

## SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE!

### HERB "GINO" HATCHER'S INSPIRATIONAL STORY

The first things you notice about Gino are his genuine smile and the confidence in his walk. The next thing you notice is his Bible – tucked under his arm, in his hand, or in his back pocket to free up his hands. He is always eager to help around the men's shelter, lend a hand and share encouragement through scripture with others.

Recently, he was asked to share his story at our annual fundraiser banquet. In a calm voice, he shared his amazing testimony of just how far his life's journey had taken him:

“Lord, grant me the words to speak as I ought to – in Your will and all for Your glory, in Christ Jesus my Lord, Amen.

Fearful . . . Hurting . . . Wretched . . . Angry . . . Loveless . . . these were the feelings that pervaded my mind as I sat in the garage of my house one August afternoon. What do I have to live for, I contemplated.

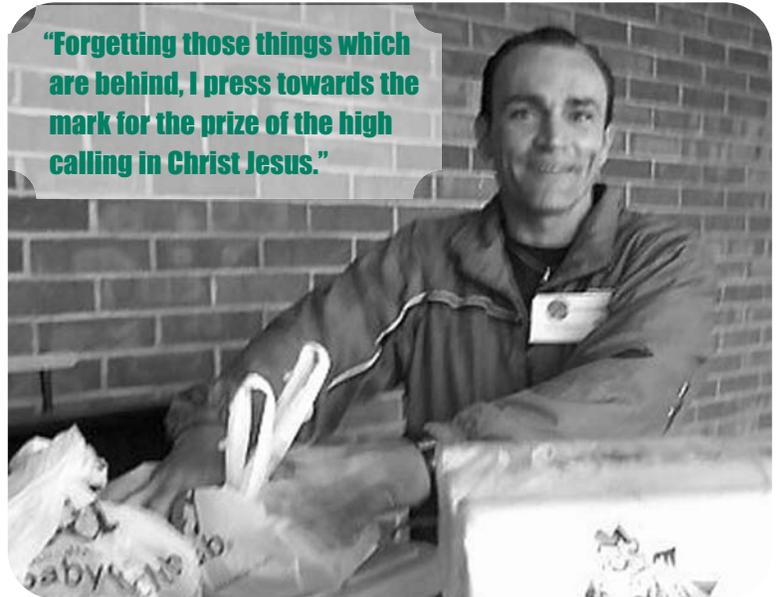
And you know, even as I looked back at my life, the only thing I saw was one mistake after another . . . one more hurt after another . . . one disappointment after another. My life was not going as I had planned.

I didn't care.

My daughter had no father. My family had no leader. Those meant nothing to me. How could they? I didn't even love myself. I was in such a low state of mind that I could not even build up the courage to end my worthless, pointless life! No one could be happy with me still around. But if gone? Everyone would be free from the pain I had caused. They would no longer live in fear of my anger. My weekly, and often daily drunks. My violent outbursts. My drug use.

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**“Forgetting those things which are behind, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.”**



Gino accepting grocery donations for the needy.

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## Director's Corner . . .



DuWayne Sipper  
Executive Director

*“Share your food  
with the hungry,  
and give shelter  
to the homeless.  
Give clothes to those  
who need them . . .”*

Isaiah 58:7 

*“Our mission is to provide a Christian living environment that allows true rehabilitation. To allow long term stays for life changing, biblical teachings to take effect. To encourage the work ethic, for those without a home in Citrus County.”*

*Dear Friends of the Path,*

*In this last year it has become crystal clear to this director that . . .*

*. . . the first stage of sheltering is an emergency phase - keeping people alive and off the streets, which is common for larger cities.*

*. . . the second stage is the program phase which The Path focuses mostly on life skills, as they are the most important “first steps” to a new start.*

*. . . the third stage is a housing phase in which clients can live for 12 - 24 months under rents that are affordable to them (this phase is more important in our county than the first phase, though).*

