

Jon Francis Foundation

2008 Annual Report

The mission of The Jon Francis Foundation (JFF) is to support and empower others, coping with the disappearance of a loved one, by providing hope, knowledge and resources and to reduce incidents of loss through wilderness safety training and information.

January 2009

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your presence, support and your gifts to the Jon Francis Foundation (JFF). Linda and I want to express our deep gratitude to you and keep you informed about our goals and accomplishments. As you know, we created JFF in 2007 to honor Jon's brief, remarkable life and ministry and to pass on his legacy of making a positive difference in the world.

What we do is help others who suffer the misfortune of losing a loved one in the wilderness.

While working through our own grief and loss we came to realize that no other organization in the U.S. is providing this kind of crises support. This awareness compelled us to start JFF.

Because of your generous support we have made a difference in the lives of others, just as Jon did.

We are guided by the belief that no human being should ever be abandoned in the wilderness. This is what we have accomplished, so far:

The Jon Francis Foundation has supported others in their grief and unresolved loss. We provided counseling and advice to others with missing loved ones in Alaska, Idaho, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Ontario, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

We are currently engaged with two families in their active search for a lost loved one:

An Ontario family whose 20 year old daughter, **Christina**, has been missing since August 2007. Visit www.findchristinacalayca.com.

A Minnesota family whose nineteen year old son, **Brandon**, was lost on May 14, 2008. www.theseearchforbrandon.blogspot.com.

Working with our partner, *Search, Rescue and Recovery Resources of Minnesota*, www.SRRR/MN.org, and law enforcement, we organized multiple searches in 2008.

JFF has collaborated with **law enforcement** to win their trust and reengagement. Our efforts have resulted in the Ontario Provincial Police and the Lincoln Country, Minnesota Sheriff reengaging in continued investigations and lost person searches.

We provided **wilderness safety training and information** to hundreds of people. We have spoken at scout meetings and church gatherings and distributed information and wilderness safety kits at outfitters across the country.

Also, to fund our mission and to honor Jon's memory we achieved the following:

Post Office Box 2235 Stillwater, Minnesota 55082, 612.963.6772, www.jonfrancis.org

The Climb-A-Thon: We marked the second anniversary of Jon's loss on July 15, 2008, by climbing on Thompson Peak, the tallest summit in the Sawtooth Mountain Range in Idaho.

Tom Tipton Concert: In September renowned gospel singer, Tom Tipton, performed in Stillwater in a benefit concert for the foundation. Tom sang with the combined youth choirs of Trinity Lutheran and Ascension Episcopal. *A CD recording of the event will be made available.*

Jon Francis Half-Marathon: We have begun planning for the Jon Francis Half-Marathon in Stillwater, May 24, 2009 (Sunday of Memorial Day Weekend), bringing together runners, volunteers, and friends in a living tribute to Jon. Competitive running was a significant part of who Jon was and a source of many of our memories of him. *Contact us if you would be willing to volunteer or participate.*

Bringing Jon Home: Written by David Francis; is the story of Jon's brief, remarkable life and ministry, our grief and loss and the search to find him and to bring him home. My book has been accepted for publication by PublishAmerica of Frederick, Maryland, and should be available in 2009.

Our Vision:

We are guided by the belief that no human being should ever be abandoned in the wilderness.

We know that when law enforcement stops their search, without finding the lost person, the family is plunged into deep despair - unresolved loss - feeling abandoned, helpless and hopeless. **Unresolved loss** – not knowing what happened and not being able to lay your loved one to rest piles grief upon grief.

Countless people in the U.S, many of them children, are lost in the wilderness each year and never found. I say countless because the U.S. does NOT maintain statistics. We document the number of bank robberies each year but not the number of people lost in the wilderness.

In addition to the unresolved and unreported loss we have become aware that local law enforcement, responsible for search and rescue (SAR), is often inadequately trained, prepared, equipped and funded.

Worst of all, we tolerate **gross inequity and unfairness** in standards of conduct and funding. For example; the State of Nevada spent over \$700,000 in their month - long search for millionaire Steve Fossett. Custer County, Idaho spent 29 hours and about \$10,000 searching for Jon Francis.

JFF intends to address this **lack of SAR preparedness and equitable funding** through research and legislative advocacy. This will be similar to the efforts of Patty and Jerry Wetterling, parents of Jacob, and founders of the Jacob Wetterling Foundation who worked diligently to create the Amber Alert System and John Walsh, father of Adam Walsh, who labored long and hard to convince the U.S. Department of Justice to create a Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

In 2009, we seek to improve and to expand our mission performance to meet the growing demand for our services. **Our long range vision is to build the Jon Francis Resource Center** where we will educate law enforcement and search and rescue professionals on search best practices and train others to go out into the wilderness safely and better prepared. Your support is important and deeply appreciated.

Thank you for caring and for helping others through Jon's legacy of love and service.

Best Regards,

David Francis

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