



ROGUE RETREAT NEWS

Community Partnerships Are Key To Medford

By Brian Sjothun, Medford City Manager

Homelessness is not a new issue, but it has become more visible in our region. The City has focused on reducing regulatory barriers and dedicating resources to reduce hardships that lead to homelessness.

The Mayor and City Council approved implementation of the Medford Homeless System Action Plan last November, which includes five goals and 31 actions to address homelessness in Medford. Specific goals include:

- Increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing
- Increase leadership, collaboration and funding
- Address unsheltered homelessness and encampments
- Increase temporary housing programs and successful placements
- Increase diversion and prevention strategies

As you can see from the list above, we're working with our community partners, like Rogue Retreat, on a multifaceted approach to address the current homelessness situation and reduce the hardships that lead to homelessness.

This plan was vetted and recommended by the City's newly created Housing Advisory Commission and Community Development Grant Commission. Members on these commissions represent social services, affordable housing, workforce development, local business, healthcare, education, construction and development, real estate, lending, tenant support, and the community at large.

One of the actions of the Homeless System Action Plan is to add two new members who have experienced homelessness to the Community Development Grant Commission. This will help achieve greater success with the programs and projects supported by the City.

The creation of the Medford

Livability Team, as well as the development of a reunification program, are examples of the different steps we're taking to address homelessness in our community. Clean-ups, like the Clean Sweep program, responding to calls and connecting individuals to services are all part of this effort.

We recognize the importance of maintaining Medford's livability for everyone and have made significant progress in our efforts to address the needs of our unhoused population. We attribute this progress to the City's dedication to listening and learning from our local service



Brian Sjothun, Medford
City Manager

providers and organizations.

We understand that additional resources, policy support and development of facilities to serve the homeless population is going to be critical in addressing the challenges moving forward. Homelessness is a complex, challenging issue and a priority for the City. Community partnerships are key in this work and we are focused on collaborating with many organizations to address Medford's livability for everyone.

We appreciate the hard work Rogue Retreat has put towards this effort and value their partnership.

Five Steps To REACH Forgiveness

By Susan Szczesniak, Foundations For Recovery Leader and Rogue Retreat Educator

With the current social distancing restrictions, people are staying at home more. For some, this is a great thing. They are growing closer as a family, getting projects done, or just having fun being creative.

But for others, it is an emotionally stressful time; things that never bothered you before are now driving you up the wall! In this climate of stress and anxiety, these little things can pile up and create resentment, anger, frustration, and disappointment.

Light University Professor Everett Worthington, Jr., Ph.D has come up with a simple model for extending forgiveness to anyone, whether it's a spouse, family member, the government, or even ourselves. It is simple to remember with the acronym REACH.

Remember the hurt, not angrily or with resentment, just simply recall the event or issue.

Emotionally replace the negative

emotions with positive ones, such as empathy and compassion.

Give an **Altruistic** gift of forgiveness, one that expects nothing in return, given freely.

Commit to the forgiveness we experience, not the feelings necessarily, but the decision.

Hold on to that forgiveness whenever we doubt we have forgiven.

Remember forgiveness is not only a Biblical mandate, but it is good for us physically, emotionally, spiritually, and relationally.

Holding onto resentment fuels addiction, creates stress, and hinders our relationships.

Forgiveness does NOT mean we are required to reconcile with an abusive partner or otherwise harmful person.

Resentment and unforgiveness only hurt US. If we want to experience peace, joy, and good health we need to take the steps to REACH forgiveness!

Why I Love Working With Rogue Retreat

By Thomas Fischer, Board Chairman

Fulfillment through giving.

If I had to explain what it means to me to be working with Rogue Retreat, that would be the simple answer.

I once read, if I remember it correctly, the secret to community lies in the way we let other people get through to us and the way we move out of ourselves, and this is the mystery of vulnerability and powerlessness.

Our programs at Rogue Retreat serve just those people. For whatever reason, they have become vulnerable and powerless. In my work volunteering for Rogue Retreat I get a chance to “move out of myself.” I get a chance to become part of a community of people striving to turn around from their past and rebuild their life. I get a chance to serve people that are positively self-motivated and have faults. They could be me.

I’m encouraged when I meet one of our participants who shares with me her success in gaining her kids back from the State. I have heard the story a number of times how parents drop into behaviors that hurt them and their children. Soon thereafter, they find themselves alone with the kids having been moved into a foster home. After dedicating themselves to follow the Rogue Retreat Programs, they are granted custody of their kids again. I have never seen a mother shine so brightly as when this happens.

I’m impressed when I meet a guest at Hope Village who is proud to say they are heading off to their job. Having a home, a place, an address, has given them the ability to “clean up” and go out after a job. Peer support has helped them find their self-respect again and the courage to be a participant in the world.

I’ve seen our people grow from despair to proudly driving off to their fast-food job or the small business group they lead, and even to managing a large local hotel. I’m humbled.

Undeservedly, I take staff handle difficult confidence and calmness, their saying their prayers right thing.

From our newest Executive Director, I am motivated by being in community striving for us. Peer counselors who someone and have the ability to be blunt when needed. Directors that are always looking for all the options possible to continue or expand a needed service. Facilities staff that know how important it is for our people to have a home, secure and functioning. The only time I’ve seen tears is when Staff needs to tell someone we have no room for them.

