

Fun Family Outings

handing out bait

"Get your free ticket here!" That's what Nathan Hagens and his C.H.A.R.M. brothers were recently offering to passersby in front of a movie theater. The men were on one of their monthly outings, a time when our transitional house residents go out as a family for fellowship and fun.

So what exactly do our ex-offenders do for fun? This particular day they were armed with Christian tracts. And they had a well-planned strategy. Their tracts looked like tickets, except printed on them were scriptures and the words "Free Ticket to Heaven." Knowing how people love their phones and taking photos, Nathan asked strangers walking by if they'd use his phone to take a picture of him and his buddies holding their tickets. And people stopped to oblige. Once they'd taken the photo, he'd talk to them about the Lord and hand them a tract. His clever plan worked: "They couldn't get away from me because they had my phone!"

being real reels them in

Every month, twenty or so of our transitional house residents (occasionally joined by some of our graduates) get together for pizza or a home-cooked dinner and then go out for entertainment or service projects. During these special times together, they talk to one another about life, their families, and how the Lord is working in their lives. Nathan says, "We are open and honest and real and vulnerable with each other. That's a good atmosphere, promoting growth and maturity." He added, "When we get together for outings, it's a reminder of where we've come from, who we are, and what our purpose is." They understand that a part of their purpose is to share the love of Christ with others.

When we get the opportunity to talk with the public, we don't bang them over the head with the Bible. We try to reach people where they are because that's the way we've been treated and loved and reached. We're here to love them, to tell them the Truth, and to be examples of how the Lord transforms lives and hearts. Some people are receptive. Others aren't. But, we know it's not our responsibility to change them. We do the loving and God will do the converting. We do the catching and the Lord will do the cleaning.

rippling effect of change

Nathan believes there's something very special about life at C.H.A.R.M. Here men share what many people don't always get to experience: unity, real fellowship, and love - all centered in Christ Jesus. The opportunity to live in this environment is not one that Nathan takes for granted.

I am very grateful for all the people who are involved with and have contributed to the efforts and family here at C.H.A.R.M. I think I speak for all the men when I say there is no better place to sow a seed where you can see such a harvest. Men's lives are being changed, and other people's lives are being changed through the men here. Thank you for your kindness and generosity and grace.



Transitional House residents out for an evening of fellowship and fun

And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Your donation helps us provide family-style housing for recently released men and women. There they learn how to "do life" as they continue to grow in the Lord. We give them a stable place from which to launch back into society, now free to be the people God created them to be.

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Christ's Hope and Reconciliation Ministry (C.H.A.R.M.) ministers to incarcerated men and women and their families. Our mission is to share the hope found only in Jesus Christ and to see souls reconciled to God. As the lives of individuals are transformed, so are their relationships with their families, local church, and communities.

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