

## SUPPORTIVE CENTENARIAN

**F**or her 100th birthday party, Bernice Harray encouraged her guests to donate to the Gospel Center Rescue Mission in lieu of gifts, just as she has done for the past 78 years.

Bernice was born and raised in Ripon and moved to Stockton in 1943. Now 101 years old, Bernice started giving to GCRM when she was in her twenties. When the Mission first opened in 1940, she recognized the name of the founders, the Van Dykens, as her fellow high school classmates. It was then that she felt called to give.

In her early life, Bernice recalls churches or families helping homeless people, since there weren't many organizations established. She has always been known for her helping hand. "People used to say, 'If you ever want any help just go to Bernice,'" she said.

Bernice has always been involved with the Church but wanted to contribute to something else as well – and the Gospel Center Rescue Mission has been blessed by her generous heart.

Bernice lived a simple life growing up. Her family lived on a ranch and they survived with what the land provided. They were not concerned with materialistic items, but rather happily lived with the basics. Their big purchase was a car – a Studebaker for \$35. Bernice purchased her own in her early twenties for \$600.

Bernice attended Humphreys College in Stockton, where she studied bookkeeping. She worked at a security title insurance company as a bookkeeper for 33 years until she decided to travel the world. Her destinations included Canada, Germany, and Sweden, among popular California spots.

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*continued on page 2*







## Graduations: Proof that God Still Performs Miracles!

**E**aster blessings! What an amazing interview with Ms. Bernice Harray in this issue! On March 16 Bernice also attended Graduation and blessed us with her opening prayer that ushered in the Lord's presence. It was an amazing celebration of God's restoration of 11 formerly homeless men and women who are living proof that *God still performs miracles!*

Speaking of Graduation, I wanted to let you know a little more about these amazing celebrations that we call our "payday."

**1** Graduations take place at our chapel and are open to the public, so YOU are always invited!

**2** We have six Graduations per year – one every other month. You can call (209) 320-2310 to find out the exact dates. Typically, they are on the third Friday of odd months at 1:30 pm. Our next Graduation is May 18 at 1:30 pm and features our graduates and active-duty Veteran, Colonel Gordon A. Richardson, US Army, as our keynote speaker.

**3** In our selection of Graduation keynote speakers, our goal is to present distinguished

men and women who have excelled in the fields of business, government, religion, education, and the military to give a "charge" to the graduates so that they remember their Graduation day. However, the graduates are not the only beneficiaries of the keynote's address. Students in the New Life Program, our staff, the graduates' families and friends, and other attending guests are also inspired by the keynote speaker's message. Many of our students attend multiple Graduations throughout their time in our programs, which means they get to hear encouraging messages from many great role models!

**4** Did I mention Graduations are open to the public??? Please consider coming to one to see the miracles that God performs through regeneration. In Ezekiel 36:26 the Lord states, "I will give you a new heart and a new mind. I will take away your stubborn heart of stone and give you an obedient heart."

Wayne G. Richardson

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

### Students Helping Students

Pharmacy students from University of the Pacific put on a health fair for GCRM's students in February. Pacific students offered a variety of services – screenings, medication information, and advice for a healthier life. Thank you, Pacific, for providing our students with invaluable knowledge to better their health.



Pacific and GCRM students at the health fair

Because of your donations, we'll serve nearly 500 people on Easter!

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When Bernice wasn't traveling, she was painting. She took an interest in oil painting after attending classes with a friend and has been painting ever since. She is a talented artist, painting landscapes and nature and often gifting her work to her loved ones.

Bernice has faced many challenges throughout her life, from the Great Depression to loss of loved ones, yet she has continued to pursue her faith. In the late 1960s when she was going through a tough time of sadness, she felt a physical tap on her shoulder with a Voice reminding her that everything would be all right. "From that moment on, my attitude changed and my perspective of the future changed," she said.

Her heart for the Lord and for the homeless shows in her efforts to promote the Gospel Center Rescue Mission. For her 90th birthday, she wanted her guests to donate to GCRM. Upon donating, she was recognized in an article in the newspaper.

In the years following, GCRM was still not well known in the community. For her 100th birthday, she personally invited former GCRM CEO Bill Brown to attend her party. "I wanted to get him some publicity," she said. Again, Bernice gathered funds from her guests to give to the Mission.

Because of her dedication and generosity for so many years, Bernice is well-known around the Mission – her picture with Bill Brown is displayed on campus. She is proof that no one is ever too old to make a difference, and GCRM has been blessed to have her support for so long.



*A few of Bernice's recent paintings*



*Bernice with former GCRM CEO Bill Brown at her 100th birthday party*

## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

We want to give special recognition to some of the many churches in Ripon for their support over the past few years! They have given their money, time, talents, and resources to the Mission. We were happy to have some of them serve on campus in areas that needed cleaning, painting, and fixing.

We gathered with members from these churches for dinner and fellowship back in February, where some of our students shared their testimonies. Thank you to Calvary Reformed Church, Almond Valley Christian Reformed Church, First Christian Reformed Church, Immanuel Christian Reformed Church, Zion United Reformed Church, and Ripon Christian High School!

We are excited to announce the start of a cause-related marketing partnership with the Stockton Ports! The organization will be working to support and bring awareness to GCRM. Last month the Ports mascot, Splash, came to visit the Mission. Shouts of joy filled the room as Splash took photos and played games with the kids. It was a fun time had by all! Baseball has begun so get your tickets and membership packages for the 2018 season at [stocktonports.com](http://stocktonports.com).



## Partnership with the Ports



# GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

*over 75 years of restoring lives*

445 S. San Joaquin Street  
Stockton, CA 95203  
(209) 320-2310  
[www.gcrms.org](http://www.gcrms.org)



# THANK YOU

Your donation to the Gospel Center Rescue Mission, via the attached envelope, can help students find their identities, restore relationships, and transform their lives through the love of Jesus.

## LAST CHANCE

To Purchase Gala Tickets

### 2018 Gala *Celebrating Restored Lives Through Scholarships*

We appreciate those who have already registered as sponsors! Our Gala is just days away, so get your tickets and celebrate God's restoration on this wonderful evening.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2018

5:30 pm RECEPTION

6:00 pm DINNER

STOCKTON GOLF &  
COUNTRY CLUB

Keynote Speaker

TORI VERBER SALAZAR

*San Joaquin County District Attorney*

CALL (209) 957-7277

TO PURCHASE TICKETS