Bottom line is that I am a selfish person. I am after the love. The community that is Rogue Retreat has brought me so many moments of love as I’ve tried to explain

above. I feel fortunate to be able to give my time and energy to this community. I am a blessed man and Rogue Retreat is part of that. I think we learn and are healed by committing ourselves to others, especially those at the margins. As part of our community, tell me how Rogue Retreat can continue to be of service.



Tom Fischer, Rogue Retreat Board Chairman



pride in seeing our situations with and like me, I know they are doing the

volunteer to our surrounded by people service to a the potential in all of will never give up on

Employee Spotlight

Michel Seibert has been with Rogue Retreat for just a short time, but is doing amazing things at the Grants Pass Warming Center. Here is Michel’s life journey.



Michel Seibert

Michel grew up in an alcoholic home. He ran away from home at the age of 15.

Despite his unhealthy childhood and being on his own at such a vulnerable age, he continued his education as well as working hard to support himself. He graduated High School and enlisted in the military.

Michel started drinking while he was in the military. After, he began hanging with the wrong crowd, and get into trouble with the law. He was incarcerated a significant amount of time between 1991 and 2004.

From 2004 to 2009 he was placed in a live in treatment facility. He had stopped using drugs in 2004 but continued to drink, and in 2015 his body couldn’t handle it anymore and he ended up in the hospital. Although his body shut down due to drinking, he could not stay sober.

In 2018 he made a choice to stay sober. He had no clue what he was doing so he decided to stick close to the people who were successful in their recovery.

He started hanging out with a man who he now calls one of his closest buddies. This man was a mentor to Michel and helped encourage him to a successful path in life. He encouraged him to take classes and told him that he has a good heart to help people who are struggling.

Michel took his Peer Support Class months ago and just received his state certification in May 2020.

Michel says working with the population we serve helps him to stay sober, and he absolutely loves working for this organization. He loves



Michel and co-worker Don at the Warming Center in Grants Pass

where he is working and what his role is, but he has hopes and dreams of getting his CADC II and becoming a Counselor/Case Manager. Michel’s

words:

“I never thought I could take all the negative experiences in my life, turn them into a positive thing, and be able to help others.”

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UCAN And Rogue Retreat Partnership For Grants Pass

By Kelly Diana Wessels, Chief Operating Officer for UCAN

“Serve, Serve, serve. Because in the end, it will be the servants who save us all”
– Sargent Shriver

Service to our neighbors, to our community is among one of the most powerful things we can all do, and starts with two things: a desire to help and a willingness to learn how best to help.

United Community Action Network in Josephine County (UCAN) and Rogue Retreat embarked on a journey of service together, creating the first official Warming Center in Grants Pass this past winter, based on these two principles.

UCAN had a desire to provide a humane resource for our unsheltered neighbors during the frigid months, and pursued warming shelter funding through Oregon Housing Community Service.

In turn UCAN sought out a partnership with sub-recipient Rogue Retreat, knowing we could learn together on how best to serve people in need of warmth and compassion.

Rogue Retreat had experience to share with UCAN from their Kelley Shelter activities, and UCAN had linkages and



resources that Rogue Retreat could benefit by in a community they hoped to serve in the future through their Foundry Village project.

Together, 230 people have been served over the winter months, and when COVID 19 hit, both UCAN and Rogue Retreat immediately responded expanding operations into a 7-day a week operation to help increase safety and sanitation among the unsheltered.

Our effort was supported by St Vincent DePaul in Grants Pass, nightly providing warm meals to our guests.

People without homes have greater challenges in basic health practices and often suffer from co-morbidities that make them even more vulnerable to a treacherous virus.

By standing up this operation, UCAN and Rogue Retreat made a safe and consistent environment for people who often are neglected in our culture. Rogue Retreat even embarked on a safety and security project to benefit the grounds, with help from volunteers and consumers, once again showing how the desire can get you across the success line.



The 37 volunteers, Rogue Retreat staff and UCAN personnel have navigated successfully many challenges, yet they pale in comparison to the outcomes achieved.

However, in my opinion, the very best outcome will not be what we did, on any given day, however important that may be.

The most important outcome will be the relationships we made, setting a path of cooperative spirit and partnership into the future.

UCAN and Rogue Retreat have invested in one another and, on behalf of very vulnerable neighbors in Grants Pass, have brought engaged volunteers to the effort – this bonding is what lasts and makes for lasting change.

Our mutual desire to serve, and willingness to be humble and learn have indeed served our organizations well and we are better now because we were willing to reach out to each other for the strength to make change.

COVID-19 Community Support For Rogue Retreat

By Matt Vorderstrasse, Development Director for Rogue Retreat

COVID-19 has had some major impacts worldwide. On top of loss of life and stress on our medical systems, our economy has taken a major hit.

Two months ago Rogue Retreat was forced to shut down our Thrift Shop that helps raise funds for Supportive Services.

On top of this we were confronted with staff being out due to healthcare concerns and loss of childcare.

We faced significant loss of income and had to move quickly to stem the

bleeding while being stretched operationally. We were still operating at full capacity sheltering and housing over 200 individuals a night in Jackson County and being presented with the opportunity of operating the 40 bed Grants Pass Warming Center each night in Josephine County in partnership with UCAN.

The community came together and our staff continued to show up and provide essential services to the unsheltered in our community.

