



Joseph's
Coat

Joseph's Coat

OCTOBER 2013

Recovery through Volunteering

Shopping Hours:

Monday and
Wednesday 9:00 -
12:00 and 1:00-
4:30

Donation Hours:

Tuesday and
Thursday 9:00 -
2:00

**FINANCIAL
SUPPORT IS FULLY
TAX DEDUCTIBLE.**

**WE DO NOT
PUBLISH, SELL,
TRADE OR RENT
DONOR
INFORMATION.**

The true spirit of Joseph's Coat is an expression of caring and giving to those in need. What many people don't realize is that volunteering at Joseph's Coat provides a stepping stone to recovery for those overcoming addiction. Many thanks to volunteer, Jake K., who contributed his story to this newsletter:

I had just moved to Saint Paul and Joseph's Coat was a block away from my new, sober home. Its mission – providing goods and services to those in need, within an

environment of dignity and respect – appealed to me. I was newly arrived in the Twin Cities to get "Minnesober," an alcoholic transplant from New York just out of rehab in Wayzata. With two hard-fought months of sobriety under my belt, I was beginning to understand dignity and respect again, and wanted to repay the community that had given me my life back.

So I volunteered for the first time in my life. After a brief interview, I was assigned a Thursday shift hanging and folding men's clothing. I walked in nervously my first

day, feeling as if the word "alcoholic" was tattooed across my forehead.

"Hey there. Where you from?" asked Whitey, a fellow volunteer who was already hanging dress shirts in the small section.

"New York," I answered as I folded a pair of jeans.

"How long you been here?" "A few months," I said. "Where do you live?"

"About a block from here."

"You in a sober house?" Whitey looked at me.

How did he know? I thought frantically. I reached up to



Cont'd on back

A Few Notes...

- ◆ PLEASE keep in mind when packing your donations that the majority of our volunteers are unable to lift heavy bags and boxes
- ◆ We cannot accept: TV sets, hangers (plastic or wire), sharp knives, medical equipment, inoperable small appliances, telephones or electronics
- ◆ We need women's feminine products (tampons and sanitary pads), toothbrushes and any travel size personal care products
- ◆ We have a new P.O. Box address: P.O. Box 16187, St. Paul, MN 55116
- ◆ We are now accepting Fall and Winter clothing

Volunteering (cont'd.)

my forehead, sure I'd be able to feel the tattoo.

Mark S., or Whitey, as he's known to everyone at Joseph's Coat, knew I was in sober living because he was also in a sober house, also a block or so away. He'd started volunteering a year or so earlier for many of the same



reasons I had. Joseph's Coat's outreach to *the community's neediest and often most marginalized* had appealed to us, as it has to many of those recovering from addiction to alcohol or drugs over the years. That recovery, if pursued beyond simple sobriety,

asks that we be of service in ways that many of us weren't when we were drinking or using. New to Saint Paul, many of us emerge from treatment eager to volunteer.

Saint Paul and the surrounding area, in fact, is home to one of the largest recovery communities in the country, fed in large part by the nationally prominent treatment centers that dot its landscape: Hazelden in Saint Paul and Center City, The Retreat in Wayzata, the PRIDE Institute in Eden Prairie and many others. A steady stream of the newly, grateful sober make Saint Paul their home, at least temporarily, as they begin to rebuild their lives. Many also stay, comfortable in a tolerant and welcoming community. Joseph's Coat, and other area charities, allow us in some small measure to give back to that community.

"Joseph's Coat has become a home away from home," said Whitey recently. "It is important to my recovery that I be of service in a way I really wasn't in my old life. Joseph's Coat and its other volunteers have been very, very welcoming."

"So many wonderful people from neighborhood sober houses have worked at Joseph's Coat. We have come to rely on them for strong volunteers from all over the world. We know that we are fortunate to be in our location."

- Cheryl Stern, Executive Director

Joseph's Coat, has proved beneficial to many communities in Saint Paul. My community is one of them, and for that I am very grateful.

We Need Volunteers!

By giving so freely of their time and talents, our volunteers help insure that the disadvantaged can meet their basic needs. We currently need volunteers for in-store help on Mondays and people willing to be on-call substitutes.



If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please put your mailing address label in the enclosed self-addressed envelope and mail it back to us. Thank you.