

1/24/2000

**A PERSONAL WORD FOR YOU from Mack
McCarter**

“The Year of The *Mission: Renewal* ! Team”

You and I have been both participant in and witness to a most remarkable movement of hope in our midst! We are seeing person after person enthusiastically embracing a new way of rebuilding the foundations. The surging growth of this cause in the lives of all sorts of folks is nothing short of phenomenal. Just let your mind’s eye sweep back for a brief review of our march together and it will fill you with an expectancy for the future which will inevitably come to pass. Look back for a moment.

Four years ago less than two hand fulls of focused people were laying the ground work for our present leap into the new century. We were holding our council meetings around my dining room table. The need to find a way to energize and enlist anyone and everyone in contributing themselves for a new tomorrow for one American city was our passion. Our Council of Directors set the goals and tasks before us.

Nineteen ninety-eight was “The Year of The ICU.” Our goal was to see that we had launched our four ICU Leaders into our target neighborhoods and had them walking through the first steps of our eight step neighborhood penetration plan. We witnessed a tremendous outpouring of community support and mobilization! Remember? Two houses were constructed, one was renovated, and one updated, and four dynamic families were moved into the neighborhoods to began building lives from the inside. I know that you will agree that the result has been nothing short of revolutionary. Our goals were not just met, they have been *demolished!* I have never seen so many people investing so much of themselves in so many ways to restore the neighborhood infrastructure of caring necessary for lives to prosper. *God is love!*

Then came last year, nineteen ninety-nine, “The Year of The Haven House.” We knew that we must set the team in place to build the launching pad for a prodigious effort. Our goal is to enlist, train, *and nurture* 1000 persons as Haven House Leaders by the end of the year two thousand. Leadership for this daunting endeavor was critical. Gwen Taylor, HH

Director, readily accepted the challenge. So last year the foundation was laid. Care Coordinators have been trained. Trainers have been taught. Our curriculum Care Kits have been compiled. And now with the enthusiastic embrace of many dynamic congregations and groups in our area, we are ready to meet and surpass our goal. “The Year of The Haven House” has been mind-boggling in its reach and scope. **We are poised to enlist one thousand Haven House Leaders who will reach sixty thousand persons on their blocks.** *But get this: Through a new partnership with the Louisiana Community Policing Institute headed ably by Dr. Harold Ledford of LSU, we will be expanding Haven House to the cities of Monroe, Lake Charles, Baton Rouge, and Gretna this year. Talk about Lagniappe!*

Now, however, we are tiptoes on the starting line of the most exciting thrust in our movement to date. (Can you believe that?) This year, the year two-thousand, is “The Year of The *Mission: Renewal!* Team.” Our goal is to begin the process of uniting 10,000 people in an army of caring which will turn Shreveport/Bossier right side up!! By the end of the year, two thousand and two, you will not only see that goal reached, but I promise you, we will look positively silly that we set our sights *so low*.

Here is the breakthrough: We already have tens of thousands of people all around us who are engaged and committed to caring for others. This is the simple truth. We don’t need to teach people to care for heaven’s sake, they already are carrying out two, three, four, fifteen caring acts a day. You do that and so do I. Multiply those acts by the thousands of persons around us and now we are explosively exponential in our caring. We simply need to harness this creative power in the energy of love. (Bob Honig, our Director of Strategic Planning, has coined the equation $E=pc^2$. Energy equals people connected in caring and connecting others. That is explosive.

The key is in the connecting of everyone who is committed to caring acts. Here is where we will see the incredible breakthrough which we are already experiencing. Forget trying to transcend all of the differences in our diverse society. We are digging down to a wonderful base of commonality. Every single person in Shreveport/Bossier shares a common humanity. But we also share the God-given *capacity to care* for one another. Everyone who *exercises* this capacity is sharing a common mission of caring.

By enlisting all of those who are committed to exercising caring in concrete tasks, we will be gathering an army of love which can turn a community inside out. So we are going to get everyone we can to join this unified army of caring by joining a common cause, **The *Mission: Renewal!* Team.**

Now listen to this: Our slogan is, CARE WHERE YOU ARE!!
When you join The *Mission: Renewal!* Team, all you have to do is sign up and tell ***where you are already carrying out tasks of caring for others!*** You may already be expressing your caring in specific acts through your church, to your family, in your neighborhood, in your service club, in your job, in a thousand ways. Just write how you **are** caring. In this way we will unite all of those who are already caring. Nothing will be added to what you are already committed to do. We will all identify by a pin, a bumper sticker, a decal, a license plate, or a sign heralding, **“WE CARE !”** Now we will see each other as team mates in a common cause. So stay tuned. And why not beat crowd and join right now. Call us and say, “I’m in! Don’t start the revolution without me!!” God Bless You All.