



# THE SOUNDS OF "THE REFUGE"

Volume 2, Issue 2

Son Set Ministries, Inc.

April 1, 2007



## Inside this issue:

Workday Progress	1
Dale Family Donates Home	1
Why Are You Here?	2
A God of Sacrifice	3
Want to sponsor a Work Team	3
Final Approval of Tax-Exempt Status	3
A Message from the Chairman	4

## Available on our Web Site:

- Web site: ([www.thesonsetrefuge.com](http://www.thesonsetrefuge.com))
- Architectural Rendering
- Work Team Volunteer Waivers
- Previous Newsletters
- Photos of Progress at the Refuge

## Workdays Generate Visible Progress and Camaraderie

Thanks in large part to a very mild winter, several workdays were able to be conducted at the Refuge during February and March. The focus of these workdays was, firstly, on a general clean up of the property and, secondly, on establishing new trails through the wooded areas of the Refuge.

Volunteers from throughout Eastern North Carolina gave of their time and resources as tons of debris was removed from low-lying areas and staged for removal to a proper landfill. How so much trash, garbage and litter came to be in these areas is unimportant. What matters is that this land is intended to glorify God and we give to God our best -- and that includes a pristine environment for folks to enjoy.

As great strides are being made in the removal of the debris, more and more effort is being put into shaping the nature trails that will meander throughout the Refuge and lead visitors along the Contentnea Creek and through natural wooded areas.

Jonathan Hines, an eagle Scout with Troop 63 in Kinston, N.C. is designing and building

two walking bridges needed to span creeks along the trails. His project is being supported by local merchants with materials and will continue throughout April.



**"Debris Removal and Trail Clearing by Workday Teams on March 24, 2007"**

In the grand scheme of construction of the Refuge, these projects may seem inconsequential but they are, in fact, critical elements of building a support base, involving the community, increasing awareness and engaging in "friend-raising." The large construction projects will come in time, but for now, these projects are a way for all of us to make ourselves available to God's calling in support of this ministry.

## First Structure to be Moved to the Refuge

God continues to bless this ministry in new and exciting ways. Thanks to the generosity of Dr. and Mrs. Payne Dale of Kinston, NC, the Refuge will soon receive its first structure; a vintage farm home, currently located about five miles from the Refuge. The home, more appropriately called a bungalow, will be relocated to a place near the entrance on the two acres of property donated by BB&T Bank.

This home, once positioned, will be the focus of effort for work teams interested in refurbishing it and will also be the prototype structure for establishing the North Carolina farm house theme that is intended to be carried out

throughout the Refuge. When completed, this house will serve to accommodate work teams, board meetings, provide restroom facilities, storage for materials, equipment and maintenance and serve as a welcoming center until more permanent facilities are completed.

Son Set Ministries is deeply appreciative of this donation by the Dale family. If you would like to participate individually, provide a work team to assist in the refurbishment of this home, or provide needed materials such as roofing, windows, door frames, paint, drywall, etc., please contact Sammy Hudson at 252.531.3214.

## "Board Member, Robert Spruill, Tells His Story"

**Why Are You Here?**  
by Robert Spruill

**Why Are You Here?** That was the question asked by the Son Set Ministry leadership in a room in a small farmhouse on a cool March morning. I was so anxious to hear what others had to say. I know now why these various people had gathered for such an occasion. We each had a story to tell that revealed the way that God had mysteriously been at work in so many hearts. My turn came. This is my story.

I've been involved in full time ministry for 29 years, predominantly in the Christian school ministry. I've worked with small churches and schools as well as other ministries and for the past 15 years with Bethel Christian Academy in Kinston, N.C.. I have been involved with Sunday school training and mission outreach for several years. Throughout my years in ministry, I have been privileged to work with some of the finest people in the world. Yet, during the past 3 years, I have sensed the Lord directing me to consider other opportunities where I might better serve in eastern North Carolina.

The idea of being involved in a Christian camping ministry became more clear to me and I began to search for a place where this might be. My involvement in various types of camps throughout my ministry days reinforced my belief that God was directing me to design or to be a part of some type of camp program. I searched and prayed for the Lord to provide the place to have such a ministry. For more than 3 years, I asked people to pray for this. I talked to people who have land for sale, many who were willing to assist me by giving me land with which to work. I walked over prime land that I believed God would grant to me for the ministry purpose. But for three years, there were no open doors.

In February, my school administrator, a close friend for many years, told me he was expecting a visit from Jimbo Perry. He mentioned that I might be interested in meeting him because he wanted to speak to us about an Ethiopian exchange program at our school in the upcoming year. He also mentioned that Jimbo was working on some sort of "camp" program. I made sure I was there. I am so glad that I did.