Four Tiny Houses at Hope Village were sponsored. These contributions came from the Medford Rogue Rotary who raised \$20,000.00 internally to pay for two tiny houses. Rogue Retreat Board Member Kelly and his lovely wife Liz Andersen and the Raymond Family Foundation sponsored the other two.

Operationally, we were supported by ACCESS, UNCAN, Oregon Community Foundation, Care Oregon, Jackson Care Connect and AllCare CCOs, Slave 2 Nothing Foundation, United Way, and many

other generous donors.

While the economy fell out from under the Country, the community came forward to save Rogue Retreat and help ensure our services are still being provided to our communities most vulnerable.

In just under two months we received over \$500,000 in support from donors and other funders. It was breathtaking and humbling to see this support come forward.

Speaking from the personal experience of having served on the Board of Directors before becoming the Development Director I remember when grants and donations were nearly non-existent and Rogue Retreat was a small agency struggling to finish the year in the black. To now be an agency that can shelter and house over 200 individuals across two counties with an operating budget of \$3,000,000; well I still have to pinch myself sometimes when I think about it.

I cannot thank everyone enough for this support. It is humbling to be able to be part of this organization and to see this support from our community grow.

We are not able to do this work without all who support us.



Why I'm A Supporter Of Rogue Retreat

By Karen Page

First of all, we would like to thank you for this opportunity to provide input as to why we continue to support Rogue Retreat. The first question that comes to our mind is: How do you thank an organization that was instrumental in saving your daughter?

Rogue Retreat not only gave our daughter, Jamie Langdon, protection and stability when most needed, but most importantly, they gave her hope.

You have provided a path for a secure future for her, along with developing the necessary skills to provide for her two beautiful children.

The value Rogue Retreat offers the community is not that of mere handouts with no expectation for improvement. Rogue Retreat offers a "hand-up" for those in need while also providing ongoing coaching for development of positive behavioral



Karen & Steven Page

characteristics, improving self esteem - and most importantly, for

taking personal responsibility on how best to manage their lives in a productive way. With the help and guidance from Rogue Retreat – and good old fashion hard work by our daughter, she has become a successful mother, daughter, friend and employee. She also, in the tradition of Rogue Retreat, has become a mentor and role model for those in need. Our continued support goes beyond the help you have given to our daughter. The mission of Rogue Retreat is to provide a path to self sufficiency. You offer programs, shelter and housing with the end goal of moving men and women toward self sufficiency and a secure happy life.

Rogue Retreat is truly an exemplary organization. Thank you for your continuing work in the community – and for all that you do for so many.

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What Are The Plans For Foundations For Recovery?

By Susan Szczesniak

COVID-19 has changed us. It has changed how we go about the business of caring for people. It has shown us that in spite of the uncertainty we all feel, we are resilient, courageous, and we do not quit.

We do not give in to fear because we know that even though life is uncertain right now, there is one thing about which we continue to be certain: we have a "higher power" who knows what we need and who cares deeply for us. Because of this, we have HOPE!

And in this spirit of hopeful expectancy, we have decided to make some critical changes to our service delivery at Foundations for Recovery.

Now, I know change can be scary, and there may be some concern we are losing the vision. Nothing can be further from the truth!

As we have examined our mission and vision, we are seeing new ways to bring recovery support to our community and to Rogue Retreat, under whose umbrella we operate.

Our mission is to "Transform Our Community One Recovery at a Time."

This has not changed. They say that a company or leader whose vision is

achievable in one person's lifetime does not have a big enough vision. We know that we are laying groundwork that will affect generations. We are not changing the scope of our work; we just have to do it in a different way.

The biggest change for us is that we will be moving to the 711 E. Main Street building with the rest of Rogue Retreat. The 110 N Ivy location is too big and too expensive to maintain. The office suite we will be moving into will give us three offices and a conference area-smaller than the Ivy Street facility, but adequate for our needs- at almost 1/3 the cost!

I personally donate to FFR, and as a donor, my main concern is that the funds be used wisely and effectively to further the mission. In that same spirit, we are paring down our expenses further by

shifting some of my hours to the Development Department, where I have been happily researching and writing grants.

Like Liam Neeson in the film "Taken," I have "a very particular set of skills" that lend themselves to writing and research. Working with the Development Department has also allowed me to identify funding sources that fit FFR's work. I will still be working part of the time at FFR as we go through this transition and identify new strategies for training peers and providing peer recovery coaching to both Rogue Retreat and the broader community.

One of the questions we have been asking ourselves is this: What does FFR offer that our community needs?

We trust that as we answer this question, we will be guided in the most effective ways to fulfill our mission while streamlining operations. We want to thank you for walking with us as we "Transform Our Community One Recovery at a Time!"



Medford Livability Team Is An Unconventional Approach

By Sgt. Geoff Kirkpatrick, Medford Police Department

The typical role of Law Enforcement in the United States has been that of the enforcement arm of the judicial system. They are charged with holding people accountable for violating the law. For many societal problems this approach seemed to work. I mean, there have to be consequences for people who victimize others, right?

However, as a lifelong resident of the Rogue Valley and as a professional policeman for almost 18 years, I have seen an alarming growing trend in our community that cannot be solved with enforcement. Without even having to rely on statistics and studies, one can visually see the increase in the unsheltered homeless population in our valley.

