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## **KC Blues Rugby Team on Rooftop to Raise Funds for River of Refuge**

*Pastor John Wiley and River of Refuge team up with the Kansas City Blues Rugby Team to score big for homeless families in the community with a unique fundraising effort, called Rooftop Blues. The 15 team members remain on the roof of the River of Refuge Transitional Living Center beginning on March 6<sup>th</sup> until \$25,000 is raised.*

Kansas City, Mo., February 27, 2014—Pastor John Wiley, founder of River of Refuge, continues his efforts to help the working poor and homeless in the Kansas City area, this time by partnering with the Kansas City Blues Rugby Team. This group of 15 Division 1 athletes will be camping out in tents on the roof of the River of Refuge Transitional Living Center starting Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, and will stay there until they reach the donation goal of \$25,000. The money will benefit the city's first-of-its-kind comprehensive transitional housing, dedicated solely to homeless working families currently residing in motels.

"We created a strong relationship with River of Refuge during our off-season this year and we are so excited to be working with an organization that is doing such good work," Kansas City Blues Rugby Club President Derek Mannell said. "It is rewarding to be a part of something for which we can truly see lives being changed."

The River of Refuge has been changing lives since 2009 when Pastor John Wiley witnessed a group of children loading a school bus from the parking lot of an old run-down motel in Raytown, Mo. He immediately began searching for a way working families could escape the pay-by-week motels in with they become trapped. In a recent cover story in Community Investor magazine, Wiley discusses the importance of River of Refuge and their mission to help families find a place to live.

"There has been tremendous growth in family homelessness in the past several years due to the economic recession," Wiley said. "There just simply are not enough beds available at family homeless shelters to serve the number of local families looking for a place to sleep."

In addition to opening the transitional family housing facility in the former Park Lane Hospital, the money raised from Rooftop Blues will also allow River of Refuge to offer programs to assist those transitioning from homelessness to self-sufficiency. This will include financial counseling and resources for finding permanent housing solutions.

The Blues understand the need that River of Refuge is meeting in their community and are not taking this challenge lightly. A March day in Kansas City can mean a blizzard, a heat wave or even a twister, but come rain or shine the team will camp out with a live webcam broadcasting their activities as they work to raise the money via text, tweet or other methods from their electronic devices.

To donate, visit [RooftopBlues.com](http://RooftopBlues.com). For more information on Pastor John Wiley or River of Refuge, go to [PastorJohnWiley.com](http://PastorJohnWiley.com).

## **ABOUT PASTOR JOHN WILEY**



John Wiley is the founding pastor of the River Church Family in Raytown, Mo.; an ordained pastor of the Foursquare Church International; and the current Divisional Superintendent for the Kansas City Metro Foursquare Division.

Wiley's ministry call to his community was ignited by a direct vision from the Holy Spirit that he is to be accountable for the spiritual climate of his city. His River Church Family congregation started with 15 teens and grew to be around 300 at present. Wiley bought the vacant Park Lane Hospital building on faith and turned it The River of Refuge making it a home for the working families trapped in single-room motels. A product of a broken home, troubled childhood, and identity crisis-filled adolescent years; Wiley can identify easily with those around him suffering and in need.

Wiley has been married to Mary Jo since 1982 and has three children and four grandchildren.

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