

Wings



Epworth Village
a change for the better

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York, Nebraska

Perseverance - James' story

By: Kerry Hoffschneider, Community Relations Director

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” James 1 verses 2-4

In this case, perseverance finished its work in the heart of a young man named James Reyes.

“I was 14 when I came to Epworth Village about 12 years ago. I remember, because it was right before my birthday in October. I knew I had problems. I was already seeing a counselor because of the issues I was dealing with. I had behavioral problems, depression and I manipulated people a lot. A lot of my depression was from anger, from the abuse when I was younger. My step-father physically and mentally abused me. That is how I ended up moving with my aunt to Nebraska. My mom then moved here. That was my growing up, living with my mom and my aunt, just alternating between the two of them. There was not a lot of consistency or structure, so I just went wherever I could get away with the most.”

“No one would have known about the abuse if it hadn't been for my cousin. We were getting ready to run through



CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

returning to home away from home

During the early morning hours of September 24, 2007 at Coleman Treatment Group Home, a place she calls, “my home away from home,” Life Skills Trainer, Jacque Bethune found her own “life skills” put to the test as an intruder’s bullet struck her while she was diligently working for children and



Pictured is Jacque Bethune, Life Skills Trainer, and Dave Rea, Coleman Unit Manager

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

what's inside this month....

BIG give, BIG success..... pg. 2

Kruse Group Home Boys Volunteer of the Year Award pg. 2

One bike at a time..... pg. 3

Non-monetary donations... pg. 4

Returning Home cont. pg. 4

Monetary donations pg.5

Honors & Memorials pg. 6

Meet Dontavious..... pg. 6

James' Story continued pg.7

Current Needs pg. 8

BIG give, BIG success for Epworth Village

By Steve Moseley-York News-Times



Tammy and Ray Boston are pictured with their son, Syras and baby girl, Sabryna.

YORK-The local area was blessed with a perfect day to celebrate the work of an angel Saturday, May 17 in York. Tammy's Big Give, a benefit project to mark the passing of her 30th birthday by York resident Tammy Boston, ended with a bang during festivities on the grounds at Epworth Village.

Boston, with priceless assistance from many, set out on a goal to raise \$30,000 and 30,000 items in 30 days. The final tabulations were announced by Tammy as a celebratory crowd looked on and cameras clicked on a beautiful Saturday afternoon.

A trailer filled with 51,784 donated items was opened and its contents stacked high, wide and long for all to see as the roll of donors was read aloud for all to hear. The Bostons then passed a check for \$11,500 in cash to Tom McBride. "This came out of a great young lady's heart," said McBride, noting that the Bostons themselves have provided a home for six foster kids.

During the celebration, 200 balloons were released, one for each donor to the project. Boston also heard thanks and congratulations from York Mayor Chuck Harris and Nebraska State Senator Greg Adams. She was presented, appropriately, an "angel" food cake by Epworth clients who toted balloons and a colorful "Happy Birthday Tammy" banner in her honor. Other gifts came to the family as well and in return Tammy presented awards of her own to some of the many who helped with the project. Tears were many and frequent throughout.

At the end, everyone gathered under the trees for a meal provided by donations from several sources, to hear live Christian

music donated by band "Higher than I" and to play a few holes of miniature golf on a portable course brought to the festival by Boston's parents.

McBride said when he was approached by Boston about staging an effort similar to Oprah's Big Give, he had "no idea what to expect." He soon found out. "I have never seen anybody so well organized as this young lady. There's absolutely no way we can repay this. I've run out of adjectives to describe this young lady, her husband and her friends."

What they accomplished together, he said, will have "tremendous impact" on Epworth Village and the boys it serves.



Kruse Group Home Boys Recipient of Volunteer of the Year Award



Kruse Group Home resident, Travis, accepted the Grand Island Salvation Army "Feeding Program Volunteers of the Year 2007" award on behalf of Epworth Village from Salvation Army Captain Jeff Richardson. Volunteers from Kruse Group Home, one of Epworth's six residential treatment facilities, have spent 1,200 hours over three years helping to prepare meals at the facility.



one bike at a time...

YORK-If anyone can put together eight bikes in about 30 minutes, a group of savvy financial planners can.

That was the case at a Team Dynamix team building exercise held at the conclusion of a workshop hosted by RiverSource, a financial planning firm owned by Ameriprise Financial Services. RiverSource believes in taking part in philanthropic activities in the communities where they hold their trainings. In this case, RiverSource worked with Team Dynamix to provide the boys at Epworth Village with some shiny, new bikes.