Our greenway, based on its very nature, has become a haven for those who are homeless and in their eyes don't have other options. The greenway and our parks are

close to the core downtown area of Medford where the majority of social services are located. This, along with the ability to be out of sight while still close to needed services, makes the greenway and our downtown area a perfect place for those who are

unsheltered to make their temporary homes. Starting in late 2018 and continuing into 2019, the City of Medford leadership recognized this visible trend. Balancing the need to serve the community and business owners, along with serving our homeless population with compassion, the City leadership began brainstorming ways to

address the livability issues that were being seen. These included things like: disorderly behavior, trash effecting our waterways, fires and general unwanted behavior. After

looking at multiple different options, the decision to use police officers and form a "Livability Team" was settled on.

The Medford Police Departments Livability Team is a dedicated team of 3 police officers, a Police Corporal, a Community Service Officer and an Intelligence Analyst. The basic mission of the Livability Team is to improve community livability through enforcement, linking resources to the homeless, partnerships, and through a collaborative approach to identifying long-term solutions.

Now, that all sounds like a great plan, but how do we actually put it into action so that it works? We have found that pure and aggressive enforcement of the law does not translate into meaningful results when it comes to our homeless population. Displacing people who are already displaced does not solve the problem. We have



Medford Chief Of Police Scott Clauson (center) at the opening of The Kelly Shelter

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Rogue Retreat Wants to Thank The Oregon Community Foundation for all their support over the years!

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developed ways to advocate for, assist and mentor our homeless clients through a system wrought with red-tape and pitfalls.

We develop relationships with people. We establish trust. After that, we can begin to help them through the process of digging themselves out of the survival mode that many of them are in. This takes the right policemen/policewomen and the right attitude. It takes empathy and caring. It takes patience and an ability to be resilient to failure. Our Livability Team officers genuinely care not only for their community, but for the clients that they serve. They take ownership in their success. The end goal of the team is to better the lives of those that are homeless and in doing that, they take steps to solve the issues that we see in our downtown area and our parks.

So what does that look like when we actually put it into action?

Well, to date, the Livability Team has found temporary/transitional housing for 24 clients, entered 6 people into addiction services, found employment for 3 people and provided identification (through DMV) for 8 people. These are just a few of the statistics but there are many more.

The relationship that the Livability Team has with Rogue Retreat, and specifically the Kelly Shelter has proven to be invaluable. They are able to streamline the process for vulnerable clients to get them into shelter beds, where case management services can be started. The Livability Team worked hand-in-hand with Rogue Retreat, OnTrack and the City of Medford to develop the Summit house, where we are able to have input on the clients that make it into that facility. The Livability Team is a resource to Rogue Retreat and vice versa.

These are exciting and promising times for us as a community as our agencies work together to provide the assistance that actually matters to people who need it. By assisting them in working towards a solution and not just giving them handouts, we are able to let them take control of their future. As we move forward, our systems will adapt to the ever changing environment around us and with perseverance and purpose we will continue to serve the entire community, focusing on our most vulnerable.

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Reflections From Our First Paid Employee

By Heather Hassett

In its infancy, Rogue Retreat was run by a small, hard-working and dedicated volunteer Board of Directors, with Chad McComas at the helm.

In the early days I worked with Chad doing various church and community projects. I eventually became the Office Administrator of Set Free Christian Fellowship where he was, and still is, lead pastor.

It was at this time I was becoming more familiar with all of the many hats Chad wore and all of the other organizations he was involved in in some way.

This is when I learned of Rogue Retreat.

At that time Rogue Retreat operated men's and women's recovery houses, to help people escape the prison of addiction. My first impression of Rogue Retreat was that, although a noble cause and vision, it was taking up too much of our beloved pastor's time, energy, focus and resources.

After refocusing its mission to helping the homeless, Rogue Retreat received a very large grant from the State of Oregon in 2009 and was finally able to stand on its own feet.

Chad offered me the first paid position and I became the Administrative Director. Together with Chad as volunteer Executive Director, a property manager and one case manager, Rogue Retreat was reborn and became a new creation.

One of the earliest barriers I faced was the realization I was "not qualified to be me." I had very little knowledge of homeless housing and programs.

Early on I recognized sometimes God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called. I became a fastidious student of homelessness. I read all I could on the subject and met regularly with other community leaders to discuss the issues.

I am a firm believer in not reinventing the wheel, so I called and visited other organizations locally and throughout Oregon to find out what they are doing, to learn best practices from them.

From this information, the team and I formed the original policies, procedures, programs, values and culture of Rogue Retreat. We had a good foundation. As Rogue Retreat grew in properties and programs its staffing needs grew as well.

I am also a firm believer in hiring people smarter than yourself. Chad intentionally

hired new staff very strong in the areas of knowledge I lacked to increase our capacity and level of professionalism.

The staff has grown from 1 in 2009 to over 50 today. Many of the staff are, or have been, past participants in Rogue Retreat programs. They have first-hand knowledge of what it takes to let go of old patterns of thinking and behavior and embrace hope and new opportunities. Their examples of resiliency and success are a testament to the effectiveness of Rogue Retreat's programs and staff.

One of the saddest and most difficult barriers I had in my work at Rogue Retreat was constantly battling the stereotypes of homelessness and the Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) attitudes in our community.

Nothing brought this out more in my experience than the creation of Hope Village.

