



Creating opportunities for the homeless to have hope

NEWSLETTER

September, 2021



HOW THE ALMEDA FIRE CHANGED ROGUE RETREAT



By Chad McComas,
Rogue Retreat Executive Director

This September marks the first anniversary of the Alameda Fire, which destroyed over 2,500 homes and businesses in the Rogue Valley and left hundreds of people homeless. Afterward, Rogue Retreat's staff and board were faced with a new challenge. Were the people displaced by the Alameda Fire part of the homeless population we were created to serve? It didn't take long for us to determine they were, and we started looking for ways to support the community in finding solutions.

The first opportunity came from the Phoenix/Talent School District. They were actively seeking donated



Redwood Inn, a 47 room motel being converted into apartments to provide temporary housing to people displaced by local wildfires.

RVs to provide temporary housing for their burned-out families. They wanted to keep the families nearby so their children could continue to attend school in the district. Rogue Retreat volunteered to be a pass-through non-profit organization to provide donors with a tax deduction, and the school district with donated RVs. Together, we provided 18 families a temporary place to live. There would have

been more, but available RV spaces in the Rogue Valley were used up.

The next opportunity arrived when the State of Oregon built the Turnkey Program to create housing for homeless programs around the state. The housing would come from the purchase of motels to convert to various forms of shelter. The City of Medford wanted to apply for a grant and

pulled together representatives from various non-profits in the area to identify who would partner with them. Rogue Retreat stepped up and the grant was submitted in December 2020. The Oregon Community Foundation, working with the state, approved the grant application and the Redwood Inn was purchased and given to

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THE REDWOOD INN

PROVIDES SHELTER FOR PEOPLE DISPLACED BY THE ALMEDA FIRE

David and Margie are a mother and son who lost their home in the Alameda Fire last year. It was a chaotic time for David and his mother, as they sought shelter in several different places before moving into the Redwood Inn, which is now temporary housing managed by Rogue Retreat.

“Prior to getting into the Redwood, we stayed in six different motels,” said David.

Right after the fire, David explained they spent several nights in their car before getting the help they needed and moving into one of the local motels. But this was also only a temporary fix. After their time was up at the Motel 6, David and his mother were searching for shelter again and turned to the Red Cross for help.

“It took them four more nights before they got a room for us, and later they put us in different motels,” David said.

However, things took a turn for the better when David and Margie

moved into the Redwood Inn.

“We had a nice place to stay and it was much better than the motels we’d been in,” he said. “It was also closer to where we needed to be and other services.”

After three months at the Redwood Inn, David and his mother received a FEMA mobile trailer and relocated to Talent.

“Now we have our own space and things have been going well,” explained David. “It was a crazy time after the fire, but you’ve just got to keep praying about things.”

After a tumultuous time bouncing from motel to motel, David and Margie were fortunate to find shelter at the Redwood Inn. While it was only a temporary stop in their journey, it offered security and respite amid the chaos.

Because of a caring community and generous donors, it was possible for Rogue Retreat to obtain, and continue to run, the Redwood Inn and create shelter for David, his mother, and many



The inside of an un-remodeled room at the Redwood Inn

others going through a similar situation.

While the Redwood Inn offers shelter, it’s also a place where those in crisis can come for help and to rest, knowing they are safe and cared for by the community.

It has changed the lives of numerous people and offered security during a time when everything they had known was upended or destroyed. Because having a place to call home, even temporarily, is the greatest gift we can give others.

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HOME SHARE OREGON



By *Phil Johncock*
Consultant

We all hear the complaint: “There’s just not enough affordable housing to go around.”

While the affordable housing crisis shows no signs of slowing in Southern Oregon, there is a new version of a classic community tradition that gives our seniors and Rogue Retreat graduates hope and disrupts the housing crisis in our own backyard — called Home Sharing!

Home Sharing is a simple idea, “where two or more people share a home to their mutual benefit.”