*This past year one of our best graduates - who was clean and sober for two years - violated probation and now must serve the final three years of probation in prison. Some of the larger missions in the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions can prove that if you oversee clients for more than 12 months in a mentoring program, at least 50% or more will become contributing members of society. That statistic has rejuvenated me. At The Path the third stage is customized to the client who wishes to point their life in a productive lifestyle and has the necessary “guidance tools” in place.*

*I was told long ago that we do not have poor people in America. Compared to other places in the world we are very rich and, some would probably say, spoiled. We’ve probably all seen pictures of Jesus traveling from place to place staying at other people’s houses, eating food that is freely given or even creating food from His divinity. Jesus says Himself that He has no place to lay His head. We live in a country where we often complain of being too hot or too cold yet many other places in the world do not even know what central air conditioning or heat is. The Bible says we are responsible for feeding, clothing and taking care of those less fortunate than we are, although it does not go into much detail on exactly who is to receive these services - which can make our choices even harder. We only know that we must try.*

*May the Lord bless you this Christmas season,*

DuWayne Sipper  
Executive Director



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My hateful words and lack of love.

Not to mention, I wouldn't feel my pain and despair that was tearing me up on the inside . . .

But God had a plan for me. So He allowed me to go back to jail that very day. It was the only way I could stay away from alcohol, drugs and those destructive influences that took me away from His plan for my life. You see, I've known God my whole life. I am a modern-day prodigal son. I spent my life squandering my rightful inheritance in Jesus Christ, only to find misery staring back at me.

When I was finally thinking soberly again, I sought forgiveness and made a decision to live for Christ. I picked up my Bible and said 'Here I am, Lord. What's Your plan? Lead the way!'

Not long after, I heard about The Path. I called DuWayne. Even as I talked to him, I wrestled on the inside. But I knew The Path was where I needed to be. It was the only way for me. A few days later I called back and they took me in. They clothed me, fed me, gave me a place of peace in this world to call home. The Path gave me what I needed to work through my issues that kept me in the gutter. I was not perfect and they

didn't judge me. They didn't coat the truth, but gave me a routine and no-nonsense wisdom. I was hurt, and they comforted me. I was lost, and they showed me the real love of Jesus.

I'm just an ordinary man, and we are all ordinary people. But, if you let God work in your life and give Him all your trust – You will see an EXTRAORDINARY God!

I no longer ask myself the question 'What do I have to live for?' Because of The Path, the people there – and caring people like you – I say 'Who do I have to live for!' I live for Jesus Christ, my Lord, Savior, and author of my faith! Thank you, and God bless you all . . ."

Gino is cautious, but optimistic. He takes things one step at a time, day by day, and knows it will take work on his part. But his faith and determination are strong. Our prayers are with you, Gino . . .

**“Forgetting those things which are behind, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus.”**

Philippians 3:13-14 NIV

## Testimonies . . .

Tammy is a veteran volunteer at The Path. She helps out at the bargain store, the women's shelter, and serves at The Path Banquet every year. Recently, we had a chance to talk to her about her experiences as a Path volunteer. Here is her story...

*“Several years ago, I picked up the Citrus County Chronicle and on the front page was an article featuring The PATH, a homeless shelter I didn't even know existed! As I read the article, I could feel God tugging at my heart to find out more.*

*I called DuWayne and we spoke about The PATH and its purpose. I taught preschool at the time and began to think of ways that our "Hearts of Mercy" Club might be able to help. I thought we could collect clothes and household items for the people staying there. I then went to meet DuWayne to take a tour of the different areas where people live while at the PATH. I told DuWayne of my idea and while he said it was a good idea, he suggested what would be even more helpful would be to collect*

*items and have a yard sale, donating the proceeds to The PATH.*

*That began one of several "major" yard sales.*

*We have had four sales, each year the total surpassing the year before.*

*God so richly blessed our meek efforts. My co-workers, who helped me collect "stuff" for the sale, the preschool families that so generously gave us their many nice items for our sale, and many people from The PATH that come out to do the really hard parts – help unload, unpack, sell, and clean up!*

*We are all tired at the end of the day, but we have so much fun.*

*If I told you I get*



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## Annual Path Banquet: Harvest Hope

The banquet was a great success, raising over \$12,000 plus approximately \$2,100 in monthly pledges over the next several months! Thank you everyone who helped in any way to make this possible!!!



