? Did they want something to keep them warm? Did they want something that they would feel good wearing? Mostly they wanted jeans, t-shirts and shoes that actually fit. The fun part, though, was watching when they found something obviously brand-new with the price tag still on it. The dance would get big and loud, as if reaching an exciting crescendo. They would proudly show their friends and surrounding staff. "Look, look what I found! And it's brand-new!" they would sing while doing minuets across the drop-in center. After finding the rest of their treasures—clothes, new socks, toothbrushes and the ever-coveted hair gel—the dance continued. They would schlep their belongings into the shower. They would take every advantage of their 15 minute limit. I imagine them first getting off all the dirt and grime that's accumulated since their last shower (whenever that was). Then I picture them just enjoying the water, the heat, the steam. Maybe even relaxing. Once out of the shower, it takes them almost as long to get out of the bathroom. They dry off, put on their new clothes. They take great care in drying and styling their hair. Then comes the grand finale. This production would conclude with the kids examining themselves in front of the mirror. And with pride and satisfaction they would "bust a move" or some of the guys would do Karate moves in the mirror. I was reminded of my own adolescence, when I went out shopping and got something new that made me feel particularly good. I remember my sister laughing at me as she caught me dancing in front of the mirror in my new outfit. Do you remember that feeling? That feeling that maybe if I can change my outward appearance, then maybe my insides can change too—or better yet, maybe something good will happen to me today?

It matters that we have a clothing room, washers & dryers, showers, toothbrushes and hair gel. I was proud to be a part of New Horizons that day. Proud to be a part of an organization that really cares about the whole of these teens. Even the part of them that needs to have their hair just right and empowers them to "bust a move" in front of the mirror in the drop-in center.

Housewarming by Sarah Murphy-Kangas

Last weekend I had the great joy of going to a housewarming party for Lily. A couple months ago, Lily and I were running errands together, and she said, "Me and my boyfriend are going to have an apartment by October, and we're going to have all our friends over and have lots of good food." I summoned up as much excitement as I could, but privately maintained quite a bit of skepticism about this plan. As staff at NHM, we love it when the youth can dream about what's ahead for them, but it's so hard when these dreams are never realized. Since that conversation, Lily hunted up several forms of rental assistance, and her boyfriend is working two jobs. They scraped up enough to pay the deposit and first and last month's rent, and we were there to celebrate with them.

My husband and I pulled up to the apartment complex, and Lily was standing out in the cold waiting to open the door since their phone wasn't hooked up yet. Her little apartment was clean and sparse, and someone had hung up a metallic "Congratulations!" banner on the wall. Her friend works at the Dollar Store, and they had several snacks from there, laid out on disposable platters. They also had several children's card games from the Dollar Store, which were carefully displayed and ready to be played. Lily's sister and brother-in-law came as well as one friend, and the other eight guests were all New Horizons staff. We all brought gifts—fry pans, utensils, a fleece blanket, a toaster, dishes, candles. Lily opened them and exclaimed over each one, and I couldn't help but think of all the parties and showers that have been given for me in my lifetime, the literally hundreds of gifts that have been given in my honor. Somehow, this little grouping of household items seemed more precious than all of those.

Since she was twelve (she's now seventeen), Lily has been living with various family members that haven't wanted her, and have left her to take care of her own emotional and physical needs. Most recently she got kicked out of her grandparents' house. She's always been extemporaneous, always the one getting the scraps, always the afterthought. Sitting in her little living room on the floor, I was so proud of her and so eager for her to feel our love for her. And I thought, "How much more does God want to pour over her his love and goodness! How he longs to give her all the fortunes that have been taken away from her!"

I went away from the party feeling that I had been given a gigantic blessing, and was sad for all the people in my circle of friends and family who never get the chance to know people like Lily. A couple days later, I read this from Psalm 36— "God, your people seek shelter, safe in the warmth of your wings. They feast at your full table, satisfy their thirst in your cool stream, for you are the fount of life, you give us light and we see." I was reminded that God does not forget about people like Lily, and *He* is the one who gives shelter and safety, who satisfies our hunger and thirst. A few NHM staff and I had the privilege of coming alongside God in his care for Lily, but he has been with her all along. She has never been an afterthought to Him, never been extemporaneous, and I was glad for at least a few hours where this was readily apparent.

Family Needs



URGENT - New Underwear: Men's sizes 24-36. Women's 4-8. Contact Abra ext.130 or abrag@nhmin.org.

Gift Certificates: For youth participating in Life Discovery or the mentorships. Certificates for movies, grocery stores, clothing stores, Target, fastfood, Rite Aid, etc. Contact Leslie at ext. 116 or lesliem@nhmin.org.

Change Machine: As we continue to deal with the needs of metered parking. Contact Darlene at ext. 100 or darlenek@nhmin.org.

Skilled Labor: John, our new Facilities Manager, wants to network with people who can volunteer their skilled labor to aid in the upkeep of our building. If you are a carpenter, plumber, electrician, painter, etc. and would like to be remembered when things inevitably come up, contact John at ext. 102 or johnj@nhmin.org.

Phone Volunteer: We need help covering the phones during office hours (M-F 9-4). Contact Darlene at ext. 100 or darlenek@nhmin.org.

Late Night Outreach has several needs: Little black or navy stretchy gloves, black or navy scarves, assorted Snacks in small packages—(M&M's, fruit snacks, cookies), granola bars, "Cup o' Noodles", bottled water, individual packets of hot chocolate, individual packets of apple cider and 16.4 oz bottles of propane for their heater. Contact Christie at ext. 112 or christies@nhmin.org



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NEW HORIZONS MINISTRIES

FOUR

*Celebrate
NHM's 25th
Anniversary*

*at the
Dessert Extravaganza*

November 7, 2003



Saturday
June 14

Pre-register by June 1st,
to ensure your Walk t-shirt

*Raise money for New Horizons.
Walk the beautiful Seward Park Loop.
Eat and fellowship at the BBQ.
Enjoy the day with your NHM friends.*

For more information
www.nhmin.org
Susie at ext. 108
susies@nhmin.org