The home can be a basement apartment, condominium, duplex, mobile home, or traditional single-family house. It can also be an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) like a granny flat, in-law unit, backyard cottage, or small living unit that shares a lot with a single-family home. In fact, one ADU in Ashland has been my home for five years now.

There are many reasons people decide to share their homes, such as:

1. Some enjoy having someone nearby.
2. Others want to supplement their income.

3. Still others need help to remain living comfortably.

Here is how it works: a homeowner offers a private bedroom and shared common area in exchange for rent, help around the house, or a combination of the two.

Sound familiar? It is. Home sharing is a time-tested tradition that families and communities all over the world use to provide homes for the elderly, relatives, foreign exchange and college students, children back from college, etc.

Home Sharing is typically not a lifestyle choice for most who prefer a place of their own. It is often an interim step for a year or two while they get back on their feet, save money or wait for senior housing or affordable housing to become available.

Could Home Share help graduates (including many seniors) from Rogue Retreat’s programs?

Absolutely!

According to the most recent U.S. Census, there are more than 1.5 million owner-occupied Oregon homes that have a spare bedroom. Home Sharing works best for people sharing their homes who are relatively independent with no expectation that the home-sharer is available around the clock for assistance. There is usually a written agreement outlining the expectations of both parties and

a trial period.

As a result of a new partnership between Rogue Retreat, Home Share Oregon (a new program of Harbor of Hope, a 501c3 nonprofit in Oregon), and a new HUD Transition Grant, interested homeowners in Jackson County can get such services as:

- Assistance creating a profile and listing on Silvernest.com (safe & secure)
- Roommate matching based on compatibility and preferences (Silvernest.com)
- Background screening of potential renters
- Rental payment processing and insurance coverage
- Written home share agreements such as a lease generator on Silvernest.com
- Ongoing check-ins and monitoring

Got a vacant room or ADU? Know of a homeowner with a spare room? Fill out the form at HomeShareOregon.org!

The 2021 HUD Transition Grant may also be able to help with rental assistance and supportive services for the first group of Rogue Retreat graduates who become renters.

Find out more by visiting HomeShareOregon.org.

HOW THE ALMEDA FIRE CHANGED ROGUE RETREAT

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Rogue Retreat in March of 2021. Because of the Alameda Fire, the Oregon Community Foundation asked the motel be used for fire survivors, first with an emphasis on the Latinx community. Once the motel was secured, the Oregon Department of Human Services reserved the available rooms and began placing individuals and families who were displaced by the fires. Rogue Retreat oversees the complex and provides supportive services

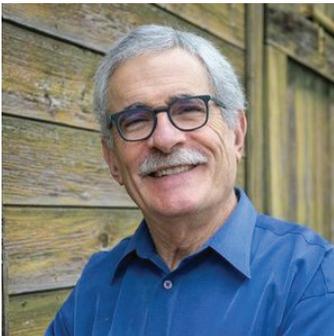
to those living in the complex. We currently have 22 rooms filled, with eight Latinx families.

Another opportunity presented itself when the Talent Urban Renewal Agency got permission from the City of Talent to use land they were working to develop for affordable housing and turn it into RV spaces until more long-term apartments can be built. The project is called “Gateway”, and will have over 50 RV spots for the fire survivor families who have children in the school district. The agency

asked Rogue Retreat to help them by overseeing the project, working with the families, and providing our supportive services.

The Alameda Fire broadened Rogue Retreat’s work and the homeless population we serve. In reality, it doesn’t matter if one becomes homeless due to illness, loss of income, loss of family, or a fire. A homeless person needs support and a hand-up to escape the homeless trap.

\$1,000,000 TO MAKE THE URBAN CAMPGROUND PERMANENT



Jeff Golden, Oregon Senate District 3

One of the most satisfying moments I've had in the Senate was the opportunity this past spring to provide a \$1,000,000 grant to the City of Medford, in partnership with Rogue Retreat,

to make the Urban Campground permanent, and more responsive to the needs of our houseless neighbors.