So many people view the homeless as only violent criminals, alcoholics and drug addicts. A common belief is homeless people deserve to be homeless because of the bad choices they have made. Some people feel that if the homeless would just "get a job" they would be able to get a place to live. Of course, we know that homelessness is a very complex socio-economic issue that has many causes and its solutions are as unique as each individual person is.

Rogue Retreat and other area partners have worked very hard at changing the general perception of homelessness by educating the community through media campaigns and public discussions.

Future residents of Hope Village spoke at City Council meetings to give a real face to the homeless population it would be serving. I feel that hearing each person's individual story dispelled some of the common myths of homelessness and opened hearts and minds of council members and allowed them to give the



speakers a chance to have a safe place to be with the support they needed to thrive.

We can only begin to change the stereotypes when we take the time to actually get to know each person experiencing homelessness as individuals, not a statistic.

Years ago, Set Free Christian Fellowship embraced the mission of Rogue Retreat and became a vital community partner. They take the time to get to know each person by providing meals and services to the homeless throughout the week and hosting a special service day on Fridays with housing, medical and other community partners in their parking lot. Their compassion is a wonderful example of "Yes, In Our Backyard."



Heather Hassett enjoying life in Hawaii

I think, now more than ever, during the coronavirus pandemic that people can see how, in just a few short months of "hard-times" people can be financially devastated and wind up homeless. I pray this pandemic can help change the hearts and minds of people everywhere to view the homeless with more compassion.

In 2018 I decided to take my own advice and follow my dreams. I resigned from Rogue Retreat and moved to Hawaii.

Rogue Retreat will always be family to me, like one of my own children. I look in on it frequently to see how everything is going and send my monthly support. I am so proud of the continued excellent work I see.

I love hearing stories of hope restored and lives changed. I am so excited when I hear of all the new and developing programs. It has been an amazing adventure to see Rogue Retreat transform from an unknown little non-profit to a well-known and respected model homeless-services provider.

Rogue Retreat now attracts visitors from far and wide to learn best practices from them, so they do not have to reinvent the wheel.

City Councilors and City Staff now value the work of Rogue Retreat and cite it as a model program. I could not be prouder of the staff and participants of Rogue Retreat who continue to shine their stars to give *Hope to the Homeless*.

Keep shining!



Grants Pass Volunteers Rock!

By Phil Johncock, Warming Center Manager

Over 235 homeless guests spent at least one night over the 4-month season of the Warming Center in Grants Pass.

With a little stability of a roof over their heads and food in their bellies, guests received help at the center with nine essential services like a mailing address, health insurance, SNAP food stamps, job readiness, identification documents (i.e., birth certificates, social security cards, IDs), resumes, phones, housing readiness and stimulus checks.

In fact, in just one week, guests received over \$24,000 in stimulus checks, money they didn't know they could even get.

None of this would have been possible without a dedicated, core group of 40 local volunteers who donated over 1,400 hours of their valuable time (value = \$35,000+) week-after-week from February to May 2020, starting with only the coldest nights (32 or

below) and ending with seven nights a week during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Volunteers like Mark Collier, who served delicious

food prepared by St. Vincent de Paul on multiple nights every week. Mark discovered creative ways to feed and serve guests who were practicing social distancing. He used leftovers to feed people sleeping in their cars in the parking lot, people turned away after reaching

capacity (40/night), even those less fortunate in

the community who were unable to even reach the warming center. In fact, on the first freezing nights of February 2020, Mark drove around town to key spots to inform dozens of homeless on the streets that the warming center was now open. Thank you, Mark!

Volunteers like Geneva Matson, who located and purchased (out of her own pocket) an excellent used refrigerator for use in the warming center kitchen. Geneva worked five graveyard shifts each and every week while finding additional time in her busy schedule to recruit volunteers and personally help dozens of homeless guests take care of their immediate needs. Thank you, Geneva!

Volunteers like Doug Walker and John Kliegl, who within one day organized a cleanup crew of a dozen homeless guests to remove five huge bushes behind the warming center, which were an eye sore



Mark Collier and Melanie Gillmore Serving the Homeless Food Prepared by St Vincent de Paul



and frequent location for illegal activity long before the warming center even existed.

Doug and John are both regular volunteers who have also helped with many repairs in the building. In addition, Doug works the Sunday graveyard shift as a host, and John (and his wife Athena) use their amazing skills to help with the wall-to-wall

cleanup of the 5,000 square foot facility on Monday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Thank you, Doug, John and Athena! Of course, there is Greg who rented a pressure washer to clean the spilled oil and stains next to the building and Leslie who is coordinating hair stylists volunteering to cut the shelter guests hair.

There have been countless acts of kindness and hours of

listening to our marginalized who are seldom seen or heard. To the 40 local volunteers whose contributions are too numerous to mention here but who each serve as a true hero in the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors, helping them get through the coldest nights of winter and through COVID-19 crisis ... thank you! Thank you! Your dedication to making the warming center a reality for over 235 homeless neighbors in Grants Pass is truly inspiring!



Julio (guest) working alongside Doug Walker (volunteer) in removal of bushes



- 9 Essential Services Provided
- Mailing Address
 - Health Insurance
 - SNAP Food Stamps
 - Job Readiness
 - Identification Docs (i.e., birth certificate, social security card, ID, etc.)
 - Resume
 - Phone
 - Housing Readiness
 - Stimulus Check



Rogue Retreat Alumni Club Starting

We have started an alumni supporter club for past Rogue Retreat participants

to give back for the life-changing opportunities received while being in Rogue Retreat.