Beautiful music performed by Common Ground of Seven Rivers Presbyterian Church, Lecanto



Fabulous food again this year: homemade chicken pot pie, ham, pasta dishes, Linda's Famous Carrots and various other veggies plus desserts by Withlacoochee Technical Institute

A special "Thank You" to everyone involved, including: food prepared by Linda, Julia and Chef "Hap" with interns from Withlacoochee Technical Institute; hosting by over 40 volunteers; music by Common Ground, dance by LINK Dancers of Gulf to Lake Church in Crystal River; centerpieces and stage decorations by Brenda Graves; guest speakers Gino, Pete, volunteer Hiram Marcano; and honorary guest speaker Elsie Detweiler.

Speakers included Executive Director, DuWayne Sipper (he shared the history of The Path and its vision for the future) and honorary guest speaker, Elsie Detweiler (she talked about mission life with her husband, rehabilitating and transforming the lives of alcoholics, the development of programs for women, and how mission work has changed dramatically over the past 40 years)



## Shopping List

- Hamburger
- Toilet Paper
- Dishwashing Liquid
- Garbage Bags
- Fruit Juice
- Gift Cards:  
Walmart  
Publix

If you'd like to help with these needs, drop them off at 27 S. Melbourne in Beverly Hills or call us at (352) 527-6500.

## THE PATH IS NOW ACCEPTING LAND DONATIONS!

Help expand the vision and let us know if you know of someone that might consider donating land. Please call: (352) 527-6500.

# PRAYER OF THE HOMELESS CHILD

Who is this man called Jesus?  
 Can He make bread from a stone?  
 Can He make my momma happy?  
 Can He bring my daddy home?

Who is this man called Jesus?  
 I'm scared and all alone –  
 Does He see me when I'm crying?  
 Can He help us find a home?

With the night air for a blanket,  
 Stone pillows for my head . . .  
 If morning comes,  
 I'll say thank you Jesus . . .  
 Just like the Bible said . . .

Can You hear my prayers, Jesus?  
 We don't know what to do . . .  
 Everyone tells us trust You, trust You –  
 You'll make a way and see us through.

We need to feel their heartache . . .  
 Show Christ's love and mercy too –  
 Can't you hear the homeless crying?  
 They're crying out to you:

Who is this man called Jesus?  
 I'm scared and all alone –  
 Does He see me when I'm crying?  
 Can He help us find a home?

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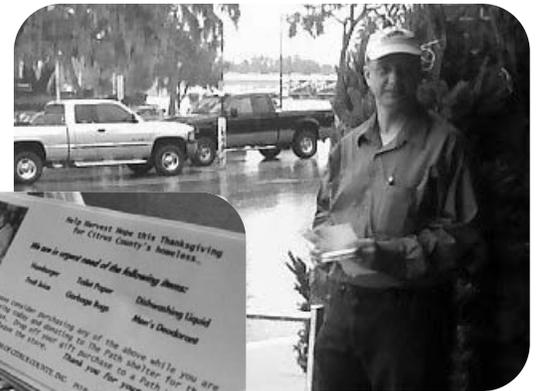
*Kathryn Sipper  
 November 2007*

*Please detach and use as a bookmark.*

# Special Thanks . . .

## Winn Dixie Thanksgiving - Instead of serving the homeless, volunteers collected for them at a local grocery store . . .

The Path would like to extend a special **THANK YOU** to the Winn Dixie store in Inverness, to store director Dawn Soltis and her store staff, and to all the people who volunteered to help us collect urgently needed hamburger, toilet paper, dishwashing liquid, fruit juice and other items at the store entrance on Thanksgiving morning.