Jimbo entered the office as a casual acquaintance, but as is his style, always with compassion in his heart. As we awaited the arrival of the administrator, we made the usual small talk. We began to exchange our visions of what God was doing in our lives. The more we talked, the more excited we both became. Jimbo had that sort of nervous energy taking over. For you see, the visions and desires began to merge as evidence that God was at work in both of our lives, leading us to the same effort. Jimbo stated that I must have talked with Sammy Hudson. I had never heard of Sammy Hudson and I certainly knew nothing of any such place called the Refuge or Son Set Ministries. That was about to



**Robert Spruill, right, helps with debris removal during March 24, 2007 workday at the Refuge.**

change! Jimbo stated that he would ask Sammy to drop by and share with me the story of Son Set Ministries. Before we left the meeting that day, Jimbo, his assistant and I knelt on the floor to ask God to do whatever He wanted with us that would give Him the most glory.

Sammy came by my office the next day to share the ministry plans with me. Unfortunately, I was in class as my schedule required. I missed seeing him. Sammy returned that afternoon. When he sat down, he asked me what I had been challenged to do with my life. He laid the map of The Refuge on my desk and I was more convinced than ever that God had answered my prayers.

During that first meeting, Sammy also shared with me his decision, made just four months prior, to step down from his position as a youth minister in a local church in order to take the position of Executive Director of Son Set Ministries. Little did he know that I too had approached my pastor five weeks earlier to tender my resignation so that God could use me whenever and wherever he chose. We joined our hearts at that moment in the realization that God was about to change our world and the part that we would play in accomplishing His will.

I have been so excited about that day that I cannot stop telling others what God is doing in my life. My wife is praying for me and asking God to guide us in whatever is His desire. Sammy and I prayed together that eventful day knowing that we would never be the same again and that our work will always be focused on the needs of others.

If you have read the previous newsletters from The Refuge, then you're familiar with all the things God is doing to make this ministry a reality. Just look at the convergence of what some might call circumstance or coincidence. Call it what you want. I'll call it God's will. I hope this story will be further evidence that God will work His will, in His time, to perfection. So I'll close with this question..... "Why Are You Here?"

## A God of Sacrifice

In rural northern Pennsylvania, during the early sixties, there lived a bridge tender named Gus. Gus was an older man with a grandson named Peter of whom he was very proud. Gus was assigned a river trestle at the time, and this would more than likely be his last assignment before his retirement. He had been a career employee of the state and was looking forward to his retirement days, and an opportunity to spend more time with his grandson Peter. However, it would be a year or more before he was able to retire so he allowed Peter to come to work with him after school and during summer vacation.

It was a warm summer day in late July as Peter and his grandfather worked the bridge. They had just enjoyed a good lunch that had been prepared and delivered to them by Peter's mother, Anna, who was Gus' daughter. They were looking forward to the evening walk home together as they had plans to stop and fish along the river before supertime. Before they could leave however, one more train had to pass. This was the 3:40, and it was late. Peter was anxious to get started back home so he could enjoy fishing with his grandfather before it got dark. Gus explained to Peter that there would be no one to put the trestle down if they were to leave, and this would cause the train to wreck. Peter understood, but did not like it, and begged his grandfather to allow him to go and begin his fishing from the superstructure of the trestle. Peter promised not to get out of his grandfather's sight. Cautiously, Gus agreed to this and Peter descended to the lower part of the trestle.

## Son Set Ministry Granted Final Approval as a Publicly Supported, Charitable Organization.

On February 26, 2007 Son Set Ministries, Inc. was given its final ruling as an organization exempt from Federal income tax under section 501 (c)(3) by the Internal Revenue Service. In addition, Son Set Ministries, Inc., is further classified as a public charity under section 170 (b)(1)(A)(vi).

This ruling essentially acknowledges that this ministry receives at least 1/3 of its income from public support and that contributors can deduct contributions to this

It was getting late, and the 3:40 was still not in sight. The afternoon began to wind down and Gus dozed off for a bit. 5PM came, and still no train. Finally, at 5:10, a whistle in the distance could be heard as Gus glanced at Peter who had stopped fishing and begun to play on the steps that lead to the riverbank. "Hurray," Gus thought to himself. Finally the day would end and he could enjoy a stroll home with Peter, and a quick fishing trip as well.

Gus engaged the mechanism, and began to let the bridge down. As the huge gears began to turn and the track began to descend the train whistle became louder and louder. Where was Peter? Gus could no longer see him. While engaging the bridge mechanism, Gus had momentarily taken his eyes off of Peter, and now Peter was out of sight. Frantically, Gus began to run about calling Peter's name. All of a sudden Gus caught a glimpse of Peter. Peter had somehow gotten his baggy coveralls caught in the gear assembly that allowed the bridge to go up and come down. As the gears slowly continued to turn, Peter was being pulled into their teeth. If Gus didn't stop the process the boy would be crushed, but there was no time. The train was within sight as the ground began to shake. Gus was faced with the choice of saving his grandson, and sacrificing all aboard the train, or allowing Peter to be killed in order for the train to pass over the river safely. Much to his regret, Gus knew he had only one choice, and that was to allow Peter to be killed.