The group met for the workshop at Cornerstone Bank and after a long day of learning about new investment funds and how the dollar competes with the yen, they were ready to remove their suit coats and roll up their dress-shirt sleeves for some bike-building fun.

Pat Whelan with Team Dynamix said the company, through RiverSource, has given out 1,200 bikes across the country to facilities in need. Whelan said the bike-building exercise is just one of the many inspirational programs they conduct to help businesses boost morale and teamwork. He said their team does approximately 350 events a year with groups ranging from 5 to 3,000 people across the globe in such diverse places as Panama and Hawaii.

The 20-inch Huffy bikes came with all the "bells and whistles" including horns, lights and special decorative touches added on by the bike builders. Each bike also came with a helmet and safety instruction sheet created by the bike-building teams. To reward their efforts, each participant received a medal that said, "Making a difference one bike at a time."

The bikes will light up the lives of the 80-plus boys, ages 7 to 18, that Epworth Village serves each day. Brand new bikes are a rarity in Epworth's six residential



Laurie Stuhr with Cornerstone Investments and Ron Eckloff of Kearney work together to build bikes during a Team Dynamix team-building exercise after a workshop put on by RiverSource Distributors, Inc. held at Cornerstone Bank.

treatment facilities that help the children overcome their struggles with an array of behavioral disorders. The eight Huffy bikes will be ridden by hundreds of children in the years to come.

"We can't thank RiverSource and Team Dynamix enough for this generous gift," said Tom McBride, Executive Director of Epworth. "Recreational items such as this give the children we serve an opportunity to just be kids while they are in treatment here. What an awesome program this is for companies worldwide."

Bike-building team participant and local Cornerstone Bank financial planner, Laurie Stuhr said, "It feels good to work for a meaningful cause."

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Your gifts will be endowed to continue giving
year after year.*

Please make checks payable to Epworth Village Foundation

*For more information about the Foundation call
Brien Alley, Development Director, at 402-362-3353.*



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Sigma Tau at York College
York College Men's Basketball Team

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Ellis UMW
Osceola UMW
Sigma Tau – York College
Stromsburg UMW
Utica UMW

returning to home...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

families in need of help. In February of 2008, Bethune's co-workers at Epworth Village, or as she refers to them, "her family," celebrated her return to the profession she loves.

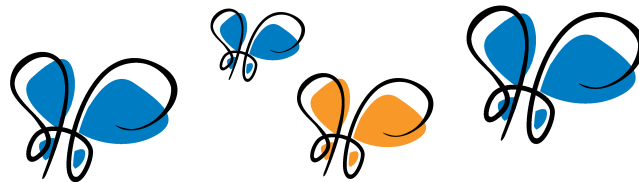
The healing journey, that will continue, has been a long one for the young woman, her husband Paul, their son, extended family, friends and the community. While the event will remain a tragic moment in history for Epworth, the event is also a testament to a woman's will to go on and an amazing heart to forgive.

"I feel that my job is important. I feel that I am doing something important with my life by helping others," she said. "I want to continue helping kids and that is why I am coming back. The work we do here is important; it's bigger than me getting shot."



Check out our website:
www.epworthvillage.org

The site is filled with stories about clients and staff! It has volunteer opportunities and our needs list. It also has ways to donate online! It's another great way to stay connected with Epworth Village, Inc.!



Monetary Donations January 1 to April 30, 2008

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Archer Zion UMW
Arnold UMW
Ashland UMW
Aurora UMC
Aurora UMW
Beaver Crossing UMW
Bellwood UMW
Blair First UMC
Bruning UMW
Burchard UMC
Burchard UMW
Cairo UMW
Callaway UMC
Central City UMW
Colby UMC
Columbus First UMC
Crawford UMW
Crawford Valley UMW
Culbertson UMW
Doniphan UMW
Fairbury UMC
Fairmont Community UMC
Friend UMC
Fullerton First UMC
Geneva UMW
Grand Island First UMC
Gretna UMW
Harvard First UMC
Harvard UMW

