

# MILESTONES

Recovery happens in relationships.

SUMMER 2023

## It Just Keeps Getting Better

**I**T'S HARD TO SUMMARIZE 25 years of addiction and hopelessness," John says. "But the most important element to my story is that when no one else wanted anything to do with me, the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission welcomed me with open arms."

It's a far cry from the life he was born into – the life he thought he was destined to stay trapped in just like his father, his aunt, and his uncle always were.

### Born into Chaos and Addiction

"One of my first childhood memories, around 6 years old, was seeing my father in a drunken rage holding my mom up in the air by her throat as he punched her in the stomach," he says.

A few years later, John started drinking. When he was 16, his father gave him crack for the first time.

His addiction continued for decades — through John getting married and having kids. When he and his wife divorced and he lost custody of his boys, John's despair grew so deep he didn't think he'd ever get out of it.

*Continued inside . . .*

## INSIDE:

Great Potential | 3

The Alumni BBQ | 4

Long-Term Recovery is a Family Affair | 5

Transform a Life, Starting Today! | 6

# It Just Keeps Getting Better

*Continued from cover*

John ended up in jail, where the judge released him on the condition that he come to the Mission and go through our 12-month Residential Recovery Program.

*"I thought at first this would be just another institution," he says. "But it was not. It rekindled my relationship with God. And I didn't realize all the changes, re-growth, and the spiritual connection that would be instilled in me here."*

John graduated from the program in 2013, and in the last 10 years, his life has taken turns he never could have dreamed of.

## Being the Father He Never Had

John was awarded sole custody of his boys in 2015 and has done everything he can to show them what a healthy family looks like. He also earned a degree in engineering and has gone on to work with some of the most impressive companies in Santa Barbara there are!



John graduated from Santa Barbara City College in 2019. *"The journey into an education on faith and recovery has become the foundation of my life,"* he says.

He worked with NASA on a solar array that attached to the satellite Lucy and attended the launch in 2021. He recently accepted a new job working on high-end specialty computers.

*"I am blown away,"* he says.

John's boys are both grown, and both have good jobs that they enjoy. John is in close contact with them and says their relationships are strong and healthy — something that he never dreamed was possible from his own upbringing.

*"Because of the program and the staff, I have a foundation of faith and recovery that has given me a life filled with hope, ambitions, and love,"* John says.

**Your gift today will help lay the foundation of transformation for someone else!**



*"It was a great opportunity to learn and work with an amazing team to put Lucy together (which is the solar array that goes onto the satellite),"* John says about working on the Lucy satellite with NASA.





# Great Potential

**J**OHN IS A GREAT EXAMPLE of how the people the Mission serves aren't always who you'd expect. John has an engineering degree and has worked with NASA. He's such a good reminder that every day we have great potential walking through our doors.

Today John is highly successful by any definition. But he, like all the other men and women you allow us to serve, didn't start there. They have to get stable and functional before they can become the people that God created them to be.

That's what your gifts do. People who need a year-long recovery program don't have minor damage; they have major trauma to overcome. But once they do, the sky is the limit — literally, in John's case.

I will never get tired of hearing stories like John's. And I hope you don't either. Great potential is all around us. I can't wait to share the next story with you.

Rolf Geyling  
President



## Have you ever wondered?

Rolf Answers Your Most Frequently Asked Questions

**Question:** *What can be done about some of the people that are clearly dealing with mental illness and living on the street?*

**Answer:** *It's heartbreaking to see the escalation of mental illness on the streets. But the fact is there are limited resources focused on mental health, and for too long we've been relying on the wrong systems — like law enforcement*

*— to help get these people off the streets. But being incarcerated doesn't typically help anyone with their mental health!*

*That's why the Mission is investing in new ways to address mental health so we can help struggling people with compassion and grace to find healing and transformation. It will look different than recovering from addiction, but it's a piece of*

*the puzzle we're working hard to address.*

**If you have questions for Rolf, send them to [newsletter@sbrm.org](mailto:newsletter@sbrm.org)**





# The Alumni BBQ

Recently John shared, *"The relationships that I've made at the Mission, I still have."*

He's not the only one. The connections made through the Recovery Program are often life-long. Every year, graduates from our Men's Program come together to reconnect, encourage each other, and celebrate life's victories at our Alumni BBQ.

This year's event was held on June 3rd and like in the past, men traveled from all over to attend. For some, it's a time to reconnect with the men they went through the program with. For others, it's a chance to connect with their mentors and sponsors. And for others, it's a chance to make new connections with people who have walked a similar road.

The food is always amazing, but the conversations, fellowship, and connections are what make this event a highlight of the summer.





# Long-Term Recovery is a Family Affair

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Genuine recovery that leads to transformation isn't magic, it's work — hard work that often requires revisiting past traumas and being brutally honest with your loved ones about how their actions, or lack thereof, have impacted you in your addiction.

