

# Homeless Receiving a Roof Over Their Heads

By Chris Regnier FOX2now.com

December 23, 2009

WENTZVILLE, MO (KTVI-FOX2now.com) - The true meaning of the holiday season is being played out at the Budget Inn motel in Wentzville. A Lake St. Louis man is reaching out to the homeless by providing them a place to stay and help in finding a job. The founder of this program, Paul Kruse, runs a ministry called First Step Back Home.

The project has been going on for close to five years but now the tough economy has resulted in more homeless people than ever needing help. And now more people than ever are stepping up to get people back on their feet.

Kruse negotiates reduced rates for the homeless to stay at several motels in St. Charles County including the Budget Inn in Wentzville. He uses donations to pay for the rooms and then helps the residents find jobs. Kruse also uses donations to feed the people in the program dinner.

The whole objective of this is so they can become self sufficient and live in permanent housing, said Kruse.

Don and Rachel Quesenberry and their six kids are among the 51 people staying at the Budget Inn. Don lost his job and hasn't been able to find another one. Thanks to the first step back home ministry, they have a roof over their heads for Christmas at the Budget Inn.

"It's like we've entered a wonderland, a Christmas wonderland. I don't know, it's just totally different," said Rachel.

Kruse says even in this tough economy, donations are streaming in from people like the Kerns. "I wanted to put a smile on somebody's face even if it's just for a moment; just at the moment of opening it and saying wow," said Valerie Kern.

Without the Kerns' kindness, the Quesenberrys' kids wouldn't have presents to open. The family is grateful on many levels.

"I'm old enough now that presents aren't required but they're nice. I'm very glad that my sisters are going to get something," explained the oldest of the kids, 14-year-old Joannah Quesenberry.

Rachel added about the program, this is awesome, this is really awesome. Kruse says along with individuals about 15 churches help his group with food. Kruse tells us the average stay at a motel is about three weeks. He admits his program is not perfect-Kruse says only about half of the homeless winding up landing a job and getting back on their feet. If you want to help first step back home, call Paul Kruse at 314-852-5288.

Copyright © 2009, [KTVI-TV](#)