



The Wire

The Enewsletter of Community Voice Mail

September, 2006



"My Community Voice Mail number has opened the door for so many things in my life. Today, I feel like I have the promise of a beautiful life"

[Hear Tyra's story in her own words](#)

Welcome to the September Enewsletter of Community Voice Mail!

In this issue:

- **Should homeless people have cell phones?** While cell phones seem like a luxury to some, they can be a real lifeline to a homeless person. [Read more about what CVM is hearing from people in crisis in an innovative research project, and participate in our survey...](#)
- **If you got laid off and found yourself homeless, what would you do?** [Click here to watch a fun, educational video about how CVM works...](#)
- **CONNECT a homeless person with FREE VOICE MAIL for only \$7 per month!** For the cost of lunch, YOU can provide a CONNECTION to jobs, housing and hope to someone in crisis! [Learn more...](#)
- **Community Voice Mail now available in Washington DC, Austin and Fort Worth, Texas!** [Read all about it.](#)

Should homeless people have cell phones?

If you think this sounds like a silly question, imagine for a moment that you are homeless. Imagine you've lost your job and are working really hard to find a new one. While you have a free 24-hour voice mail number through Community Voice Mail, it's really hard to find a pay phone and when you do they often don't work, or the street noise is so loud you're worried you'll make a bad impression on a potential employer. There's a public phone at the shelter where you're staying, but there's usually a long line and you don't have much privacy.

When you really think about it, if you were homeless and/or jobless, wouldn't you need a cell phone even more than you do now?

CVM has been conducting focus groups with CVM clients across the country, and we've learned some interesting things about how people in crisis stay connected. For example:

- **40% of CVM users in the focus groups have cell phones**, and use them almost exclusively for employment and emergencies. They use free phones when they can find them to check their voice mail and keep costs down.
- **Of those who have cell phones, all still use CVM for voice mail.** Folks stressed the consistency and reliability of their Community Voice Mail number.
- **73% of focus group participants have an email address and use the web to search for work and keep in touch with friends and**

family.

[Click here](#) to participate in a brief survey and answer this provocative question - [Should Homeless People Have Cell Phones?](#)

Stay tuned to find out more about what CVM will do with this important input from the people who need, and use, our services the most.

When's the last time you had to worry about paying your phone bill?

Hopefully, never!

A telephone is probably your most important tool for staying **CONNECTed** with loved ones, services and resources. But for people who've been laid off, lost their homes or been displaced by natural disasters, a phone number must unfortunately come second to paying for food, temporary shelter and medical care.

Now, with a modest contribution of only \$7 per month, you can help someone in crisis maintain **CONNECTIONs** with friends, family, job opportunities and a chance for permanent safe housing.

For the cost of lunch, you can make an important difference in the life of someone in need.

Your donation is secure, much-needed and deeply appreciated!

[Click here](#) to learn more and sign up today!

Community Voice Mail launches in Washington DC, Austin and Fort Worth, Texas!

[Click here](#) to read about Mabel McNair, who was once homeless, is enrolled in a culinary arts class and plans to take advantage of Community Voice Mail in Washington DC.

[Click here](#) to read about Lynne Johnston, a 46-year-old Austin woman, who is homeless and lives at the Salvation Army shelter. Lynne says she'll do anything: typing, landscaping, cashier work. But she can't get a job without a phone number.

A CVM client hearing her voice on her recorded message for the first time in Fort Worth, Texas. Read an editorial about the Austin launch [here](#).

Note: If someone forwarded you this Enewsletter, please [click here](#) to sign up for future editions of The Wire or tell a friend about CVM!







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