

Special Thanks

The Path wishes to say a huge **THANK YOU** to bicyclist **Julia Michael of Hernando** for raising close to \$1500 for The Path. Thanks as well to all of the caring people who sponsored her by pledging.



Julia is pictured (left) with Rath Whitehurst.

Julia participated in JOY FM's *2-Day Bike Ride for the Homeless* in February 2008. Julia joined 75 other bicyclists from the JOY FM listening family and rode from Brooksville to Bradenton – approximately 120 miles – to raise money and awareness for the homeless. According to a 2007 point-in-time survey by the Florida Homeless Coalition, there were 856 homeless in Citrus County . . . 300 of them children. Families with children are the largest growing segment of the homeless population.

Announcing: Cruise for Charity '09 - January 4, 2009

Join The Path's executive and development directors, DuWayne and Kathryn Sipper, on a cruise to raise funds for our rescue mission. Departing from Port Everglades, we'll sail seven nights to the western Caribbean on the *Costa Fortuna* and visit Key West, Grand Cayman, Cozumel, and Roatan Island. Inside, outside and balcony cabins are available, starting at \$695 per person. Price includes all government taxes, port charges, RT bus, transportation, a private group party, and donation to The Path. Reserve your room a.s.a.p. – space is limited. For more information, contact Kathryn Sipper at 352-522-0514.

Traveling? Heading North for the Summer Months?

Call us to let us know how you would like us to direct your Path newsletters. *We want to hear from you!* We'll send your newsletters and mail when you want it, where you want it. If you travel and would like to give us an alternate address, just tell us when you'll be at that address or ask us to hold all mail until you return. Let us know which months to change or suspend delivery service by calling 352-522-0514 or sending a note with your gift.

Save the Dates . . .

Winn Dixie (Inverness) Grocery Collection Days: Saturdays, April 26, May 24, June 21 from 10 am to noon. Please call 352-522-0514 if you would like to help out and volunteer.



The Path Shelter Store Yard Sales: Saturdays, April 19, May 3, 17 & 21, June 14 & 28, from 8:30 am to 2 pm. Drop of smaller items at The Path Shelter Store during business hours or call 352-746-9084 to arrange furniture pick-up.



Coming Soon . . .

Planning on traveling overseas? The Path can use your treasure hunting skills. We would like to host an auction at our banquet on November 8, 2008, and are looking for unusual treasures that can't be found locally. While you are enjoying your adventures to faraway places, why not help us out by donating an item from your trip to The Path's auction and make a difference in someone's life? Call 352-527-6500 for more information or to arrange your donation.

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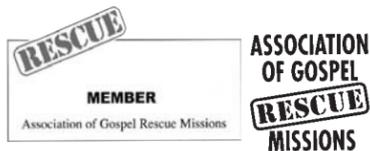
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THE PATH NEWS

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The Greatest Gift of All

The greatest gift a mom offers is her love. One of the most touching and consistent themes in the lives of the women who come to The Path is the great sacrifices they make for the sake and wellbeing of their children. Our staff and volunteers have an abundance of love and compassion for these women. There is plenty to give and share because of Christ's love for each of us. As we honor our mothers this Mother's Day, I'm reminded of the role we play in the lives of the people who pass through the doors of The Path. Take Kristy, The Path office manager, for example. Kristy is a single mom of three, and affectionately known as Office Mom. She is warm, caring and known for her easy smile and good humor. Here is her story:

Meet Our Office Mom: Kristy

What brought The Path to your attention and why did you decide to get involved?

My mother ran across a publication with a job ad The Path had been running for about a month. I spoke to DuWayne and found out that the position was still open! DuWayne explained to me what kind of an establishment it was, all the things they did and stood for - I knew I had to be here. My heart began to fill, I got very emotional . . . I believe I even began to cry a bit. **Finally at last, not only a job to help support my own family, but a job I could LOVE and feel like I was a part of something. That GOD showed me the gate to my very own PATH.** I left the interview feeling not only nervous, but so overwhelmed with joy, you would have thought I floated the whole way home I prayed on it all day and the next, until that blessed phone call.

How long have you been involved and what are your duties? How do you hope to make a difference?

I've been with The Path since October 2007. My official title is Office Manager, but recently I've also been blessed

[Continued on page 2]



Assistant Manager
— Thrift Store

Kristy's
Many
Hats . . .



