

MEL TROTTER

Journal

Two brothers travel the same path

FROM BROTHERS BY BIRTH...TO BROTHERS IN CHRIST

Lee and Terry are brothers who have been on a journey together all of their lives—a journey that has taken them from addiction to recovery. Terry started drinking at age 13 and Lee followed. “We grew up together. Started getting high together,” says Terry. But God was preparing a way for these brothers. Influenced by their grandfather, a preacher, both were saved at an early age. “God didn’t leave me,” Lee says. “I left Him.”

As their lives unfolded, Terry married and had two children, but drugs eventually pulled him away. By the time Lee and Terry were in their 40s, they were living on the streets of Benton Harbor, drinking and doing drugs. Hoping to make a fresh start, they moved to Grand Rapids together. “All we had were the clothes on our back,” Terry recalls. “No money, no ID, no jobs, nothing.” Despite their hopefulness, things only got worse. “I kept drinking too much and hanging around the wrong people,” Lee remembers.

Waking up and moving on

Lee was the first to wake up and come to Mel Trotter Ministries for help. When he joined our program, he was ready—but Terry was not ready. He would come to spend the night—then during the day he’d be back on the street, drinking. “I was a mean drunk,” Terry says, “but they were still willing to help me. They showed me God’s love.”

One night in a drunken stupor, Terry fell asleep in a parking lot. He came to under a van that had parked right over him! This was a startling wake-up call. Many of his drinking buddies were dying off. Would he be next? Terry thought about the two children he hadn’t seen in almost two years. “I wanted to get close again,” he says. “I knew the only way I could see them...was to get sober.”

So Terry joined his brother in our long-term program, ready at last to let God in. As he says, “...God took the craving for drugs and alcohol from me.” And when the time was right, Terry was able to have that longed-for meeting with his children and begin the process of reconciliation.

Today Terry and Lee are both looking forward to a better future. Not only are they being richly fed in their spiritual lives at Mel Trotter, but the practical classes have been life-changing. “I [didn’t] even know how to do my banking or pay a phone bill,” says Lee. “Here at Mel Trotter I’m learning to do all those things.” The brothers are also actively involved in church and support groups.

“This place teaches you how to feel good about yourself again,” says Terry. “Mel Trotter helps you overcome.” Brothers by birth and now brothers in Christ, Lee and Terry are putting their lives back together and looking to the future with hope.



“...God took the craving for drugs and alcohol from me.”

READ MORE STORIES OF HOPE ONLINE

www.meltrotter.org/storiesofhope.aspx

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MAKE THIS A SUMMER OF HOPE!

Summer is usually a relaxed season, a time for family vacations and barbecues. But for homeless and hungry Grand Rapidians, the long, hot and humid days are no vacation, and can even lead to dehydration and other serious health issues. That's why we're asking faithful friends to consider making a special summer financial commitment in June, July and August.

At Mel Trotter Ministries, we're so grateful for your support because it means we can continue to offer nutritious meals, safe shelter and life-transforming services during these challenging months. With your help, we'll be ready with a hearty meal and an open door to help everyone who comes to us in need of help.



For more information on how you can help make this a Summer of Hope for the homeless, please call (616) 454-8249 or give now at <http://summer.meltrotter.org>

STAY INFORMED THIS SUMMER...

Connect with us online!

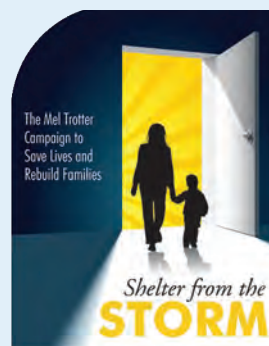
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FUNDRAISING GOAL: \$2.5 million

DONATIONS TO DATE: \$2.3 million

3 GOALS:

1. Establish more housing for women and children (7 beautiful, new apartments already completed!)
2. Badly needed renovations for existing shelter facilities (work in progress)
3. Complete funding of thrift store (done!), auto repair shop and job training center

Much has been accomplished, but we need your help to complete the work and put on the finishing touches. For more information on how you can help, visit www.meltrotter.org

FAMOUSLY WRONG PREDICTIONS

The future is so hard to predict—even for so-called experts. In 1943, the chairman of IBM observed, "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." And even the Commissioner of the US Patent Office predicted in 1899 that "Everything that can be invented has been invented."

Putting our trust in human wisdom is risky. But putting our trust in Christ, and sharing the wisdom that comes from God with our children is not only wise—it's life-changing. That's the picture we see in Proverbs 3:1-4: "My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart...Let love and faithfulness never leave you...Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man." May God bless you as you share your wisdom and your wealth with your family and the ministries you love.

For a **FREE** copy of "Passing Your Values to the Next Generation," check the box on the enclosed reply card or contact Tim Swiney, Director of Development, at (616) 454-8249 ext. 268 or timswiney@meltrotter.org



FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION...

