



ESM NEWS

3rd Quarter/ Spring
April 2011

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July 2010-June 2011

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Carolyn McDole
Executive Director

"The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad."

Psalm 126:3

During the season of Lent our hearts and minds are focused on the path that leads to the cross. As I read the "Daily Devotions – Discovering the Lessons of Lent" from First Lutheran, I am reminded of the lessons of sacrifice, temptation, choices, grace, salvation, compassion, humility and God's love for the world and everyone in the world.

All the lessons of Lent are an important part of our Christians lives. As we continue the journey, the destination is the cross and Christ's sacrifice for each of us. It is hard to believe He loved us so much He died for us.

"Living and practicing the lessons of Jesus"

ESM is the mission outreach to the low income and the homeless in Colorado Springs of our eight downtown churches. Our daily guide in serving those in crisis is to serve with compassion, understanding and humility. *"There but for the grace of God go P"*. Our goal at ESM is to provide for the "whole person" - the physical, the mental and the spiritual. Through the gifts of friends of ESM we are able to help many. Last year we provided 62,100 services to 19,594 individuals. Our largest program is our Housing and Utilities Programs providing 3,125 services with a value of \$689,206. Our Food Pantry provided 13,521 services valued at \$492,421. Our Jobs Department serviced 3,514 individuals with their job search with a value of \$434,871. Direct Services provides health, mental health, prescriptions, showers, clothing, gas and bus vouchers and other critical services. The value of these services is \$331,789. Our Annual Report for fiscal year 2009-10 can be viewed on our website at www.ecusocmin.org

"Gratitude and thanksgiving"

We are dedicated to managing efficiently the resources provided by our churches, individuals, foundations, grants, businesses and civic organizations. We are just as efficient in managing the talent of the many volunteers who enable us to serve the many who come to us for help. You have entrusted us with your resources and we are thankful.

We have been challenged this year as some funds have been reduced due to the challenges of the economy. The reverse side of this is the number of people needing help continues to grow.

We respectfully ask that you continue to support the clients of ESM to the level you can. Thank you again for your support and commitment to ESM. Please include ESM clients, volunteers and staff in your prayers.

You have an open invitation to visit ESM and to see for yourself the difference we make in people's lives through the generous support of many.

Blessings,

Carolyn McDole
Executive Director



Dedication, Commitment and Faithfulness

ESM lost a beloved, long-time volunteer, when **Vernon Jensen** passed away in February. Vern first volunteered for Ecumenical Social Ministries back in January 1984. If you looked up the word passionate in the dictionary it would give you words such as excited, affectionate, and inspirational. Vern was passionate about ESM and cherished each and every volunteer day at ESM.



Vern gave 16,380 hours at ESM over the 27 year period. While Vern's main 27 year volunteer emphasis was working with clients in the jobs program and direct services, he also gave of his time sorting food, mailings, maintenance, and holiday events. Vern's passion grew to volunteering 3 days a week. While Vern looked forward to working with the clients each day, he also looked forward to the camaraderie with the staff and volunteers.

When clients heard of Vern's passing away they stopped and reflected on the "little guy with the cowboy boots."

Vern was born on June 11, 1916 in Claire, Iowa and spent most of his childhood working on the family farm. He was married to Eldora Christensen in 1943 and served in the Army during World War II. After being honorably discharged the couple attended beauty school and graduated in 1959. They moved to Colorado Springs in 1965 where Vern went into partnership with his brother by opening the Americana Beauty College.

The school was sold in 1971. Vern went on to work for the City of Colorado Springs Parks and Recreation Department. He retired from the city in 1980 and enjoyed traveling to Army reunions in different locations throughout the United States. He also volunteered for the Acacia Meal program and was eventually hired to oversee the Acacia dances but had to retire in 2002 due to two knee replacements.

In 2008 Vern was awarded the Volunteer Presidential award for his many hours of service at ESM. He touched the lives of countless people through his selfless giving and humble spirit. The ESM Board, staff and volunteers share in the Jensen Family's loss and lift them up in their prayers.

Daniel Kieft, son of Volunteer John Kieft, died unexpectedly in October 2010 at the age of 31.

John and Connie Kieft adopted Daniel when he was 3 years old from a troubled home. Like his parents, Daniel did what he could to help others. Daniel had a passion for life and enjoyed being with others. Connie remembers a time Daniel spent his last \$12 to buy a chicken dinner for a homeless family. Daniel didn't have a lot, but he was always doing something to help others.

Daniel was a talented artist and vocalist. He played Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*, sang with the church choir and warmed the hearts of many at nursing homes and various family churches with his beautiful voice.

Daniel and his father loved to go hiking together and had many good hikes in Rocky Mountain National Park. He also enjoyed going to 24 Hour Fitness and running around Quail Lake to stay fit.

Daniel had started his 10th year in Bible Study Fellowship where he enjoyed studying God's word and sharing in his small groups. He also studied history and ancient cultures and the arts.

He loved his parents as he would always say "Mom and Dad you have always been there for me. I want you to know how much I appreciate that." Connie said "He would say things like that all the time and it would just get to your heart."

All who knew Daniel were blessed by his love of God, family and friends. We will miss his smiling face at ESM activities.

