

February 3, 2015

Attention and Hello,  
Terry Bray, David Lay, Greg Greer, and Burt Rosen

I personally, want to thank you for the support I received from KARM during one of the darkest times of my life. I wanted to share a couple of things I was afforded during my time at KARM. I am a college graduate with a degree in business administration. I kept my achievements to myself while I used the services of KARM. I just felt it best for the time. I have never been homeless, but the experience has left me richer. Well at least, I know it give me a great gift and I am thankful.

I found myself divorced, addicted and totally lost from reality. I have no family in the Knoxville area. My ex-wife has strong roots in this city and this is why I was there. After one poor decision, followed by after another, she demanded I leave our home. Her family helped provide the house so, I accepted the fact I could not stay. I knew I would not want to be around someone like me either. Around the same time, I lost my job because of my addiction to prescription medication (long story and I am sure you have heard similar). I crashed on the sofa of a friend of mine for a short time. I knew my welcome would soon wear out. I wanted to avoid losing one of the few relationships that remained so I made the decision to come to KARM. I was on the bottom.

I was so unsure of what to do; I came in the door one Friday evening around 4:30pm. The lobby was full of people and there appeared to be frantic activity everywhere. I was told to go and eat dinner and then I could register and get a number for a bed. I was confused and I felt so lost and so incredibly sad. While standing in a long line to eat, I met Stan Green. I watched him from a distance, he engaged himself with almost everyone who came through the line. People seemed like they were glad to see him. He was offered hugs, pats on the back, and handshakes by so many. I was sure he was well received by the people who needed KARM.

When I got to the where he was he ask for a 'number' and then said, "Are you new to KARM?" I told him, "Yes". Stan said, "If you need me or if you are confused, let me know." The man reached out to me in an incredible way. It almost caused my fear to subside or at least I found some element of peace.

When I finished eating and the check in process I received instruction on how to get a bed. I entered the Samaritan's Place thinking, can I do this? Once again, I spotted Stan; he was busy with several men bidding for his attention. Stan took time to connect with me and walk me through the process of getting my bed. He brought items to help me put together a hygiene kit. It was huge for me.

In the days ahead, I had the opportunity to talk with several of the staff members at KARM: Katlyn, Tony, Michael, Vanessa, just to name a few. For the most part, I was met with kindness and there was concern from the staff. These guys helped me with very specific needs and gave good direction.

One Friday night, I had just spoke with my now, ex-wife. I was so broken over the fact she would not even consider a time for reconciliation. I told her about being involved with Celebrate Recovery and local recovery meetings. I told her I was seeing a counselor and had an appointment with a medical doctor as well. All of the services, I found through the connections provided to me by the KARM staff. At this point, I was beginning to understand, I had to move on and find a different way. I was so broken. I was standing, waiting on a shower when Stan saw me crying. He pulled me aside and asked me what was wrong. I was somewhat embarrassed, but I had nothing else to protect or hide. I told Stan the entire story. He never left me while I was telling my story, even with others calling out his name.

I found out that Stan was a pastor at this point. I knew there was something different about him. I mentioned the pastor thing to him and it had caused him to be different. Stan said, "Well yes, I am a pastor but what I hope you see is the fact I am in love with Jesus." This blew me away. For the first time in my life, I realized my faith was NOT placed in the living Jesus Stan spoke of. I supposedly, took Jesus as my Savior when I was younger...maybe I did. I don't know. After the conversation, hearing this news, for the first time in my life, I realized I needed

Jesus and what he really offered. Stan prayed for me and with me. If this makes sense, I found Jesus to be so much more than I ever thought. All of this, came because of a conversation over my loss and my hurt. All of this, because there was one man cared to talk to me about a better future. Now, I'm a Christian. Tomorrow, I will be headed to a new job (I've already connected with Celebrate Recovery group) in my hometown of Canton, Ohio. I am glad for tears, a dormitory for homeless men, and Stan. I couldn't have paid for a better place to be at that moment in time. Oh, don't get me wrong, I have daily struggles and I all of my stuff is still in the works. I guess I will always be a work in progress.

Thanks KARM for giving to me. Thanks for the food, the showers, the shelter, a good staff. But, I thank you for having enough insight to employ a man like Stan Green.

Mr. Bray could you pass this letter around to those listed in the salutation?

*James*