

New charity offers fresh start

Loretta Palmer
Staff Reporter

Rodolfo Valdes and Brenda Valdes bonded themselves for life in more ways than one on May 10, 2001.

On that day, the husband and wife said their marriage vows and also made a commitment to each other to receive treatment for alcohol abuse.

Five and half years later, the couple said they have devoted themselves not only to continuing their sobriety but also to changing other people's lives by giving them a second chance and a fresh start.

The couple opened Good and Funky, a nonprofit organization located behind Cinema 8 in downtown Kirksville on Jan. 1.

"Our mission is to help recovering addicts, battered women and children," Brenda Valdes said. "If they need it, we have it."

Brenda Valdes said the idea for Good and Funky came from personal experience. After receiving treatment in Miami, the couple visited a similar organization called Grubstake, operated by Heather Klinker, where they were able to get furniture for their house and other important items.

"She really inspired us to do what we are doing," Brenda Valdes said.

Brenda Valdes said people coming out of treatment find it difficult to start over because they do not have much of anything. Besides the material items people receive, the organization also provides peace of mind, she said.

"When you are getting out of [the] treatment center, and you have nowhere to live, and you're just getting a place, and you don't have any furniture, that's a lot of stress," Brenda Valdes said. "Basically, it takes off the stress, and they feel like they have support if they need it."

Donations to the organization range from furniture, clothing and toys to dishes, fans and books. Because of space limitations, the organization does not accept large appliances, such as refrigerators.

Brenda Valdes said Good and Funky has received incredible support from the community. Travelers Inn has donated several beds, headboards and dressers to Good and Funky, she said.

Ashlee Frazier, Travelers regional sales manager and acting general manager, said she decided to donate to Good and Funky because the Salvation Army was full and she wanted to find a different organization.

"I think anytime there is a non-for-profit effort that goes towards helping people, I'm all for it, and we'll support that in any way we can," Frazier said.

Various organizations including the Division of Aging, Victim Support Services and Preferred Family refer individuals to Good and Funky, Brenda Valdes said.

Brenda Valdes said the profit from sales goes to a fund for recovered addicts and abused children and women to help them pay for bills and other day-to-day necessities. The money also helps the Valdeses pay for Good and Funky's rent and other



Timothy Clayborn and owner Rodolfo Valdes sort clothes at Good and Funky.

Adam Kabins/Index

operational bills.

Brenda Valdes said she stresses the importance of donations, but now she needs volunteers. Currently, the couple runs the organization full time with the help of other family members.

Brenda Valdes said the need for volunteers increased dramatically in the first few weeks of operation because of the large volume of donations.

"Life is ... you work, you support yourself, take care of yourself, but you also have

to take care of your community," Brenda Valdes said.

Rodolfo Valdes said he also has learned many lessons throughout his life. Born in Cuba, Rodolfo Valdes said he began drinking at age 9. He said alcohol consumed a large portion of his life, and one incident in particular sticks out on his mind.

"One of my daughters was trying to dance and impress me, but I didn't even notice her," Rodolfo Valdes said.

Now, however, Rodolfo Valdes said he enjoys the pleasures of life — his wife and his two children, Angely and Vanessa.

Rodolfo Valdes said he has realized that taking care of his family is what is important to him.

"Everything we do is for those girls," Rodolfo Valdes said. "They are my life."

Rodolfo Valdes said becoming sober was hard, but he knows receiving treatment and recovering were the best things that ever happened to him.

"It was a major change of life from facing no responsibilities to becoming more mature and responsible," Rodolfo Valdes said.

Rodolfo and Brenda Valdes both said they look forward to helping others achieve the same success. Rodolfo Valdes said he would like to open up similar places in Columbia, Mo., and Milan, Mo., but he and his wife are focusing on helping the Kirksville community for now.

"We all make mistakes," Rodolfo Valdes said. "We are not here to judge each other. We are here to help each other."

Kirksville lottery ticket wins big bucks

Erin Clark
Features Editor

Jackpot. Doug Dorosh proved that kicking a smoking habit can be worthwhile when he won \$200,000 in December.