This was an easy decision. No organization has been more diligent and effective in bringing near-term relief and long-term opportunity to the Rogue Valley's houseless residents than Rogue Retreat. I began to understand that when I first visited Hope Village in 2018 and heard the stories of some of its residents. The name of the place was perfect; these were people who, a very short time before, had no reason whatsoever to feel hopeful about their futures. Now they could. Rogue Retreat's focus on integrated support for

these folks to guide them towards self-sufficiency, fortified by an inspiring level of dedicated volunteer energy, is as effective as any strategy I've seen to house marginalized Oregonians with dignity and compassion.

One of the major sources of my pride in the Rogue Valley is the level and tenacity of largely volunteer organizations on behalf of others. They frequently remind me of a comment by Tom McCall, Oregon's Governor when I first came to the state:

"Heroes are not giant statues framed against a red sky," he said. "They are people who say: 'this is my community, and it is my responsibility to make it better.'"

By that definition, the grant I secured for this purpose is a fortification of clearly heroic work.

Amplifying the work of groups like Rogue Retreat is an efficient and effective use of state funds, and I'll be looking for more ways to do that in the future. In the meantime, my sincere thanks to Rogue Retreat and the heroes who support it. I'll be watching the Urban Campground's ongoing development with excitement and pleasure.

With all best wishes,

Jeff Golden
Oregon Senate District 3

AFTER A YEAR, MEDFORD URBAN CAMPGROUND SET TO EXPAND



By Justin Hon Rogue Retreat Operations Manager

On July 27, 2020, the Urban Campground was created through a partnership with the City of Medford. The primary goal was to create an outdoor-style shelter to support individuals who are houseless along the Greenway. The major concern with the Greenway is it's a tinder box of dry fuels, especially with the traumas people have endured from the Almeda and Obenchain fires which tore apart our community.

Although this was one of the most tragic events I have personally witnessed, our

community rose from the ashes to support everyone, get them housed, and help in any way they could. The Urban Campground has played a significant role in helping get people off the Greenway. Since the creation of the Urban Campground, we have served 646 guests, and 225 of those people have transitioned to other more sustainable housing or residential treatment. We began with 25 sites and grew to 75 within a year, which speaks to the need for housing in our community. As a team, we brainstormed and decided to build a campground 2.0, which is different from the current site.

Campground 2.0 will have intensive case management, showers, running water, and no camping tents; it will be pallet structures and rigid tents. With this expansion, there have been numerous challenges. The biggest and hardest is the cleanup process

to electricity. This will be an enormous challenge as each one has to be carried by a forklift to the adjacent campground.

However, the greatest thing about this process is the community coming together to support the efforts of getting



Pallet shelters being moved to their new location at Campground 2.0

to get the property ready to be utilized for a campground. This includes trash removal, weed mitigation, and leveling of the lot. The next steps are to move the structures from the current site and get them hooked up

this started. St. Vincent de Paul has agreed to cover the costs of the clean-up to make sure the site is ready to use. Without the community's support, none of what we do would be possible.

MEET THE BOARD:

JENN HEESE



Jenn Heese, Rogue Retreat Board Member

How did you first hear about Rogue Retreat?

A good family friend, Father Joel Maiorano, reached out to me. He knew the organization needed board members who believed in those they served. Although I was unfamiliar with the organization, after researching and learning more, I was overwhelmed with the compassion, tenacity, practicality, and spirit of collaboration I saw. Taking the tour, led by the CEO Chad McComas, was informational and enlightening. I feel those terms are different and invaluable.

If you could choose one song to play every time you walked into a room for the rest of your life, what song would you choose and why?

“Let Love Rule” by Lenny Kravitz. It was our song after our wedding vows. I love the song, its message, and the artist, whom I saw in one of my favorite concerts ever!

Someone gives you an elephant. You can’t sell it or give it away. What do you do with the elephant?

