



# St. Vinnie's Voice

A journal of the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County, Inc.

We assist the poor & those in need of consolation, seeking out & utilizing every resource. Being mindful of the sanctity & dignity of all, any charitable work that advances those goals is within the mission of St. Vincent de Paul.

Visit our website: [www.svdp.us](http://www.svdp.us)

Volume 10, Issue 2

Spring 2009

## Doing fine things with the present

*There are many fine things which you mean to do some day, under what you think will be more favorable circumstances. But the only time that is yours is the present.*

-- Grenville Kleiser

The impact of Lane County's strained economy is evident at St. Vinnie's Social Service Office where what was a busy day is now average. That's about 80 phone calls and 75 in-person visits from people in need.

The calls are typical, but there are more of them.



Anne O'Brien

Rent crises used to occur after the first; now they come all month long. People ask for help with electricity bills for the third or fourth time, or because they have tapped out other programs.

These are single parents with kids, single adults on disability, the elderly. To quote one staff person, "It's been crazy."

Please read Dennis Maricle's column on page 4 for more on the Social Service Office and how your monetary donations truly do touch lives.

You can help in other ways. Donate your unneeded vehicle or RV to Cars for a Cause. Treat yourself to shopping at St. Vinnie's retail stores. Consider Aurora Glass products for gifts, home decor, and awards. It all supports the work of the Social Service Office.

Help homeless families and have great fun by attending St. Vinnie's musical fundraisers. Our Picnic Supper and Divisi Concert is May 1<sup>st</sup>. Our third annual Dinner Theatre will be in November. Call 687-5820 for details!

I could go on about St. Vinnie's, but you can see for yourself by taking a tour, our schedule or yours, and by subscribing to St. Vinnie's monthly e-newsletter. For a tour and/or to receive the e-newsletter, call Tamara Andreas at 687-5820 or email her [tandreas@svdp.us](mailto:tandreas@svdp.us).

Thank you for all that you do to help the less fortunate in our community. I speak for the entire Board of Directors when I say please continue that support in the time that is yours -- the present. -- Anne

## Aster Apartments a beacon for low-income seniors

Imagine being 62 or older and moving into a gleaming new apartment that is modern, comfortable and secure, will never cost more than a third of your modest fixed income, and is yours for as long as you care to stay.

It's almost incomprehensible to 73-year-old Richard Pell who will be moving into St. Vinnie's Aster Apartments in early April, closing the door on 16 years of homelessness. He is excited at the prospect of being able to truly relax in a place that's warm, secure and his own, and he's at a loss to express his gratitude.

Richard is one of three people for whom homelessness will end with a move to the 54-unit Aster Apartments. The

facility's first residents are mostly single. Five have disabilities.

St. Vincent de Paul's first HUD 202 housing for seniors, Aster is one of three housing complexes opening this spring. Heather Glen, 27 units of affordable housing for families in Veneta, will open in May. VetLIFT III will add 10 apartments for chronically homeless veterans plus space for the community and staff. The VetLIFT celebration will be held near Memorial Day.

Sunlight poured into Aster's many windows as a delegation of students from Korea toured the building in late January. Even in its unfinished state, the project impressed its visitors who were accompanied by Kevin Ko, Community Development Specialist for the City of Springfield. He described the group's reaction.

"They really liked the facility," Ko said. "It was good to see what was happening in Springfield."

The Aster project has broadened the horizons of many St. Vinnie's staff members. Among them is Melissa Crover, an assistant in Property Management who accepted applications and conducted interviews.

"It's been very much of a joy to do," she said. "I got a better understanding of what seniors are going through."

About 40 applicants remain on the Aster waiting list, which is always open to new applicants. The waiting period to move in could be from three months to a year and a half.

For Terry McDonald, executive director of SVdP, the Aster Apartments represent the culmination of a plan that had been on the back burner for nearly a decade and is now a bright spot for low-income seniors and a timely boost to community development.

"Taking care of our senior population is a basic value for all in our society," he said. "Without affordable housing for some of our low income seniors, their golden years are a struggle."

"This effort helps 54 families achieve a permanent and caring way for them to live a decent and hope-filled future."

With the Aster Building, Heather Glen, and VetLIFT III, St. Vinnie's has developed more than 950 units of affordable housing and homeownership opportunities since the mid-1990's.