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Hastings Grace UMW
Hull UMC
Inland UMW
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Kenesaw UMC
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Loretto UMW
McCool Junction UMW
Miller UMC
Milligan UMC
Mitchell UMC
Mitchell UMW
Nebraska Annual Conference UMC
Omaha First UMW
Omaha Maplewood UMW
Omaha St. Paul UMC
Omaha St. Paul UMW
Orchard UMW
Pawnee City UMC
Ponca UMW
Prairie Rivers District UMW
Ralston Trinity UMW
Shelton UMW
Shickley UMC
Shickley UMW
Stark Valley UMW
Stromsburg UMW
Sutton Federated UMW
Sutton Salem UMC
Tilden Faith UMC
Trumbull UMW
Wausa UMW
Wilsonville UMW
Women's Division
York First UMW

Rohling Family Scholarship Fund
Lori Rohling

HOW EPWORTH HELPS CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

They helped me make better choices.

-Jesse

We trust and depend on each other more and we are able to talk to each other when we need each other.

-Ryan

We're closer together as a family and have come to understand each other better.

-Joe

I've learned to make the right choices on the right path.

-Isaiah

I can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

-Dakota

They took me in and got me ready to go home.

-Aaron

I'm learning to ignore negatives and enjoy life's positives.

-Shawn

Epworth has helped me with my self-esteem and they taught my family and me how to communicate better.

-Davie



Honors & Memorials

In Memory of...

Betty Rood
Mr. Warren Rood

Bob George
Mr. & Mrs. Jean Laffitte

Cathleen Joy Scarborough
Mrs. Virginia Scarborough

Deanna Teaford
Assurity Life Insurance Company
Epworth Village Inc.
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Jean F. O'Connor
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Fern Ham
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Mr. Wayman May

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Shirley Trauger

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Elsie Bolin

In Honor of...

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Mrs. Lori Rohling

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Opal Bowmaster

Lyle & Margaret Stock
Stock Seed Farms

Mikki McBride
NACBH

Paul Blanchard
Ellen Schroeder

St. Edward Public School
Administrators, Teachers, and Staff
St. Edward UM/Presbyterian Church

Meet Dontavious

Children are always watching, learning and growing. Dontavious was watching his mom draw as early as age three. It's around that time he said, "I wanted to draw too."

He said at ten years old, his creative hands really began to work. That's when he started drawing more and doing art projects, "Like making houses out of popsicle sticks."

Later on, he developed a broader range of artistic interests and the inspiration flowed from new places.

"You won't believe this, but poetry inspires me, like Shakespeare. After reading Romeo and Juliet, I drew a whole stage," he said.

Dontavious said he likes to draw people and anything else he can think of. He especially likes giving the drawings away to people. "I don't sell them. Maybe someday I'll be able to."

"I just like drawing. It calms me down. What really inspires me to draw is what is going on in the world."



Paulus Scholarship Fund

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Applicants must have been successfully discharged from Epworth Village or to a lower level of care
- Be positively involved in their community
- Submit a completed application
- Pursue studies at a Trade School, Community College, College or University

Selection is made by the Epworth Village Paulus Scholarship Fund Committee

**For more Information, Contact Brien Alley,
Development Director
at (402) 362-3353 or
email brien@epworthvillage.org**



James' story continued

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the sprinklers and she saw my bruises. My cousin told her mom about it," James said.

James said the counselor who was seeing him at age 14 found Epworth Village. He said he had also come to the point in his life that he knew there needed to be a change. "I was with the wrong people and I saw what they were doing and I didn't want my life to end up like that. I knew I had more potential than that. There were people who had told me that I had more potential. I knew I needed to get out of the situation and get right with myself."

At Epworth James found the tools to build a better life and the safe structure he needed to develop new skills and confidence to grow. He learned he could overcome the mental impacts of the abuse and other life challenges from the people at the family-centered treatment agency and the caring hearts he came across in his life once he left Epworth's doors and entered the world.

"I was at Mills Cottage and I could immediately see that people at Epworth believed in me. The school helped a lot too. I was able to focus on my studies there and actually did a lot better at school because you didn't have all the other distractions. The teachers showed that they cared and they did not put up with anything. At the public school you had all those other kids doing their thing and at the Epworth Village Learning Center, I could just focus on doing what I had to do," he said.

"Epworth showed me there are always choices..."

While finding himself, James also found a relationship with Jesus Christ. "In Spiritual Life we would do Bible studies and I actually started reading the Bible when I was there and it helped a lot."