Build a bigger backyard! Then, hopefully, figure out a way to give it the best life possible and pass that knowledge on. Maybe explore therapy related to equine animals.

Where did you grow up? Do you miss it there?

I was born and raised for 13 years in a small area outside of St. Louis, called House Springs. I then moved into the suburbs of Kirkwood, MO for my high school years. I moved downtown where my heart for social justice and

activism were ignited. Living and working in a lower socio-economic environment along a predominantly LGBTQIA+ neighborhood offered insight and compassion for a world I had not known.

I moved to Las Vegas shortly before my 25th birthday. I met my husband and his family and spent the next 17 years raising a family and cultivating a life until my husband’s career brought us to the Rogue Valley, where we have been for five years. I miss aspects and people from each of these places. However, I know that what colors my life’s purpose is the lessons and experiences from these places that make me uniquely who I am.

What was the last gift you gave someone?

Our daughter just turned 16, so we held a party for her and her friends at Lake of the Woods. She and I also recently served at our church, Westminster Presbyterian. We gifted our heart and sweat alongside other members as we sorted and sold things at the annual \$1 per item clothing sale. They collect and distribute items to local charities in need of clothing for those they serve; the proceeds go to a sister church in Kenya. I love that we can help on a local and global level.

What’s your favorite thing about Rogue Retreat?

The desire to learn from those they serve as well as those they partner with — with true humility — is rare and wonderful. I see their genuine desire to learn and adapt, in addition to partnering with others in the valley and beyond to best serve their clients.

Besides Rogue Retreat, who is your favorite non-profit?

My husband and I have served as Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) in Jackson County for 4.5 years and it has become an integral part of my life. CASA volunteers do what no one else does — they donate their time to act as independent eyes and ears of the court and speak solely for the best interest of children and youth in the custody of DHS.

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CLEAN SWEEP CELEBRATES ITS THREE YEAR BIRTHDAY



By Todd Diehl,
Clean Sweep Manager

We have a birthday coming up—Clean Sweep is turning three years old, and it's been an amazing journey so far. With the help of the City of Medford, local businesses and the community, we have helped acclimate our less fortunate folks back into the

workforce. Self-sufficiency is one of the key factors that will keep people moving forward into a more productive and peaceful life. Over this last year, I witnessed many people go from feeling worthless to having self-worth. None of that would have been possible without the support of our sponsors. I want to personally thank all of you for your love and support. Happy Birthday, Clean Sweep.

We have also been blessed with some great contracts with Southern Oregon Pacific Railroad and ODOT. It has been an amazing opportunity for our volunteers to assist in cleaning our local roads and freeways, as well as help with fire prevention by doing brush removal. Sadly, these contracts are seasonal and as fall approaches, we are looking for other ways our volunteers can

get work experience and give back to the community.

Autumn is the most colorful time of year and has the most comfortable temperatures, but with that beauty there is a small downside...leaves. Raking leaves is a yearly chore that needs to be done throughout the season. Clean Sweep has decided we will offer **Leaf Patrol** in addition to

litter patrol. Whether you own a home or business, we will be happy to come out and provide a low cost bid. You can reach Todd Diehl at 541-613-8110 or todd@rogueretreat.org.

At Clean Sweep we not only provide job-readiness, but also self-esteem and hope for the future. Something that not just the Rogue Retreat family needs, but all of us need.



Before and after our Clean Sweep crew cleaned up trash on the Greenway in Medford.





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STEVE'S BEST FRIEND



Klo'ee sitting on her trailer in the Urban Campground

Dier, Deer, Dear Human,

My name is Klo'ee and I am a dawg. A very beautiful dawg bekaws Im half Staffordshire Terrier and half Boxer witch in my opinen is the best combination for a dawg to be.

I'm sorta of medium size and I am all white with brown and blak spots on my head and ears and I have just about the most beeeautiful brown I's you could imagine.