We have a challenge for all past and current participants.

Will you give at least \$5 a month to be part of this new club? Will they pay it forward for another person to create their own success story?

Send us your first \$5 this month stating you want to be part of this new club. We

anticipate creating officers of this club, scheduling alumni events during the year and finding ways for all participants (past and current) to share their ongoing stories. We can only imagine what this club will help create!

For more information call our development department at Rogue Retreat. 541-499-0880.

Your gift will have lasting

affects for so many!



Working Together To Serve Vicky and Buttons

By Nathan Twiss, Community Service Officer, Livability Team and Cathy Marcoux, Case Manager for The Kelly Shelter

NATHAN'S STORY

I first met Vicki at a camp along the Bear Creek Greenway just south of US Cellular Park. Vicki had been living with her adult daughter, several other people, and multiple dogs in a makeshift tent with a dirt floor. Vicki had been using a wheelchair to get around, but was unable to leave the camp due to the rough terrain of the area.

No one living at the camp was physically able to pull her wheelchair out of the camp, and the only times she was able to leave was if we drove to their camp via I-5 and pulled her wheelchair through the muddy trails up to the freeway to take her to appointments to receive services.

We were concerned for Vicky due to her medical situation, as well as her likelihood of her being victimized due to her age. Through our partnership with Rogue Retreat, we were able to get Vicki (and her dog Buttons) off the bike path and indoors at the Kelly Shelter.

Once she was living indoors she was able to give up the wheelchair and begin using a walker supplied by Access of Medford to get around. We are extremely thankful for Rogue Retreat and their commitment to the wellbeing of their clients.

When Vicki met me she explained, *"The cops were not our friends and made our survival so much harder when they would come and issue homeless camping tickets that we couldn't pay and force us out of whatever small space we found. I wasn't anxious to trust any police officer until I met Officer Twiss."*

CATHY'S STORY

In my very first case management meeting with Vicki, my heart sank. This could be anyone's grandmother living in such horrific circumstances, I thought to myself.

During our initial meeting, I learned Vicky's story and how she went from living with her significant other in a trailer for over thirty-five years with no problems.

Vicki shared she and her partner split the bills between the two of them and although they weren't living with an abundance, they did live comfortably.

When her partner passed away she knew

she was in financial hardship. She receives \$791 in social security.

Here is her story: *"This doesn't go very far (the \$791) I had a car that I had almost paid off and I didn't want to lose that. I also had rent and my utilities and co pay's for prescriptions. I had to make a choice rent or my car payment? "Within a years' time I found myself on the greenway having no way out. I then was hospitalized two separate occasions about 8 months apart. The first hospitalization was for MERSA, a skin infection, due to my living circumstances. "We had multiple dogs in the tent with us, and they were constantly running over me scratching me and so forth.*

I then was hospitalized and had my toe amputated, after which I needed to be placed in a skilled nursing for rehabilitation for a short time."

During the first case management appointment, I was able to get Vicki an appointment with the LaClinica mobile bus. They helped her get back on the medications for hypertension, COPD, and clinical depression which she had been forced to discontinue months ago.

We also made a virtual appointment with la Clinica for a new primary care physician for the following week. Vicki, like so many others who come into our shelter, had all her vital documents stolen while on the Greenway.

We have since sent out for a replacement social security card and are working on getting her birth certificate.

We have more to do, Vicki and I, but her life is



Vicky and her dog Buttons



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improving and she can now see a light at the end of the tunnel.

In asking Vicki where she wants to go from the shelter, her response was, "I want a home again. That's it, nothing more than a home and the security that comes with it." She went on to say, "I want a porch for Buttons and me to sit on again." This is where saying thank you just doesn't feel adequate. Due to the many generous donors who support Rogue Retreat and The Kelly Shelter we're making a difference in the lives of our clients.



It takes many people working together to bless our community one person at a time



Spring Cleaning with Clean Sweep

Keep the homeless employed and the community clean during these trying times.



For more information please contact Chris Hyde, at 541-499-0880 or by email at Chris@rogueretreat.com

People Can Make Important Changes In Life

By Justin Hon, Rogue Retreat Peer Support Specialist with John Salmons

JUSTIN

Working with John has shown me the resiliency people can have when they put their mind to it.

When I first met John he appeared broken and wore out. John has overcome so many barriers and obstacles since putting one foot in front of the other. John has a drive and a commitment like no other. He's always looking for ways to better his life. And his outlook on life is truly amazing.

It's a blessing to be able to work with John. No matter how hard things got for John, he always kept a positive outlook on his life, and he was always willing to do whatever it took to change his future.

Since moving into the Summit House John has created back up plan after backup plan to keep himself financially stable and has been able to build a new support network with his roommates. So many times people just need a hand up ,

not a hand out, and this is a prime example. With our donors' support we are helping people like John achieve their goals and persevere through life's challenges.

John's ultimate goal is to have his own residence and own business and all this is possible through community support as well as our gracious donors that support Rogue Retreat.



Justin Hon and John Salmons

JOHN

When I came to the Kelly shelter on February 6, 2020 I had no money and my cell phone was disconnected because

I could not pay the bill. I had no way to pay the approximately \$350 a month in bills I had.