Raising generous children is one of the most valuable legacies we can leave behind. Since kids learn by example, the best way to instill a heart for giving is to have one yourself. To help reinforce the attribute of generosity:

- Attend and support your church as a family
- Pick a favorite charity not connected to your church to support, as well
- Talk to your kids about why you give...where you give
- Volunteer your time to help others
- Involve your children in giving and volunteering

Grandparents, you can help! Through your own generous example, you'll support your grown children...and pass on the legacy of giving and caring from generation to generation.

HOPE BY THE NUMBERS

JANUARY-APRIL, 2011

Here's how your compassion changed lives:



Meals served: **60,935**



Nights of shelter provided: **24,926**



Articles of clothing given: **1,293**



Chapel attendance: **6,699**



GEDs earned: **5**



Dental visits: **201**

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER!



Please join us in praising God:

That our women's transitional housing apartments are all occupied.

For our 20 graduates and their continued successful growth as they move on.

For the faithfulness of our donors who supported us at our Banquet and Golf Marathon.

Please pray for:

The men and women who are in the program, that the temptations of the summer weather won't distract them from accomplishing the changes they came here to make.

More dentists to volunteer in our dental clinic.

Our Food Pantry to stay stocked for those who come each week, and that we would get fresh fruit and veggies for the pantry.

We value your prayers! For a complete list of prayer and praise concerns, please visit us at www.meltrotter.org/Pray.aspx

HAVE WE GOT A BARGAIN FOR YOU!

Whether your finances are tight and your budget can't afford regular store prices—or you are a bargain hunter who's looking for a great deal—Mel Trotter's retail stores are a great place to shop! We have a wide selection of "gently used" name-brand clothing and other items at greatly reduced prices.

All four of our retail stores in Grand Rapids, Belding, Middleville and Sparta are clean, friendly and open to everyone. And we're stocked with much more than just clothing. We also carry furniture, electronics, appliances, linens, kitchen items, home décor, toys, senior items, books, CDs and DVDs, sporting goods, jewelry and accessories.

We would especially encourage you to visit our newly remodeled store in Sparta, which has expanded to almost double the floor space. Now we'll have more products in every category!

The best news is that when you shop at any of our stores, you support the work of Mel Trotter Ministries in West Michigan. All of the profits generated from the stores go back to helping people who are in need. That makes



every bargain even better!

Also, please consider donating your items to Mel Trotter. For more information, call (616) 301-1415. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Vince Desmond at (616) 454-8249 ext. 226, or email him at vincedesmond@meltrotter.org

A MESSAGE OF THANKS FROM CHICO

MEL TROTTER MINISTRIES

Dear Friend of Mel Trotter Ministries,

I am concerned about our clients who head back out into the streets when the summer sun comes out. With the first signs of warmer weather, the pull of street life becomes strong. Residents who have been model citizens all winter long get what I call "spring fever." Some end up going right back to their old habits. This is the dark side of rescue ministry.

Happily, the bright side outshines the dark side! It shines in the ones who choose to stay—even though they, too, feel tempted. When they ask God for help...and cling to our staff who are here to support them, a world of hope opens. We count on your generosity to help keep this doorway to hope open all summer. We also ask you to pray against the epidemic of "spring fever" I've just described.

If you can go a step beyond, we'd love to have you mentor someone who needs the powerful "antidote" of accountability. I realize getting involved on a one-to-one basis can be intimidating, but the blessings of mentoring are two-sided. When Jesus said it's more blessed to give than to receive, He wasn't just talking about money. To give of your time, to build an intentional friendship...it's an experience that is life-changing for both mentor and mentee. If after prayerfully seeking God's guidance you feel His call on your heart, please get in touch with Vince Desmond at (616) 454-8249 for more information on how to become a mentor.

I'm quickly running out of room! But I must say "thank-you" to all who have generously supported our *Shelter from the Storm* campaign. As you can see from the information highlighted on page 2, God is working mightily in response to your compassion. May He bless you for helping to make this a ministry of hope, not just in the summer, but all year long!

Your friend,

Chico Daniels, President & CEO



Rev. Chico Daniels
President & CEO

"We count on your generosity to help keep this doorway to hope open all summer."

OUR MISSION

To demonstrate the compassion of Jesus Christ toward the hungry, homeless and hurting of the Grand Rapids area.

MY SUMMER OF HOPE GIFT

YES, Chico, I'll help Mel Trotter Ministries provide hope and a home for homeless Grand Rapidsians this summer.

HERE'S MY GIFT OF:

- \$15 \$35 \$50 \$150 \$_____

Please complete this slip and return it to Mel Trotter Ministries with your generous summer gift. Your donation is tax deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Please make your check payable to: Mel Trotter Ministries

Please send me a FREE copy of "Passing Your Values to the Next Generation"

Donate online by credit card at <http://summer.meltrotter.org>

225 Commerce SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 (616) 454-8249 www.meltrotter.org

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