My favorite thengs to do are: a) give my dad kisses, b) give other humans kisses, c) give other dogs kizzes, d) eat breakfast, lunch, dinner, snaks, treats, more snaks and then breakfast, lunch and dinner, e) give my dad kissez, f) give other humans kisses, g) avoid mean dawgs, h) skateboard, i) go swimming, j) give my dad kizzes, k) take baths, l) give my dad kissez, m) take naps, n) play with my toys, o) dress up, p) give humans kisses, q) eat breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, treats, more snacks and then breakfast, lunch, diner, r) ride on my wagen when my legs are soar, s,t,u,v,w,x,y,z) give my dad kizzes.

I currently re side at Rogue Retreat's Urban Campground with my dad, Steve. My dad, Steve, would have nevr, never,

never, nevr, never, never come to the Campground unless the vere, vere, vere, vere, vere, vere, vere, vere, vere nice human people who work there let me inn with propru identifikation. You sea, homeless people who have beloved pets (like me though I'm not sure what "pet" means because I am a dawg and a vere, vere, vere, vere beautiful dawg butt I digress) are allowed in to Rogue Retreat programz (wear I am lurning propru gramur and punktuation).

I am three yeers old and I was a pressent to Steve by his parents. I was just a teeny, tiny, baby Klo'ee puppy dawg when my dad got me and I am, four sure, the best friend he evur had, currently has, or will ever half.

Life as a homeless dawg wasn't that bad for me. To be honest, I was a little scarred when we lost our apartment but dad was with me all the time so I figure home is where the heart is and Steve and I are totolly knected at the heart.

Living in the Urban Campground is very nice. I have THREE BEDS - THREE BEDS! I have one outsied bed where I lik to sit outside of Steve's tent dureng the day. At night I like to unzip Steve's tent and to make shure I don't skare him when he's sleeping I give him little kizzes on his face to let him know that I am heading to my own bed, next to his, on the grownd. We sleep vere good there. And my third bed is.... Um, I fourgot but it'z there somewhere.

Steve took me to the doctor bekasue my back legs don't work so gud anymore. I half something called hip displacer sew I can't sit like other dawgs, I just lay on my side so if you see me around town with Steve, do not tel me to sit because I kant though I want to please you so eye wil try. It hurts.

Dad raised over six thousand dollhairs to get sergery on my hips but he's scared about my recovery. Me two. Eye wood have to stay in a tiney little box thing called a kenel for three weaks and if one little thing gos wrong - well, I don't want to thenk about that. Dad doezn't know what to do right now. He just wants a job so he can get a niece place to live so he can go to werk while eye stay home and get wel.

Dad really likes Rogue Retreat bekasue he says they are hulping him do things he hasn't dun in a while like get a drivers lisense and get a social sekurity kard and find out how to pay taxis and get medical stuf done and he even getz to go talk to nice people and do this theng called therapy which is what I do for him without useng my words.

I am writing this lettur to you today bekasue I want you to no that Rogue Retreat humans restore lifes of homeless humans just like they're tag line says they do.

Because they are restoring my dad's life, I get my life restored two and I want to say thank you for that.

Love,
Klo'ee

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RECLAIMING LIVES AND PROVIDING HOPE



Ribbon Cutting at the Recovery Café in Medford

**By Stephanie Mendenhall,
Founder Recovery Café, Medford**

Reclaiming Lives was established by the Mendenhall family in response to a need we saw in our community. Over the last five years, we've stood alongside young people struggling with substance abuse. In the beginning, this looked like sharing a meal at Burger King, providing clothes or blankets, or giving rides to appointments. Whether it was listening to newly written rap music lyrics or watching someone skateboard, we were interested in what they were interested in. Mostly, it was about listening and caring; seeing the person for who they were, not the situation they were in.

In 2019, Reclaiming Lives became an official 501c3. Our mission is to provide hope and stability to those struggling with drug and alcohol addiction through recovery planning and long-term support. We believe connection is the opposite of addiction. In our efforts to provide long-term support in an atmosphere where people felt safe, we launched Recovery Café in downtown Medford.