Office Manager

Mentor



Spiritual
Guide

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- ▶ Meet Rebecca
- ▶ Director's Corner
- ▶ Cruise for Charity
- ▶ Special Thanks
- ▶ Coming Soon
- ▶ and more . . .

with the opportunity to work at The Path Shelter Store. I guess some would call me the unofficial "Assistant Manager" for the store as well. My duties at the office include everything from answering the office phones to typing up forms to filing, and so much more. I also assist with payroll and client budgets. When I'm at the store I help to ring up customers, sort donations, move furnitures, and just be an all around cheerful helper — Sherry even lets me assist her with paperwork and Community Service Workers. **I hope my office skills help keep The Path well organized, up-to-date, and running smoothly. My retail skills are still being honed, but I have an excellent trainer, and I just like to be part of this wonderful place in any way I can!**

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

There have been two moments that really stood out for me. The first was when I attended the annual banquet. I felt so blessed to be able to bear witness to the testimonies of the two gentle clients, Pete and Gino. I hadn't heard their stories before and I was overtaken with emotion. **I couldn't have asked for anything more when I heard them both thank us and refer to The Path as a part of their families. I was a part of that, and I was overwhelmed with gratitude.** The second was when I recently read an article that DuWayne had written for The Chronicle. He mentioned the fact that we were currently using the muck from the rivers as compost at our farm. I swelled with joy, because a family friend had suggested the idea and I was able to, with his help get the connections made for it to become possible. I felt like I was making a difference.

What are your hopes for the future of this organization?

That The Path and all involved are able to keep their vision clear, following the direction that HE has chosen for us. **I feel in my heart the He has plans so big for The Path, even we cannot fathom its impact. I also feel that Our Heavenly Father has chosen The Path as a wonderful vessel to not only spread His LOVE, His JOY, His WISDOM, but also His WORD.** To make a difference to those who may have strayed from the flock in their lifetime, and to those who may have never known they were His children to begin with. My immediate prayers are that we will be granted with the funding to keep the wheels turning and the good works churning, plus be able to start providing transitional housing for our program graduates. I believe this is a glorious idea that would greatly benefit our clients, society and the current job market.

*A Note from the Director: Where would we be without Kristy? She looks after all the little details, keeps everything neat and in order; lives by to-do list and is very proactive - accomplishing a task before being asked to. Kristy is also a single mom with three kids, whom she adores. **Happy Mother's Day, Kristy!***



"And if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your light will become like the noon day." Isaiah 58:10

Meet Rebecca: Women's Case Manager

Rebecca, what brought you to The Path ?

I want to share and show the love of Christ daily . . . to help others get where they want to be in life. I started as a volunteer, along with my husband Hiram, over a year ago after he brought me along with him to The Path one day, and I felt that God wanted me to help any way I was needed.

*We have assisted around the shelter houses, organizing the clothing donations in the shed, painting and doing maintenance in the houses and on the grounds. We volunteered for a Path fundraiser last spring and recently at The Path Shelter Store — sorting through donations, pricing and arranging merchandise, and filling in as cashier. **When the opportunity came to work with the women's shelter as a case manager, I knew this is where I belonged and God could use me.***

How has working with the women at the shelter challenged or changed you?

*I have seen first hand that **God works miracles DAILY.***

***Nothing is impossible for our God, and that is especially important to convey to the women who come to The Path.** Many have been through rough situations we can't begin to understand or comprehend, and have very little hope when they first arrive. There are challenges, but working at The Path shows me that God is in control of everything!*

What is your vision for The Path?

That God blesses this ministry so that the SKY is the ONLY limit.

***That The Path grows so it can hold countless more people in need of help and, most importantly, in need of God!** My prayer is that God keeps His hands on The Path and strengthens It and guides it for His glory everyday.*

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY TO ALL MOMS!!



Director's Corner . . .



DuWayne Sipper

“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest is love.”

1 Corinthians 13:13 NIV

Dear Friend,

Love. So many definitions go with that simple yet complicated word. A mother's love . . . love from your children . . . a dear friend's love . . . the love of your one true love.

To love someone as Jesus loves us, to obey Christ's command and thereby discover that we are not alone, only requires that we submit the feelings of our hearts and the attitudes of our minds to the wisdom and the counsel of God.

Yet to love someone as Jesus loves us does not require that we understand them; nor does it entail we approve of their lifestyle or their decisions. But this love is the toughest love to submit to.

As we offer hope to the many that enter The Path's doors every day, we also offer love. This is the love of our greatest challenge: one that is not disparaging but the most compassionate we can offer. A love similar to the love our mothers offered us as we grew and developed under her nurturing.

So, as we celebrate Mother's Day, we can easily see God's love all around us. Through the reawakening of Spring we feel the warmth of the season both physically and spiritually — and we praise God for what we've been blessed with . . . love.

Thank you for keeping us in your hearts and prayers. And thank you for your love.

God bless you and keep you,

DuWayne Sipper

DuWayne Sipper
Executive Director
The Path of Citrus County