After 18 years of playing the Lottery, Dorosh won big in Powerball when he bought a ticket from Ayerco North in Kirksville.

"I used to be a smoker and spent \$30 a week on cigarettes," he said. "Now I play \$10 a week in the lottery."

Dorosh was in Kirksville visiting his wife Debra Cartwright, interim dean of business and accountability at Truman.

Dorosh said the lottery has an online registry where people can have an e-mail sent to them if the numbers they often play turn up as winners.

"I've been playing the same

numbers for some time," he said.

The numbers were 2, 15, 26, 37 and 42, representing the birthdays of family members.

Dorosh said the drawing was Dec. 3, 2005. The following day, he was on the telephone making an appointment and logged on to the computer to look at his calendar.

"They sent me an e-mail," he said. "Some of my lucky numbers had been drawn that night."

Those lucky numbers were worth a lot — to the tune of \$200,000.

"That's the second-place prize," said Susan Goedde of the Missouri Lottery. "You win it by matching all five white ball numbers and not the Powerball number."

The odds of winning the \$200,000 second-place prize are 1 in 3.5 million, she said.

Goedde said the second-place Powerball prize was changed from \$100,000 to \$200,000 August 2005. Although Powerball is a multi-state

Lottery, 18 Missourians have won since the change.

"Powerball offers some unbelievable jackpots," Goedde said.

She said the main jackpot always starts at \$15 million, and then the prize money depends on how many people buy tickets and how often someone wins, which means the whole process starts again.

The Missouri Lottery pays 61.6 percent of its proceeds out in winnings, according to the organization's Web site at molottery.com.

Originally, the remaining proceeds went into the Missouri General Revenue fund, but in 1992 Missouri voters chose to put the money into the public education system. Twenty-seven percent of the lottery's proceeds now go to public schools at the elementary, secondary and higher education levels. This percentage has resulted in \$2.5 billion to date.

Missouri higher education re-

ceived more than \$80 million from the lottery in 2005. Truman received nearly \$4 million, the sixth-highest amount on the list of higher education fund recipients.

The money was earmarked for "salaries, equipment and library purchases and institution-based student financial aid," according to the Missouri Lottery Web site.

The remaining lottery proceeds, more than 11 percent, go to the retailers who sell lottery tickets and administrative costs.

Of the money that is paid out to lucky-number holders, only the main jackpot fluctuates. The other prizes are unchanging numbers.

"There are nine ways to win [at Powerball]," Goedde said. "The overall chances of winning at all [in Powerball] are 1 in 36. The prizes range from \$3 to the jackpot."

Goedde said the lottery Web site shows the winning numbers, and people also can get them through

Match	Prize	Chances 1 in...
6 numbers	Jackpot	
5 white balls	\$200,000	146,107,962
4 white balls & PB	\$10,000	3,563,609
4 white balls	\$100	584,432
3 white balls & PB	\$100	14,254
3 white balls	\$7	11,927
2 white balls & PB	\$7	291
1 white ball & PB	\$4	745
0 white balls & PB	\$3	127

Source: www.molottery.com
Designed by Lindsay Koski/Index

OVERALL CHANCES: 1 in 36.61

e-mail, text messaging or at retail locations.

Senior Joe Kluesner said he plays Powerball a couple times a month and has won some small prizes.

"I think I won 20-something one time," he said.

Kluesner said he doesn't think the fact that a winning ticket turned up in Kirksville affects the odds of playing Powerball in town.

"It's all random," he said. "Your chances are the same anywhere you go."

Those chances might be long

odds, but Dorosh said he will continue to play the Lottery — as most winners do, according to the Web site.

"Each to their own," Dorosh said. "You've got to have fun. It costs a little and may give you some greens that are worth more than that."

Dorosh also said he decided to save most of his winnings.

"There's things in life that you always wanted to do, ... but it's kind of a windfall when you can do those things," Dorosh said. "You can go a little crazy, but you can't go too far crazy."

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