Recovery Café was founded in Seattle over 19 years ago to help people maintain recovery, reduce relapse, and fulfill their potential. It was established on the truth that every human being is precious and worthy of love regardless of their earlier trauma, mental and

emotional anguish, addictive behaviors, or past mistakes. The model engages people for a lifetime of managing their disease, focuses holistically on a person's needs, and empowers them to build a life that realizes their full potential. This person-centered system of care supports a person as they establish a healthy life and recognizes that we all



need a meaningful sense of membership and belonging in community.

The model is designed to prevent one

life-threatening crisis after another; saving taxpayer's money in emergency intervention and allowing mental health and addiction support professionals to focus on health maintenance and addiction treatment services.

We host 14 recovery circles a week and serve free meals and coffee each time we are open. The recovery circle is where lasting relationships are made. Each circle is led by a peer support specialist who has at least two years of sobriety. These leaders meet with the same people every week to discuss life's challenges and check in with those they've come to know and love. It's been amazing to see our participants find stability through the support of our peer support leaders and those in their circle. We also offer classes, groups and fun events to Recovery Café members throughout the month.

One man said about the Recovery Café, "There's something special about the connection of eating and having coffee and fellowship with people. Recovery Café attracts me to the exact kind of person I want to be around. At Recovery Café the environment is completely voluntary. I feel safe, loved and respected. The entire network of support has accepted and made me feel like I matter to them. I have never felt so cherished and welcomed to a group. I look forward to coming every day it's available."

We are proud to partner with Rogue Retreat to train our peer support facilitators. We are also very grateful for the housing options they provide to so many in our community.

Our lives have changed so much in the last five years. As a family, we found out people do recover from addiction and go on to lead productive lives. Recovery Café is a place of inspiration and hope; a place of celebration and pride in accomplishments. Come visit us; I promise you will not be disappointed.

For more information, visit:
www.reclaiming-lives.org

Stephanie Mendenhall, Executive
Director and Founder
Reclaiming Lives/Recovery Café Medford
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PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT:

KAREN



Karen, Hope Village resident

Karen was homeless for over 6 years before arriving at Rogue Retreat in Grants Pass. Raised in a foster home, she ran away as a young girl.

“There’s a lot of things that contributed to me being homeless – my addiction, wrong friends, and a bad crowd of people,” she said.

For Karen, one minute things felt normal, and the next, everything was ripped away.

“I’m a believer, and God is a big part of my story. I believe God had to reach me, so he stripped me of everything I have. I was screaming to the heavens and trying to understand what was happening,” she said.

About two years ago, Karen was dropped off at the warming shelter in Grants Pass by a man she didn’t know. She also did not know anyone or anything in Southern Oregon.

“I was afraid to be in public. To the outside world, I was just a lunatic and couldn’t make people understand I didn’t know what to do,” said Karen.

After spending time at the warming shelter in Grants Pass, Karen had a tent along Bear Creek near mile

marker 20, where someone from Rogue Retreat would bring her lunch.

However, Karen has also had a long and bumpy journey with Rogue Retreat, getting kicked out of the shelter several times.

“I was sleeping outside the jail and thought, *I don’t want to do this anymore.* I came back to the Kelly Shelter 6-7 months ago, and I had to humble myself,” Karen explained. “It was a hard won battle, but the last time I went into the Kelly Shelter, I stuck it out. I got off of meth and started working with Clean Sweep. But working on my mental health has been the hardest part. I didn’t know how I was going to return back into the normal world.”

Additionally, one of the hardest things for Karen to overcome was the stigma of being that low in her life. But after a few months at the Kelly Shelter and working with Clean Sweep, she saved enough money to move into Hope Village, where she is now.

“I have two case managers who truly care,” she said.

