

March 10, 2006

For Immediate Release

Rescue Mission's Bethel Village Home for Women and Children Expanded to Serve Women in Pathways Ministries

Public Invited to Open House and Grand Opening Ceremony to Honor Donors

When its doors opened in July of 2004, the Panama City Rescue Mission knew Bethel Village home for women and children was already too small. But the need for recovery for this growing homeless population forced them to make due with the 5-bedroom home until changes could be made.

Up to 10 women and 6 children had to share one and a half bathrooms.

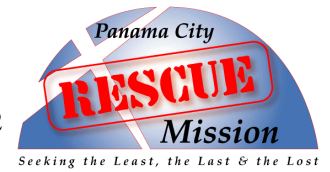
“With that many women and only one full bathroom available to them, it was a lesson in sharing and cooperation,” Helen Jett, Bethel Village Manager said, “Both of these are good for recovery, but hectic on the nerves!”

Soon an anonymous local contractor agreed to move walls and expand the home to serve more women and children in need.

The project, which would have cost the Mission nearly \$90,000, cost them less than \$60,000 because so many builders and donors gave of their time and supplies to undercut the costs. Renovations expanded capacity with a larger dining room, created a development center for women and children's classes, replaced the roof, added bathrooms and showers, and a single ladies' dorm for 12 women, bringing the total capacity of women and children to 23.

Saturday, April 15th, at 11 a.m., the Mission will recognize the contributing groups and companies at an open house with a cookout and will offer tours to the public until 4 pm. Those interested in attending may R.S.V.P. 215-9007 before April 7th.

-more-



Pathways to Success

For safety during the renovations, the Mission reduced the number of students served. Even then, seven women successfully completed the program in 2005.

“I’m so excited about bringing our population to its maximum so recovery can begin for all these precious and hurting people,” Jett said.

Recovery for the addicted or homeless is through the mission’s Pathways Ministries, a five-phase process that is individualized for each student’s needs. Many complete their program in 6 months, but because there is no time limit, some may stay even up to a year or more as they work to accomplish their tasks and make progress towards self-sufficiency.

The Mission is enjoying recognition from the Acton Institute’s Samaritan Award, which honors effective Christian programs that are not publicly funded. Out of 400 organizations, the Mission was chosen as one of the nation’s top ten. A copy of the report can be found at www.samaritanguide.org.

###