

Port Austin Bible Campus

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February 8, 2011

Dear Fellow-laborers in Christ,

Thank you very much for your offerings and gifts in support of our ministries. This annual thank you letter is more of a challenge to write, considering the diversity of people who are receiving it. Some have read our Bible teaching publication, *Servants' News*, since 1995. Others have never read it, but have been stirred to help our recent efforts to serve homeless people here at Port Austin. We readily admit that we are struggling to do both things.

Nevertheless, we are reminded of the model ministry of all time, that of Christ our savior. He was able to teach the Scripture better than the learned men of his day (Matt 13:54; 22:46; John 7:15), yet he was concerned for the simple physical needs of the “least” of the people (Matt 10:42; 25:40; Mark 5:43; John 13:3-14). The work we do is a pale shadow of what Christ did with His perfect wisdom and miraculous power.

Even so, we must realize that all servants of the Eternal go through a time of training. While 20 is the biblical age of accountability (Num 32:11), Christ himself did not begin his work till he was 30 (Luke 3:23); “though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered” (Heb 5:8). Similarly his apostles went through a period of training, as did Moses, Joseph, David and many others. It takes time and experience to understand a diversity of people, to have compassion, but to also be able to peaceably say “no” to people whose habits are destructive to themselves and others. We also need to develop wisdom to know when a person is able to receive a truth. Our Savior said to his disciples, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now” (John 16:12).

During 2010, we concentrated more on helping homeless people here at PABC, than we have on our publishing ministry. The Sept-Oct issue was finally finished and on the web site, but we are still looking for a printer and funds to print it. A Nov-Dec issue will also be produced, but, depending upon our Father’s answers to our prayers, that may be the last one. This weekend, I am going to be meeting with the Jim Patterson, Duane Nicol, Ed Malone, and Bruce Horne families to discuss merging *Servants' News* into their new independent Sabbatarian Christian publication, *Shepherd's Voice*. If this works out, it will relieve me of the tasks of editing other’s articles, magazine production, publishing, etc. I will be able to concentrate much more on writing—and finishing many dozens of help articles that I have already started.

Similarly, we hope to become more effective in helping the homeless people here with the addition of Adam Miller, who is planning to move here at the beginning of March to manage that task. We have a unique opportunity here in that we can share the Scriptures with people as the answer to most of their difficulties in life. We can do this because we do not directly receive any government funds. Some people staying here have asked us to pray for them, and have accepted the scriptural admonitions we have given them. (Oh yes, some times they do not listen or do the opposite of what we suggest.) We hope to add some regular studies for them in the future—to which we could require attendance when appropriate.

We do expect to have much more work to do to help homeless people in Michigan’s thumb. The number of people out of jobs and who have exhausted unemployment payments is continually growing as government funding and other programs are being cut. Port Austin Bible Campus is now well known in Huron, Sanilac and Tuscola counties as the only place in these counties that can take any homeless people on a same-day basis. (Other places accept only certain types of people such as battered women, people released from jail, etc.) Even the government rapid re-housing programs take days, sometimes weeks to place people. And there are people, for a variety of reasons, who do not qualify for the government programs. On an

annual basis, PABC already exceeds the local women’s shelter’s number of “bed nights” (people times the number of nights housed). This has been done with a \$30,000 annual budget, compared to the shelter’s \$200,000 annual budget.

The table below gives details of each homeless family that intended to stay at PABC. Some stayed months, some only one night. Two found a long-term solution on the day they planned to move to PABC, so they never came. Even so, PABC was blessing to them as they were able to concentrate on their arrangements, knowing a place for the night would be available in needed.

In Christian Love,

Norman Edwards

Heading Abbreviations: Ad – Adults, Ch – Children, B. N. – Bed Nights (Persons multiplied by nights each stayed.)

“Came From” Codes: H – Homeless Coalition, L – Local People from other sources. S – *Servants’ News* Readers, C – Church related recommendations, O – Other people from distant areas.

In	Out	Ad	Ch	B.N.	Came From	Went To
6/3/10		2	2	758	H – Moved away from family with criminal records. Staying with friends who asked them to leave. Married at PABC on 12/31/10.	
7/15/10		2	0	500	S – Husband without job 2 years, homeless when unemployment ended	
8/5/10	11/9/10	1	0	106	L – Was staying with man who went to jail	Subsidized apartment
9/1/10	10/7/10	1	0	36	L – father decided to sell trailer he was living in	Jail—maybe unjustly so
9/19/10	10/4/10	2	1	45	H – Staying with friends who were evicted	Low cost housing in PA.
10/5/10	10/5/10	1		0	H – Spent all available money applying for programs and apartments but was not accepted	Friend fixed up garage so he could stay till his rental assistance came
11/10/10	1/3/11	2	3	270	H – National Guard dropped husband from deployment with 4 days warning. Moved to friends who locked them out with no warning.	Subsidized housing. Husband got a good job and family is doing well.
11/24/10	11/25/10	1	0	1	L – Evicted	Mom took her in
11/18/10	12/27/10	1	0	39	S – Disabled, living with brother who is losing home	Back home, situation improved
11/28/10	12/9/10	1	0	11	L – released from jail for possession of drugs, family had moved out of area	Back to home area
12/2/10	1/27/11	1	0	56	C – Wife misspent rent money, reported him for domestic violence, but charges always dismissed	Home. Guest better able to care for himself than we first realized.
12/22/10		1	0	48	H – Independent contractor, little work for years, friend asked him to pay a lot more or leave without warning	
12/28/10	1/13/11	0	1	15	L – Homeless, will not stay with mom & her boyfriend	Jail for home invasion
1/5/11	1/11/11	1	1	6	H – Within a week; left boyfriend’s due to first time violence, left woman’s shelter due to dispute with another woman, left friend’s apartment because landlord said “no”	State subsidized housing
1/9/11	1/11/11	1	0	2	L – Father of daughter of above woman—planning to build her a decent family.	Tried to get back together with above woman, but did not
1/25/11	1/26/11	1	0	1	L – Out of job for days. Paid bills by pawning stuff a friend gave her. When friend found stuff had value, friend demanded money (already spent) then accused her of theft.	Jail—apparently scared into accepting unreasonable plea bargain. Appeal may be filed
2/1/11	2/1/11	1	0	0	H – Wife sent him out and filed for divorce. No violence, but house goes to wife because her minor child was living with her.	Relatives in Florida paid for motel here & bus trip to Fla.
2/3/11		2	2	20	H – Lost jobs, friend they were staying with was leaving his house and required them to leave	
	Total:	22	7	1914		