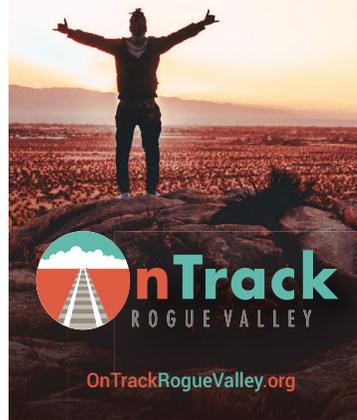
It is very hard to walk out of homelessness, both for Karen, and others like her. “Rogue Retreat has seen me at my lowest,” said Karen. “I think of then and now, and I hardly recognize myself anymore. I am so grateful for Rogue Retreat.”

While Karen has endured many difficult things in her life, she continues to work toward a new and better future.

“It’s a slow process, but I’m still moving. I don’t know where God is taking me, but he’s using the people at Rogue Retreat to show me the world is better and there’s a future after what’s happened to me. I may never have closure, but now I have a way out.”

“I was afraid to be in public. To the outside world, I was just a lunatic and couldn’t make people understand I didn’t know what to do,” said Karen.

“My recovery must come first so that everything I love in life doesn’t have to come last.”



OnTrack Rogue Valley offers treatment for alcohol and drug abuse, DUII education, a Domestic Abuse Alternatives Program (DAAP), teen counseling including minor-in-possession (MIP), medication-assisted treatment (MAT) counseling and anger management counseling.

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JOIN OUR TEAM: CREATE HOPE WHILE RESTORING LIVES

By Kathryn Reinhardt,
Rogue Retreat HR Manager

I'm often asked, "Why do you work for Rogue Retreat?" The answer is simple, yet profound.

"Rogue Retreat creates hope for the homeless, while restoring lives."

This is a learning organization that isn't afraid to decide, fail, evaluate, adjust, and move forward. The work I do for Rogue Retreat means finding skilled, experienced, talented, creative, dynamic individuals who embody our values of Compassion, Honesty, Opportunity, Respect and Encouragement. We look for people who want to make a difference in other's lives and in our community. Our commitment goes deep.

When interviewing potential candidates, our behavioral



questions get to the heart of the matter. Will this be more than a job for you? Can you be successful in helping us shape and grow an organization that's in the business

of shaping someone's future? Candidates who tell us that they want to give back, make a difference, and help our unhoused neighbors are the people who

we find are most successful at Rogue Retreat.

As one candidate said, "I am passionate about helping people. I can take my experiences and inspire people. I want to give people a hand up in life so they can see what their life can be."

When looking at the culture of Rogue Retreat, what is evident is the sense of family, deep commitment, partnership, and community. We care. Our team members are dedicated to the mission and live it every day. If you want to make a difference in someone's life, in your community and want more than a job, join our team. We look forward to working with you.



FROM THE THRIFT SHOP:

VOLUNTEER WITH THE THRIFT SHOP



This is an exciting time for Rogue Retreat, as our programs expand and more lives are touched for the better. More than ever, it's vital to raise money to help support Rogue Retreat's programs. The Thrift Shop is an essential component to raising funds, providing job training and promoting good will in our community.

We need volunteers to help sort donations,

work as cashiers, set up displays and fix items for sale. The more help we have, the more the shop can provide to our other programs. We have a fun, hardworking crew who supports our mission of creating opportunities for the homeless to have hope. Please consider volunteering and let others know what opportunities are available. Call Jana at (541)

499-0067 for more information.

The Thrift Shop will be returning to regular hours on Sunday, September 5, 2021. These hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 am—6 pm and Sunday, 11 am—4 pm. Please support the shop by shopping, volunteering and donating!

UPCOMING SALES AND EVENTS:

Monday, September 6th
Summer Clearance Sale. Savings all week long!

Saturday, September 11th
Fall Preview Event from 10 am—6 pm. The shop will have beautiful fall themed home furnishings and clothing. Lite 102 will be there promoting the event and giving away prizes from 10 am—12 noon.