While our residents in the 12-month Residential Treatment Program have been digging into the causes of their addiction, often their families haven't started doing their own work yet. Family Day happens every other month for residents in the program and their families.

## Family Day Participants:

- Learn how to identify and avoid co-dependency.
- Learn how addiction impacts the family system.
- Receive helpful information and community resources.
- Process their experiences in a supportive environment.
- And learn to set healthy boundaries.

**A family approach to recovery is essential to rebuilding relationships and reestablishing healthy habits.**

## Family Day is just the start of that.







Your gift will allow the life-transforming work offered in our 12-Month Residential Recovery Program to continue so that more people can experience real, lasting change!

## Transform a Life, Starting Today!

John didn't choose to be born to a dad battling addiction. He didn't choose to see his dad beat his mom. He didn't ask his dad for crack when he was 16.

But he endured it because he didn't think he had any other choice.

After battling addiction for 25 years, John came to the Mission and learned he did have a choice. And John chose transformation.

**It wasn't quick. Transformation never is. But the work that John was able to do at the Mission has lasted for more than a decade, and it's impacted the lives of millions of people. His work**

**at NASA has impacted us all, and his current work likely will, too!**

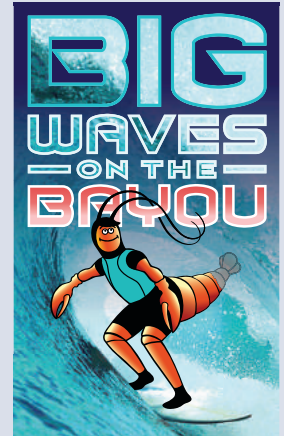
John chose transformation, but it only happened because friends like you chose it, too. And when you choose transformation again today, you'll change even more lives!

**Your gift of any amount helps provide proven, Christ-centered recovery that can lead to lasting transformation for men and women here. The healing they experience will not only impact them, but all the lives that they touch.**

**SAVE THE DATE:**

**Saturday, October 7**

Two O'Clock in the Afternoon



The 22nd Annual Benefit for the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission

**WE ARE EXCITED** to invite you to join us for Santa Barbara Rescue Mission's 22nd annual benefit, *Big Waves on the Bayou!*

- Paddle on over to Santa Barbara's most popular destination at Rancho Dos Pueblos Beach.
- Dive into our Silent Auction for an array of gifts and getaways.
- Glide to the tunes of the Idiomatiques.
- Enjoy dinner on the lawn presented by Lorraine Lim Catering.

For information, please contact Rebecca at 805-966-1316 ext. 105 or [rweber@sbrm.org](mailto:rweber@sbrm.org) or visit [www.sbrm.org/bayou](http://www.sbrm.org/bayou)

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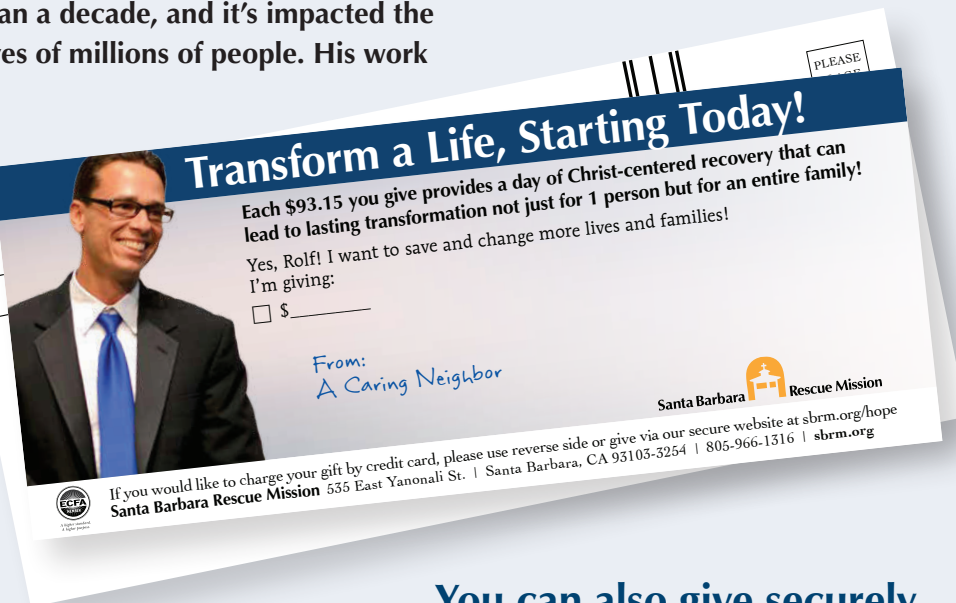


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