Since then I have paid all the bills. I have also made two payments to child support and I have paid the reinstatement fee to get my driver's license back. I have



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an SR22 in which I'm insured in any vehicle I drive. I have taken the written test with the Oregon DMV to get my driver's license reinstated which I got 90% on. I need to take the driving test and submit a letter of self-employment proving self-employment.

I have also started repairing lawn mowers and appliances for people and I've been selling appliances, lawn mowers and other miscellaneous items.

Since I was at the Kelly Shelter I created income by donating plasma and using that money to buy stuff from the Goodwill As Is Store. I started selling that stuff to create income to pay my bills.

I'm receiving food stamps and have applied for low-income housing. I now live at the Summit House which makes me feel like I'm not homeless like I was a month-and-a-half ago.

I've established five lines of income and with Rogue Retreat's help I'm excited about the future again.

Is your community struggling to address homelessness? Learn through Rogue Retreat's experience and discover how to create tiny house transitional communities, winter shelters, employment programs and more in your own community. The time is now to improve our housing and shelter opportunities.

Hope University Available Audio Courses:

Community Village 101

Discover "How to Launch Your Own Tiny House Transitional Village for the Homeless in Your Community."

Winter Shelter 101

Winter Shelters 101 covers the most important issues for your community to address and how to turn problems into opportunities for creative partnerships.

Clean Sweep 101

Discover How To Create Your Own Community Clean Sweep "Job Readiness" Program For Your Homeless to Clean Your Streets!

Let Hope University help coach your community to develop shelter and housing programs.



To learn more or to purchase a course please visit:
www.rogueretreat.com/hope-university/



OPEN FOR SHOPPING AND DONATIONS

We are officially reopened on Monday the 18th of May, 2020.

1116 N Riverside Ave, Medford, OR 97501
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Thank you for helping us combat the spread of COVID-19

Ashland Dreaming: An On-Ramp For The Poor And Unsheltered

By Julie Akins, Ashland City Councilor And Advocate For The Unhoused

On any given night in the hamlet of Ashland, Oregon you might find among the mix of tourists and residents coming and going from rooms and houses, another population--those who sleep outside under the stars.

There are roughly 100 unhoused residents of Ashland and more depending on the time of year. And then of course there are the invisible unsheltered who stay below the radar as they work their jobs and raise their children in cars and the guest rooms of friends and family who are not counted in that number.

Ashland is a small town. Roughly 22,000 people live in its limits and as such the city has made the argument that it doesn't have the resources to fund programs for the poor and homeless.

And currently that holds true. In Ashland there are no year around shelters, tiny house villages or transitional housing. There are meals served, a good food bank and a resource center provided by Options for Helping Residents of Ashland to assist people in navigating but until and

unless there is actual housing provided, those who live rough on the towns streets will remain in situations with more police contact and difficult health outcomes.

It's not because Ashland residents don't care. In fact, many volunteer their time to assist. And the city has designated its marijuana taxes to an Affordable Housing Trust Fund which could be accessed to help.

What's needed are experienced people with a vision to help. That's where Rogue Retreat

could come in handy. That is why many are advocating for at least one 24/7 shelter and transitional housing. The model used by Rogue Retreat could be used in Ashland as it has in Medford and Grants Pass.

In Ashland, we want to create on ramps for the poor and homeless. We know that when people are stabilized with a door that locks, access to regular hygiene and some time outside of the



Save the Date
Foundry Village
Ground Breaking Ceremony
Wednesday, June 10, 2020 ~ 12:00 pm
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For questions please call or email at:
541-583-0113 or
info@foundryvillagegrantspass.com

FOUNDRY VILLAGE

Our vision is to provide short term housing and case management for individuals and families to help move up from homelessness and ultimately into long term housing.

Foundry Village will be the first tiny house transitional community for those affected by homelessness in Grants Pass and Josephine County.

Foundry Village will provide short term housing and case management for individuals and families to help move up from homelessness and ultimately into long term housing.

constant movement which accompanies being unhoused, the homeless begin to want to re-enter society in a meaningful way.

As an Ashland City Councilor I visited the Kelly Shelter and Hope Village created through Rogue Retreat. I personally build homes for homeless families and saw the work of Rogue Retreat as thoughtful and productive both in short and

long term problem solving. The program's "secret sauce" of wrap around services and involving the unhoused themselves in the solution seems a powerful way of engagement that could be life changing. When you're used to being invisible being asked about what you see as solutions is big medicine for the trauma of experiencing life on the edge.

It's my deepest hope and most closely held dream that the many friends and neighbors I know who live unsheltered will one day soon have the same access to a roof over their head and programs to re-enter society as exist in other communities.



My Story: Ashley Mitchell

My name is Ashley. Rogue Retreat is where it all started for me. I walked onto the Riverside Apartments location in a meth induced psychosis, badly broken, and pleading for help.

I was taken by Cindy and Justin to the main office. After all the staff talked patiently with me for over an hour they suggested I try treatment first and pointed me in that direction.

Not long after, I did just that and when I graduated I had the privilege of being accepted into Heather's Haven after a short interview process.

Having no life skills whatsoever or any sense of responsibility, the case management Rogue Retreat offered taught me how to budget, helped me obtain things like my birth certificate and even paid for me to get my license reinstated.