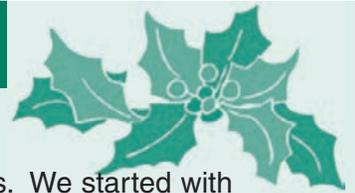
**The response from the community was overwhelming!** Thank you Alana, Deloris, Kay, Sue, John – and all the other volunteers who gave a few hours that day to help The Path. Thank you Winn Dixie - Inverness store staff . . . and most of all to you, Citrus County, for your generous giving that holiday morning.



Path clients, staff and several volunteers spent three cool, rainy hours requesting shoppers to purchase a few extra items to donate to the shelter, collecting the items from shoppers as they left the store and assisting them to their cars with umbrellas.

## Getting to Know . . .

### THE PATH'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS: BOARD PRESIDENT, STUART GREEN



In the upcoming months, we would like to help you get to know our Board of Directors. We started with Board President, Stuart Green, who was with the original group of men who formed the original non-profit organization before it reorganized in 1999 to become The Path of Citrus County.

#### Stuart, what brought The Path to your attention and why did you decide to get involved?

*In the early 90's I was involved in a local prison ministry that had a desire to build a halfway house in Citrus County to help the men get back on their feet after they were released. We struggled with it for about 5 years until we came to the realization that this just wasn't the place for it. We decided to dissolve the 501-C-3 organization formed for that purpose and just focus on the prison ministry work.*

*At the very same time, DuWayne Sipper was beginning his quest to start a homeless shelter in Citrus County. He met one of our members, Ken Morey, and found out that we were about to throw away the very thing he needed! It really was just in the nick of time, and instead of being dissolved, The Path was reborn. We handed the organization over to DuWayne and a new board of local concerned pastors.*

*Along with the organization he got me. I decided to stay involved at that point because I was no longer going into the prisons and DuWayne felt I could help with the transition. At that time I didn't have a vision for what God wanted to do here for people that were in need. I also had no idea that a dozen years later I would still be involved! As time went by I saw God do amazing things to make The Path a reality and I couldn't help but share the same vision.*

#### How long have you been involved and what are your duties?

*As a board member, I attend monthly meetings. I am also on a committee to assist DuWayne with some aspects of our client program that need additional volunteers.*

#### What is your most satisfying experience with The Path or your most memorable moment since being involved?

*My most memorable moment from the early days was the gift of a \$150,000 property in response to a 3-line classified ad that DuWayne ran. That money really jump-started the whole thing. And the most satisfying experience was the day in 2001 when we opened our little shelter house in Beverly Hills for the very first time. It was the realization of a dream.*

#### What are your hopes for the future of this organization?

*My hopes for the future are to see God provide the land for The Path to have a permanent home that can hold all of the facilities needed to provide a complete program.*

## Things to do this Christmas Season

- Decorate a tree with a child - you'll see this special season through renewed eyes after this experience!
- Carol in your neighborhood with family & friends (or go to another neighborhood if you sing a little off-key)
- Pack your car up with the family (or friends) and travel mugs of hot cocoa, turn on the radio to Christmas tunes then drive through your community and view the beautiful lights and displays
- Wear a winter hat when decorating to get in the wintry, holiday mood (even if it's 80 degrees outside!)
- Buy a few bags of Styrofoam balls then start a "snowball" fight on your front yard
- Read Luke 2:1-20 to the family instead of watching TV - then sing your favorite Christmas hymns
- Help your kids throw a birthday party for Jesus on Christmas day - and don't forget to sing Happy Birthday!



nothing out of volunteering at The PATH I would be lying. It's not about what we get out of it, but about how we can show Christ's love to others by our actions. It's about serving Christ and loving and caring enough for others to want to show them what an awesome God we serve. We are called to help the poor and troubled and to bless people, but it feels like I am the one that goes away blessed!