Monday, September 27th
Timeless Vintage Event. The shop will have amazing vintage finds! Books, home décor, kitchenware, jewelry, collectibles, clothing, shoes, purses and more.

Monday, October 11th
Around the World Global Event. Find something amazing from all corners of the world! Antiques from Europe, in addition to books, jewelry, clothing, shoes, toys, home décor and more.

TRUTH BE TOLD

WHY CAN'T THEY JUST GET A JOB?



*By Matthew Vorderstrasse,
Development Director*

The title of this article is a sentiment that many of us have been guilty of falling into, especially myself. You know the scene. You are driving and running errands during your busy day or enjoying a walk during a break from work. You come across a homeless individual sleeping in the grass or resting in the shade. The entire world is passing them by and they seem disconnected from all of it. This used to be me. I was the person, who despite my own lived experience with housing instability, would view that person laying in the grassy shade as lazy. I would often think to myself, “Why can’t they just get a job?”

I see and hear this sentiment everywhere. Through passing conversations and in social media posts. We treat homelessness like it is shameful and deviant. These beliefs further dehumanize people and ensure that the cycle of homelessness and extreme poverty is passed on from generation to generation. It is a cycle that has to end.

I remember when the lightbulb went off with me for the first time. I was at Hope Village and I met a married couple that had just been accepted into the village. It was a Friday and the wife of the couple looked hopeless, exhausted, and defeated. Fast forward to the following Monday.



This couple was arriving at Life Skills (a weekly meeting with all participants for them to connect and learn) and the wife had a glow in her eyes. Her skin had life in it and she was smiling. Chad noted the change and asked her what happened. Her response hit me like a hammer.

She said that she was finally sleeping at night. She let us know that her husband worked a graveyard shift and she stayed in their camp while he was away. She was never able to sleep because of the fear of being attacked, or their belongings being stolen. Then during the day, she would often have to move from location to location to help get their basic needs met. This left very little time for sleep and it was usually during the day when they could finally rest. Then the exhausting cycle starts over again until it breaks people.

When this epiphany occurred, it changed my perspective. Homelessness is traumatic, and when you are homeless, you are stuck in constant survival mode. All of your energy is spent meeting your basic needs and ensuring your safety. When under

this stress your brain is unable to think beyond the immediate, and planning becomes impossible. Over long periods of time, this chronic stress and trauma can lead to permanent damage to both physical and mental health. Studies have already proven that when the human brain experiences trauma, it is experiencing brain damage that rewires how our brain operates. The person experiencing this does not receive a manual for this change. The idea of being able to pull up your bootstraps and get a job, when stuck in this state, is difficult to pull off and imagine. For most, it is impossible without help.

Most of the homeless are there because of circumstance. Their own choices along the way may have even helped them along. Most lack family support or any family at all. They have fallen through the cracks of the community, and are alone. This isolation is crippling and it keeps people stuck. Chad McComas describes homelessness as a well. It doesn’t matter if you tripped, jumped, or got pushed in. Once you are there, you need help

getting back out.

Our job at Rogue Retreat is to help remove those barriers. We have created low-barrier programming that allows us to meet our participants where they are at. From transitional campgrounds to multi-family apartment complexes, Rogue Retreat provides shelter and housing, in addition to offering program participants comprehensive wrap-around supportive services known as its “secret sauce” — a multi-faceted supportive network of community partners who collaborate with Rogue Retreat’s Community Support Specialists to meet the needs of program participants. The “secret sauce” team helps Rogue Retreat participants build skills, gain knowledge, access services that provide stabilization, and access to resources that help build self-sufficiency and healthy interdependence within the communities in which they live.

I am forever grateful for how my experience at Rogue Retreat changed my perspective on how to build community and address homelessness.



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“My beginning wasn’t that great, but I always had hope
that there was going to be something better in the future.”
- Sunshine, Rogue Retreat Finance Supervisor



What does hope mean to you?
www.RogueRetreat.org/RaisingHope