After about ten months they offered me a town house. My very own first ever apartment in my name. The house inspections taught me the importance of

keeping a clean house. They set me up with Consumer Credit Counseling and I was

able to clean up my credit. They showed me what it was to be a responsible productive member of society.

The Life Skills Meeting on Monday nights hooked me up with many much needed resources in my community and made me feel a part of something great.

They helped me obtain my Peer Support Specialist Certification and they believed in me when I didn't even know how to believe in myself.

Today I am proud of the woman I am and a big part of that is because of the love

and guidance of the amazing staff at Rogue Retreat. I have a beautiful family, I

work in the Recovery Community and we have our new home. Rogue Retreat gave me an outstanding recommendation to my current landlords and could very well be the reason they decided to choose us out of over 140 applicants. Much of my success is due in part to all the wonderful people who work at Rogue Retreat and the many things their program has to offer!

I love you, Rogue Retreat and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the many blessings you have brought to myself and my Family!



Ashley Mitchell received an outstanding star award at the annual Rogue Retreat picnic

Heather's Haven Gives Women A Chance

By Krystal Perkins

Heather's Haven is a safe haven where women graduating from substance abuse treatment can have a safe, clean and sober place to live. It is a place where they can

begin to rebuild and piece their lives back together. Heather's Haven was founded by Betty Fredericks after tragedy struck head-on in 1988. Betty was seriously injured and her granddaughter Heather



Old front doors at Heather's Haven

Frederick was killed by a drunk driver.

The Fredericks stated that 15 month old Heather was an "angel on a mission." The family desired to continue that mission and created Heather's Haven.

Max and Betty were adamant this was a much better alternative than incarceration for those struggling with drug and alcohol addiction.

They believed incarceration was the wrong approach and considering the increasing success rate of the program over the years, it is safe to say that they were right!

One of the founding principles of the program has NEVER been to try and save these women, but instead to provide a safe & stable place where women could save themselves.

Rogue Retreat was lucky enough to take over the operations of Heather's Haven in 2015 and continue the mission Max and Betty dedicated their lives to.

Many changes have occurred over the years. Rogue Retreat has been able to open and operate three more havens. Two are for women and one is for men. All havens follow the same principles and mission.

One of the latest changes comes from an incredibly generous donation from Mountain View Window and Door. They donated a stunning set of glass double doors for the entrance to Heather's Haven.

With this transitory world we live in some things are always changing. When it comes to the type of work we do; the people change, locations change, home improvements and the look might change, lives definitely change but the mission of Heathers Haven will always remain the same.



New front doors for Heather's Haven donated by Mountain View Window and Door



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Rogue Retreat Saves

By Sarah Minshall, Finance Director for Rogue Retreat

In 2017 Rogue Retreat was invited to participate in the pilot program for OregonSaves.

OregonSaves is state run retirement program that allows all Oregonians 18 and older to open and maintain a Roth IRA. They can fund their Roth IRA via payroll deduction from participating employers or automatically deducted from their banking account if their employers aren't participating yet.

OregonSaves allows participants to direct how their savings is invested and offers many choices. OregonSaves is easy to navigate and their customer support is top notch.

Being part of the pilot program brought Rogue Retreat into the spotlight. We were honored with a visit in 2017 by State Treasurer Tobias Read and his staff, we were featured in the 2018 OregonSaves annual report, and we were featured in a Wall Street Journal video about the Oregon Saves program. The video can be found here: <https://www.wsj.com/video/series/financial-inclusion-in-america/saving-for-retirement-how-auto-ira-plans-may-secure-the-future/54DA57D7-ADCA-468D-9DA1-4D88AB31C39F>

Most importantly our employee's retirement savings have grown.

Total Savings by Year:
2017 \$ 3,399.15

2018 \$27,527.17
2019 \$37,522.65
2020 \$21,367.18 (January-April)

This amounts to \$89,816.15 our employees have contributed toward their retirements!

When we started OregonSaves I personally didn't know how I could afford to contribute so I started out with the lowest available contribution. I quickly realized I didn't really miss the small amount I was contributing. My contributions have gone up every year and just recently my fiancé opened an account so he can start saving for his retirement also. We love watching our retirement savings grow every month and are planning on putting an even larger amount away each month in the near future. Having retirement accounts has helped create a sense of security in our house.

We've all been told the benefits of saving for retirement. What I've learned is the earlier you can start saving for retirement the better!

OregonSaves is a state retirement program providing Oregonians a unique opportunity to save for the future. Whether you are an employer who will facilitate the program or an individual planning for the future, OregonSaves is a simple way to get started. To find more information about OregonSaves please visit their website at www.oregonsaves.com



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Mission:
*Creating Opportunities
For The Homeless To
Have Hope.*

Vision:
*Rogue Retreat envisions
a community where all
homeless have a place to
call home and are
empowered to
strengthen the quality of
their lives.*

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Finding Hope Podcasts

Stan Littrell was introduced to us through a local program which finds employment for those with disabilities. Stan is blind, but he has a great history of working with radio. The idea of creating a podcast for Rogue Retreat was developed with Stan taking the lead and making the 30 minute programs a reality.

Over 30 podcasts have been recorded and shared so far. Most are of Rogue Retreat employees who share their personal stories

of "Finding Their Hope." Some are of community partners sharing their stories of how hope changed their lives and their connection with Rogue Retreat. You can hear the "Finding Hope" podcast online at: Anchor Fm and other places podcasts are found.

