

# Transcription of Podcast Episode 401: Spring Clean Sweep

## SPEAKERS

Billie McDonald, Scott Wolf, Bob Firing

**Note:** This transcription was computer-generated and may contain typographical errors.

### **Bob Firing 00:01**

Hello Shadow Hills. Well, I'm back. And yes, life is mostly fun and games around here, but this is a very giving community. Last year we started with a shoe fundraiser, and there was a fundraiser done for Coachella Valley Foster Kids. And we have a new one this year, Billie McDonald has come up with an idea to help the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission. So Billy, welcome to the podcast, and tell us your idea.

### **Billie McDonald 00:37**

Well, this idea came about about 10 years ago at another club, and several of us thought we would support the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission. We didn't know much about it, but we're trying to find a charity that that would work well. So we came up with this idea to have a Clean Sweep in January when the snowbirds came back. And we brought the truck to the parking lot on a Saturday morning at eight o'clock, we were going to be there from eight to 12. And we filled that truck and two and a half hours to the top. It was just amazing. Because people were able to bring things over to the clubhouse, they didn't have to drive a long distance to get rid of the things that they wanted to get out of the house. And because this is a senior community, I thought it would be a really good chance for us to clean our garages and maybe the kitchen and maybe the closet.

### **Bob Firing 01:31**

Yeah, I walk around and I see these houses full of, garages full of boxes.

### **Billie McDonald 01:37**

Yes.

### **Bob Firing 01:37**

And so I know there's a lot of extra stuff around.

### **Billie McDonald 01:40**

Absolutely, and I'm even working on that. And I've been up here for seven years, and I'm still getting rid of things, so.

### **Bob Firing 01:48**

Okay, and this is going to go to the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission. And we're happy to have the director here, Scott Wolf. Scott, welcome to the podcast.

**Scott Wolf 01:58**

Well, you know, Bob, and Billie, it's an absolute pleasure to be here on the show. Thank you so much for having me today.

**Bob Firing 02:04**

So tell the audience about the rescue mission. We know of it, but people typically don't know much about it.

**Bob Firing 02:11**

I see. And I have been there and I know you've got quite a good sized campus there. How many people can you house at any given time?

**Scott Wolf 02:11**

Sure, and once again, I just want to say yeah, my name is Scott Wolf. I am the development director over at the rescue mission and the rescue mission, the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission, our official title. We've been established since 1971. So we're getting ready to celebrate our 53rd year of service here to the Coachella Valley. And what we do is we take people off the streets, and we give them the opportunity and the resources to get their lives back together to redeem renew, and get to a place where they can live independently again. We start our operations actually start out on the streets. We have a full time street outreach team, we have an emergency shelter, that's open 24 hours. And then we also have long-term programs, we have a secular program and a faith-based program. And you know, Bob, both of those programs are designed, no matter what kind of circumstances a person has, that caused them to be homeless, you know, because homelessness doesn't discriminate across any demographic. There can be any number of circumstances that cause somebody to be without a roof over their head, of course. But what we do is we take an individualized approach with each person that comes through our doors, and we give them the skills and the tools necessary for them to succeed, once they leave our doors. Once they graduate. They're able to secure employment while they're at the rescue mission and start working and start saving money. They learn all kinds of different life skills that we provide classes for. And they get to a point where they're able to go right back out into the real world all by themselves, and be able to maintain themselves and be able to support themselves and get back into society being productive members of society. And that's the goal and the mission of the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission.

**Scott Wolf 04:16**

Well, you know, Bob, that's a great question. We have an emergency shelter, which has 75 to 80 beds at any given time, and that's pretty much full. And then we also have our long-term program dormitories. Now our long-term program dormitories have a capacity of up to 150 beds between the men's and the women's shelters. And then we also have our family shelter for moms with kids. That's a big part of who we serve, is single moms with kids. At any given time, we've got anywhere between seven to 28 children that are staying at the mission with their moms. So we've got a lot of people that are staying with us, Bob, you know, at any given time, we've got upwards of two to 300 people every night sleeping in our sleeping on our beds?

**Bob Firing 05:01**

And how many people typically will pass through your program in a typical year?

**Scott Wolf 05:09**

You know, that's another great question, Bob. You're asking all the right questions today! There's a different ways that we can track that. But on any given year, if you come to the rescue mission, no matter what you come for, and even if you come multiple days, or you're staying with us for six months, up to a year, if we count your name only once, okay, no matter how much services you provide, we're serving anywhere from 1,500 to 2,000 unique individual names every single year.

**Bob Firing 05:45**

Wow, that's quite a mission. And when I was talking to somebody about this last night, and a lot of us here, including myself, have retired, and we still have business clothes that we don't use any longer. But it would seem to me that that would be very useful to you, because you have people who are going out and applying for work.

**Scott Wolf 06:07**

Absolutely, absolutely. The rescue mission, when they have the long, when they have people in the long-term programs, part of their program is they get job skills training at the mission, we are what we call a working mission. And what that means is part of the long-term programs at the mission, the client's work at the mission in certain jobs around the mission under a paid staff supervisor. And they learn that job, whether it's working in the kitchen, and working learning food service skills, or working in our thrift store. So they learn how to do retail skills, you know, talking to customers operating the cash register, answering phones, you know, things like that. Or, whether it's in our landscape department, or a building maintenance department or our laundry department, janitorial, it doesn't matter. What they're able to do is learn those job skills, and put those job skills to good use. Because once those job skills are instilled, and they learned just you know, they learned the basics from the ground up, they're learning, you know how to get up in the morning, you know, how to report to a supervisor, how to dress for a job, how to how to do all these things. So when it comes time for them to actually seek a real job and go out in the outside and fill out those applications and submit those resumes and they start to get job interviews, they need good presentable clothes to wear. And so it's a great opportunity for residents and donors to donate clothes that they might not necessarily need anymore. Whether it be for men or women suits and jackets and slacks and dress shoes and you know, purses and...