James was at Epworth approximately eight months. "Then I went back home with my mom. It was kind of hard, I have to admit. I was 15 and I was trying to utilize what I had learned at Epworth, sometimes that was a battle and I fell back into my old routine."

Still, the consistent care of the dedicated people at Epworth kept creeping into his life. "I graduated high school and started trying to re-discover myself. When I was packing to move out from home, I found a book given to me from Epworth. It was called, 'Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul.' There was a message in there from Sherlock Valley; he was a Life Skills Trainer. It said something to the effect of, 'Use this book to make chicken soup for your own soul.' I have never forgotten that."

As a high school graduate, James was exploring his career and education options. "One day I was watching MTV and there was a guy on there doing hair and he was talking about how he made all this money and I thought, 'I could do that.' So, I went to Joseph's College of Beauty and tried it out."

Though James did meet the pretty, young woman named Tracie who would become his future wife at the college, he did not finish school because his mother wanted him home to help her. However, that didn't stop James from building a life with Tracie and continuing to seek the ideal career for himself and his family.

"...Every choice impacts your life so try and make the right ones."

On April 17, 2004, the couple was married at the Raymond United Methodist Church in Raymond, NE. "Rod Lyon married us. We had always been afraid to go to church because I had gotten into tattoos and piercings previously and we thought maybe people would judge us. My wife also had two children from a previous marriage and we didn't know how people would look at that. But my wife's best friend had met Pastor Rod and said he was a great person. So, we started going to church and they accepted us openly. It's the best thing that ever happened to us."

James worked for awhile at the Nebraska State Penitentiary in Lincoln. "I would see those guys in prison and I was getting really unhappy. You see the worst that is out there."

Then a new opportunity came forward to work at Nebraska Public Power District's Cooper Nuclear Station. "My wife said I could do it. She said, 'Just try, what is the worst thing they are going to say, no?' My wife is my biggest motivator and so I tried and I got the job."

James said he has been, "constantly learning," since getting the position at Cooper Nuclear Station. "We have a training every month. I work a rotating shift and there is the opportunity to work overtime too. I really enjoy my job."

He also loves his three girls and the fact that his wife is able to be a stay-at-home mom.

"When she is ready, she can go back to whatever she wants to do. As long as she is happy," he said about Tracie.

"Since I was at Epworth, I've gotten more than I ever deserved," James said.

The staff at Epworth disagrees; instead, they believe that due to the intervention of caring people, faith in God and his own perseverance, James deserves all the joy in life he has been able to obtain.

"Epworth showed me there are always choices. When I was working at the prison that is what I always told the inmates. I grew up in the poor area of a big city. I've seen people get shot and moms selling themselves for drugs.

I don't buy that you are a victim of your circumstances. It's all up to you to make a choice and go on. I didn't want to end up dead in a ditch or in prison. I just wanted to go on. Every choice impacts your life so try and make the right ones."



CURRENT NEEDS

Ways to help...

Raise money for a specific need at Epworth Village.

Have a paper drive for printer paper! We use tons of white copy paper!

Take part in the "Adopt-Our-School" or "Adopt-A-Cottage" programs.

Send in your Box Tops for Education! These go towards school supplies!

Keep those Campbell's UPC codes coming!

Have a group collect items such as, pots, pans, belts, socks, boxer-briefs, winter gloves or hats.

Invite a speaker to talk about Epworth to a church or civic group.

You can find a more complete list of needs on our website: www.epworthvillage.org or contact: Kerry Hoffschneider at (402) 362-3353 ext. 1144 or email kerry@epworthvillage.org.



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ATTENTION Everyone Saving Campbell's Labels

There is a **NEW** way to submit Campbell's labels. The only thing we need from the label is the UPC! Campbell's will not accept anything but the UPC! Please spread the word! **FRONT PANEL PRODUCT LABELS WILL NO LONGER BE ACCEPTED .**

Clip & save UPCs & lids from participating Labels for Education Brands.

See the examples of UPCs shown below. This is ALL we need to redeem Campbell's labels:



If you have any questions contact Megan Linnell at (402) 362-3353 ext. 1135! Thank you and keep saving those UPC labels off your Campbell's products!



If in doubt, send the ENTIRE label! And keep saving those lids too! Thank you! Our next van is on its way!

Box Tops for Education Update

We APPRECIATE all of your efforts to save the Box Tops for Education - KEEP saving! To check out the entire list of products with the Box Tops for Education coupon go to **www.boxtops4education.com**.



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