I get to meet the clients and enjoy interacting with them. I hope they can see my love for Jesus and the joy He fills my heart with. God has also allowed me the opportunity to sit with some of the babies and children staying at The PATH. What

better way to spend an evening than rocking a baby or reading to and playing with some really cute kids! There are many ways to serve God at The PATH. I strongly recommend volunteering. It truly is good for the soul and it feels so good to make God smile!"

**“When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?” And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of My Brethren, you did it to Me.**

Matthew 25:38, 40 NIV

## Year End Giving

### From Survival to Significance: What Does It Take?

You can play a big part in helping The Path serve a growing list of people in need -- something that rescues The Path and positions them to display God at work in a major way: Year End Planned Gift Support. Or better still: *Kingdom Investment*.

- 1. Gifts of Securities:** Gifts of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds may be given directly to The Path – without paying any Capital Gains Taxes. In fact, the tax deduction is based on the value of the securities on the day they are gifted. That means if you originally paid very little and the value has grown, you can claim a deduction for the higher amount. This is an excellent way to make a large gift at very little cost.
- 2. Charitable Distribution from an IRA:** IRA owners who are age 70 1/2 or older may now ask their investment firm to distribute up to \$100,000 in one year to The Path. For those required to take a minimum distribution, this is an excellent way to make a sizable gift and keep your taxable earnings to a minimum.
- 3. Give Inventory from a business:** For business owners, giving from “business inventory” is an excellent way to make room in the shop, showroom floor or warehouse, and help The Path accomplish its mission. The tax deduction is based on your “cost”, and you should check to make sure The Path could use the items before gifting them. Many have used this technique to give useful items to ministry.

Check with your financial advisor or accountant to see if any of the above solutions are appropriate for you. We appreciate your support as our mission grows to meet the ever- increasing needs of God’s people.

- Based on a newsletter article distributed by Dan Mirgon & Associates, Inc.

**25% OFF COUPON**  
ON ANY DONATED  
ITEM IN THE BARGAIN STORE  
[except new furniture or new items]  
**VALID UNTIL 12/30/2007**  
1729 W Gulf to Lake Hwy.  
Lecanto, FL 34461

**Please remember us in your will,  
trust or estate planning.**



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Stuart Green**  
President  
(352) 637-3585

**Mark Stone**  
Board Member  
(352) 637-2777

**Connie Lobel**  
Board Member  
(352) 726-1559

**Brian Ludwick**  
Board Member  
(352) 563-6508

**DuWayne Sipper**  
Executive Director  
(352) 527-6500

**Administrative Offices**  
27 S. Melbourne  
Beverly Hills, FL 34465

Phone: (352) 527-6500  
Fax: (352) 746-6746

**Mailing Address**  
PO Box 3024  
Inverness, FL 34451-3024

**Bargain Store**  
1729 W Gulf to Lake Hwy.  
Lecanto, FL 34461  
Hours: Tue - Sat  
9 AM - 5 PM  
For pick-up, call:  
(352) 746-9084

[www.pathofcitrus.org](http://www.pathofcitrus.org)

[www.agrm.org](http://www.agrm.org)



# At The Path . . .



## Thanksgiving Meals to the Community's Homeless

The Path partners with two local churches each Thanksgiving to share Christ's love and a hearty, warm Thanksgiving dinner with Citrus County's homeless and to those without a place to fellowship for the Thanksgiving holiday meal. Volunteers and members of each church – Vineyard Church in Inverness and St. Anne's Episcopal in Crystal River – open their doors every Thanksgiving to spread kindness, good food and smiles to the many who stop in for fellowship, turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, green beans and pie.



Barbara Martin, member of St. Anne's



Thank you to all of you who contributed meal tickets, food donations, or your time as a volunteer to make these special holiday gatherings possible . . . someone's Thanksgiving was made a little brighter because of you!



Table hosted by Giguere Travel - YTB - Kevin & Cheryl Giguere



Les & Joan Cook's Table



Herb & Mary Stenger's Table



Barbara & Steve Martin and the registration volunteers