New hope, new job

Robert (named changed to protect privacy) came to ESM after he had been incarcerated in the El Paso County Jail. He left the facility with the clothes on his back and a piece of paper stating his name and where he had served his time. He had no ID, no home, and no relatives to help him make a fresh start. His former employer was willing to put him back to work and provide a place to stay but Robert had to buy his own tools in order to start working. Since his tools had been stolen while he was incarcerated and he did not have a penny to spend, the client came to ESM seeking assistance from our Jobs Department. Due to funding limitations, ESM typically asks the client to pay for half of the tools and we will pay for the rest. It also gives the client a sense of ownership in the tools. Needless to say, this gentleman was not happy to hear this and all hope was lost.

He came back later in the day a much different person. His employer had agreed to pay for Robert's half of the tools he needed. ESM not only paid for the other half of the tools but also gave him a Wal-Mart gift card for \$30 to buy work boots. He was so thankful for the help that he promised to pay ESM back for the tools AND give back the \$30 for boots as well. What looked like a hopeless situation for Robert turned around in less than three hours because of the generosity of a fellow man and the help of ESM.

Returning home

Without a "traveler's aid" office in Colorado Springs, many people get stranded here for various reasons. This year has seen a marked increase in individuals trying to return home and ESM has been able to help many of them. In many cases, they are trying to get home to family who will care for them or to be with a dying loved one or attend a funeral. In other cases, ESM has helped a young, pregnant woman going home and escaping an abusive relationship and a young man recently released from prison returning home and a promised job from a former employer.

ESM receives referrals from agencies across town including Westside Cares, Northern Churches Care, Catholic Charities and the Homeless Outreach Team of the Colorado Springs Police Department. Due to the limited funding ESM has to meet this need, the client is often asked to pay for half of the bus ticket. ESM also provides a packet of traveling food (non-perishable food items) to help the client until they reach home. The only other requirement we ask is that the client help someone in the future who might be in a similar situation.

ESM is actively pursuing grants and other funding to continue this vital and necessary service.

Save the Dates!

Saturday, May 14th
7:00 a.m. to 12 Noon
105 N. Weber Street



3rd Annual Health Fair hosted by ESM and First Presbyterian Church

Low cost and free health screenings including blood screenings (which require a 12 hour fasting period) and free health information fair. For fee based screenings, please bring cash or checks. Credit cards cannot be accepted.

November 18th - Jingle Bell Gala
November 19th & 20th - Festive Family Fun Days

We are seeking volunteers, decorators, vendors and entertainers. Contact us today to find out how to get involved! Call 228-6781 or visit our website and click on the Festival of Trees link.



Follow us on Facebook. Visit our website www.ecusocmin.org and click on the icon.



Dynamic Duo in Missions

Arthur Ashe once said, "From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life." **Susan Buenger** and **Michelle Swanson** (an ESM board member) are great examples of this statement and have dedicated their time and energy to the First Presbyterian Missions Outreach. Susan has served as the Associate, Global Missions since 2003. Michelle serves as the Associate, Local Missions and has been with First Presbyterian since 2005. Both women have given countless hours of their time to help the homeless, hungry, ill and troubled individuals of the Colorado Springs community - the very individuals that ESM serves every day.



Susan (l) and Michelle (r)

First Presbyterian Church is involved in many different projects throughout the area through Susan and Michelle's leadership. They also work to raise awareness for the non-profit community including ESM. Through Susan and Michelle's leadership, First Presbyterian partners with 37 individuals and 43 non-profit organizations locally and globally. When Katrina hit New Orleans the missions team was quick to respond and has sent a total of 30 teams to help with the relief efforts. They also participate in the "Feed My Starving

Children" program, which works to feed hungry children in nearly 70 countries. Last year, families from First Presbyterian packed 202,000 food packages that will feed 555 children for an entire year.

The latest outreach is a "Journey to the Cross" during Holy Week. The community is invited to follow the path of Jesus to the cross by going out in the community and visiting different sites that represent the journey that Jesus took that led him to the cross. The goal of the project is to find the light in the dark and allow the people of Colorado Springs to experience the story of Jesus. Participants will visit sites like CASA, Dale House, Urban Peak, nursing homes, etc. to not only volunteer their time but also learn more about the many non-profit organizations in Colorado Springs and how they are serving those who have shared at least one hardship with Jesus.

Thank you, Susan and Michelle, for all that you do for ESM and the Colorado Springs community. What you give through your leadership is certainly changing lives all around us.

Supporting ESM is easy!

Financial support: Your gift helps ESM provide assistance to the many people who come through our doors each day. There are many ways you can give:

- Direct gifts (checks, secure on-line credit card donations)
- Monthly pledges
- Give through the El Paso County Enterprise Zone
- Matching gifts through your employer
- Combined Federal Campaign (CFC Agency Code: 48877)
- Gifts in memory or in honor of a loved one
- Planned giving - Leave a Legacy
- Donor designated to ESM through Pikes Peak United Way

Volunteer: There are many volunteer opportunities available. Contact Kissy, Volunteer Coordinator, (719) 228-6785, for more information.

In-Kind Gifts: Donate food, personal hygiene items, clothing, small household goods. Call Christine, Administrative Manager, (719) 228-6781, for more information.

*Use the enclosed envelop to make a gift today!
All gifts, large and small, can make a difference in someone's life.*