So it was that the bridge was to continue its path downward until it was locked in place, thereby crushing Gus' grandson, but allowing safe passage for the train loaded with

ministry up to 50% of their gross income.

During the period December 31, 2001 through Dec 31, 2006, Son Set Ministries operated as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization under the provisions of an advance ruling by the IRS.

Any questions about the organization's tax exempt status or allowable deductions should be addressed to Chip Olmstead: chip@thesonsetrefuge.com.

passengers. As the train passed, the people began to smile and shout to Gus as they waved excitedly at the bridge tender. Gus waved back as tears rolled down his cheek. The people on the train had no idea of the sacrifice that Gus had just made for them. They were just excited to see him, as they knew he was the one responsible for their safe passage and they expected him to be there.

This is the way it is with our God. He loved us so much that He was willing to sacrifice His Son for our safe passage, and often we do not understand or really appreciate it. What kind of God would do this for us? What kind of God would lay down a part of Himself to be destroyed for our sakes, and why? We only have to look at John 3:15 -17 to find the answer. God simply chose to save us. For that we give thanks! The story of Gus and Peter is a true one, and so is the one about Jesus and you.

Chuck Stokes

## Want to Organize Your Own Work Team?

If your church, scout troop, civic organization or neighborhood would like to organize a work day or work weekend at the Refuge, contact Sammy Hudson at 252 531-3214. This is a great way to build teamwork and enjoy a spiritually uplifting time that will benefit the Refuge and each participant.

## Architectural & Design Committee Seeks Assistance

The Architectural and Design Committee, under the leadership of Suzanne Gallaher, will soon begin meeting with local architectural firms to develop the plans for the buildings and facilities of the Refuge. The Board of Directors voted to develop a "farm house" theme throughout the Refuge and the work of this committee will be critical to achieving that end. If you have an interest in architectural design and functionality, and would like to serve on this important committee, please contact Sammy Hudson at 252.531-3214 or email him at sammy@thesonsetrefuge.com.

*"Fundraising begins with Friend-raising"*

SON SET MINISTRIES, INC.

*Ministries of Hope for a Better  
Tomorrow*



Property Address: 782 Lowerfield Rd.  
Ayden, NC 28513

Business Address: PO Box 5247,  
Kinston, NC 28503

Phone: 252-531-3214

Fax: 910 451-9994

Email: [ssm@thesonsetrefuge.com](mailto:ssm@thesonsetrefuge.com)

LEARN MORE AT  
[WWW.THESONSETREFUGE.COM](http://WWW.THESONSETREFUGE.COM)

## A Message from the Chairman

### Nehemiah As Our Model

In any significantly difficult task it is always advisable to have a model by which your efforts can be guided. In today's world, those with MBA's might ask, "What business model are you using?" Since I'm not a business major my answer has to be, "we're using the Nehemiah business model!" It's really quite simple.

Nehemiah took on a task that many thought was born out of lunacy as he sought to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. For him, the process was clear: Recognize the need, Ask for God's favor, Form a Team and Assign Responsibilities, Identify and Remove the Roadblocks, Manage the Effort. Sounds simple enough, but let's take a deeper look at that process.

Nehemiah first asked for information about God's people. In today's lingo, what were the demographics and what are the conditions. He then listened for the answers to his requests. In other words, he collected data. Then Nehemiah prayed for understanding and for guidance. Careful discernment over what is God's will and what is our desire is essential. Nehemiah then discovered his passion for the task before him and he developed a plan. He prayed more fervently for the plan and for the resources. Then he asked for help from others.

Specifically, Nehemiah asked the king to grant him safe passage and to instruct the governors of the territories to give him the resources he required. With the king's permission, he then planned for the journey using available resources. Upon arriving in Jerusalem, he assembled the workers and shared the vision. As the work began, skeptics were everywhere including those who wished to see Nehemiah fail. Yet, he worked through the enemy's attacks.

At various times in the building process, the people celebrated milestone accomplishments. When the task was completed, the finished work was dedicated and the people rejoiced in the hearing of the Word of God.

What strikes me throughout the "Nehemiah Model" is his understanding that he could not accomplish this on his own! He knew first and foremost, that God's blessing was essential. He constantly sought guidance and discernment in prayer. Secondly, the resources to accomplish the task had to be provided to him and the workers had to buy into the project. HE HAD TO ASK!

In our model, WE HAVE TO ASK! You are essential to the accomplishment of this task! Please give generously with your financial support, your talents and your prayers. We would love to spend some time with you individually or as a group to answer your questions. Join us in this effort to glorify God!

Chip Olmstead

If you would like copies of previous "Sounds of the Refuge" newsletters, contact Son Set Ministries at P.O. Box 5247, Kinston, N.C. 28503 or go to our web site for downloads.