**Bob Firing 07:48**

High heels for all the women.

**Scott Wolf 07:51**

Absolutely, absolutely. And what we always tell our donors who asked it and that's a good just a good segue as it pertains to just clothing donations in general, what you could do is you could go into your closet and either drawers and if you haven't touched it in a year, it's probably good to donate.

**Bob Firing** 08:10

And so I know you want everything, and but other things that are not obvious to people that you could use that that you would like to mention in particular.

**Scott Wolf** 08:24

Oh, absolutely Bob, that's another great question. The rescue mission needs everything that's in your house, we use too. So everything from toiletries, to clothing, furniture, appliances. Anything that you have in your house, we can always use too. And we are so grateful for our community and the way that they support us. The Coachella Valley is great in supporting the rescue mission. And what we do with everything that's donated to us, and of course, it's all gently used for the most part if it comes out of your house. But we also accept brand new donations, especially when we do things like underwear drives, or sock drives, toiletry drives, canned food drives, things like that. Of course, the brand new stuff is always wonderful. But as far as gently used items, everything that we take in at the rescue mission has a priority of the mission first, the client second, and then everything that the mission can't use or the clients can't use goes to our thrift store to be sold and then the profit, the proceeds, go right back to the mission for operations. Now, you might think well, if I donate a dresser or I donate a bed, the mission probably doesn't need that so it's automatically gonna gonna go to the thrift store. Well, that's not necessarily true because the clients take precedence. So when we have these really nice victories when a client says you know, hey, I just got a job and we celebrate that. And then they've saved up their money. And they say, Hey, I'm looking for a place to live. And we celebrate that when they get the keys to their apartment. But now, they've spent all the money that they've saved on things like you know, first and last and security deposit and turning on the utilities, they might not have the resources for the furniture and the stuff that they need. So what we do with the donations that come in, we gift those through a voucher system to the clients, so they have everything that they need when they move into their new apartment.

**Scott Wolf** 08:35

So Billy, why don't you tell the audience how you got interested in the rescue mission, and what you can do to get other people interested?

**Billie McDonald** 09:44

Well, I volunteered, and went on a tour and volunteered and then of course, we got involved in this, this Clean Sweep thing. So that was the basic thing that started about 10 years ago. And one thing that I was thinking about as far as Sun City Shadow Hills is concerned, most of us are retired, we have a lot of time on our hands. And if you're not playing pickleball, or golf or art or something, you still have a lot of time.

**Bob Firing** 11:11

And you can't do it every day.

**Billie McDonald** 11:12

And you can't do it everyday, as much as I want to my body won't let me. But there are many things that you can do. Helping in the kitchen, I remember the first Thanksgiving I was out there. And I peeled a whole garbage can full of potatoes for mashed potatoes for the next day. But I've worked in the

kitchen many times and I was a mentor for one of the young ladies one year. There are a lot of volunteer opportunities. And I'd love to see Sun City Shadow Hills really go for it.

**Bob Firing** 11:42

And you're taking a group of ladies over there?

**Billie McDonald** 11:47

Yes, on Wednesday for a tour of the mission so they can see exactly what the mission does. And people are just absolutely amazed. You know, they connect with other charities here to within the valley.

**Bob Firing** 12:00

Okay, and so I'll say to the audience, if this is interesting to you, send me an email at [podcast@scshca.com](mailto:podcast@scshca.com), and I will put you in touch with Billie. Well, thank you for coming in and telling us about this. So to the audience, Saturday, February 10, starting at 8am, here's your chance to unload your unneeded items, and do a really good job for a worthy charity, in addition to that. So thank you for coming in and telling us about it.

**Billie McDonald** 12:35

And can I add one thing?

**Bob Firing** 12:36

Of course.

**Billie McDonald** 12:37

Okay, if they don't have anything to bring over that day, or they have a few things, but they have some large items. There is a phone number that they can call and make an appointment and the truck will come right to their house.

**Bob Firing** 12:48

Oh, perfect. All right. Well, that that's very good to know.

**Scott Wolf** 12:51

Yeah and I think it'd probably be good to just to mention that phone number right now.

**Bob Firing** 12:55

Go ahead

**Scott Wolf** 12:55

Area code 760. The phone number is 347-3512, extension 300. That's our donation, call line. And you can talk to the nice lady on the end of that phone number, and you can schedule the truck to come to your house for larger donations.



**Bob Firing** 13:11

Okay, well, that's really good to know because I've heard that these thrift stores are accepting a lot of things now that they are overwhelmed with.

**Scott Wolf** 13:21

We're accepting so much everything

**Bob Firing** 13:23

That that's very good to know for people, yeah. Okay, well thank you for bringing that up. Thank you for giving us this idea. And for Shadow Hills, here's your opportunity. We'll see you on February 10. And thank you for your attention, until next time, bye-bye