Outside the Aster Building, Project Manager Kristen Karle chats with visitors from Korea who toured the facility earlier this year.



# Thank You!

- Help homeless adults and families with children
- Provide shelter and services for families, veterans, seniors, and single low-income adults
- Divert useable materials from the landfill and provide jobs through recycling/reuse
- Provide emergency assistance for utilities, rent, and prescription medication

Read more inside about how your support helped others in this edition of St. Vinnie's Voice!

Visit us online at [www.svdp.us](http://www.svdp.us)



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**From our director**  
*Where there are challenges, there are opportunities*

The past year has been difficult. The vague uneasiness we experienced in mid-2008 ended in a winter of true disbelief and dismay. Through it all, you, our volunteers and donors remained steadfast and optimistic – making a difference in the lives of people who are less fortunate. As one donor said, "I'm lucky to be able to give anything, but I know there are people out there who are hurting worse."

At St. Vincent de Paul, we have always served those who are hurting worse. In years past, that typically meant homeless and low-income folks: people who are "barely making it," and we continue to help as we can. Increasingly, we're seeing even more "neighbors in need": middle-class people who have just been laid off and don't know how they are going to pay a utility bill or mortgage. People who have never had to ask for help before.

For 2009, we do not ask "where it will

take us", but "Where will we take this year?" We feel optimism for improvements in the coming year. The heart of St. Vincent de Paul is to reach out to folks in crisis, and we'll continue to partner with EWEB, United Way, Womenspace, FOOD for Lane County, and others to do just that. Thanks to our visionary Board, we've developed more than 900 units of affordable housing. We will continue to grow, particularly in housing for veterans and the elderly and with a continued exploration of creative "green building". Our recycling efforts will expand into new arenas, providing jobs and opportunities.

Where there are challenges, there are opportunities. Thank you again for your continued interest and support.



Terrence R. McDonald  
 Executive Director

*Thank you, Night Shelter faith communities & volunteers, for opening your doors & hearts to homeless families!*

- Central Lutheran Church
- Central Presbyterian Church\*
- Ebbert Memorial Church\*
- Emerald Bible Fellowship
- Emmaus Lutheran Church
- Episcopal Church of the Resurrection\*
- Eugene Friends Church
- Eugene Mennonite Church
- First Baptist Church of Eugene
- First Baptist Church of Springfield
- First Christian Church\*
- First Congregational Church\*
- First United Methodist Church\*
- Friendly Street Church of God
- Harvest Community Church
- Hope Lutheran Church
- Living Hope Church\*
- Northwood Christian Church\*
- Springfield Lutheran Church
- St. Alice Catholic Church
- St. Helen Catholic Church
- St. Jude Catholic Church
- St. Mark Catholic Church
- St. Mary Catholic Church
- St. Mary's Episcopal Church\*
- St. Paul Catholic Church\*
- St. Peter Catholic Church
- St. Thomas Episcopal Church
- Temple Beth Israel
- Valley Covenant Church
- Wesley United Methodist Church\*
- Westminster Presbyterian Church

\* Special thanks for covering 2 WEEKS of Night Shelter this school year!

**New members bring array of experience, expertise to St. Vinnie's Board of Directors**

Three of SVdP's key volunteers have stepped up to positions on the Board of Directors. Local artist Judy Alison was elected in January, bringing the Board to its full capacity of 15 members.

Molly Westling, Mike Favret, and John Antone were elected at the Board's annual meeting last September. Each chairs a different group of advisors to the Agency; Molly the Housing Advisory Board, Mike the Stores Advisory Board, and John the District Council.

The shift reflects renewed emphasis on recruiting community members for St. Vinnie's various advisory groups and, as they gain experience, the opportunity to take on increasing responsibility.

"The Board recognizes the importance of having a continuum of people familiar with the workings of the entire Agency," said Anne O'Brien, Board chair. "It can take years of involvement to reach that point."

Each advisory group monitors a different aspect of the agency, from recycling programs to home visits. Board members are asked to maintain an affiliation with at least one advisory group.

Molly Westling joined the Housing Advisory Board nearly three years ago. Her interest in housing comes naturally; she is descended from a long line of builders, architects, and civil engineers. She is Professor of English and Environmental Studies at the University of Oregon and an advocate for social justice.

Since she joined the Housing Board, SVdP has opened the Royal Building, developed the Aster and Heather Glen residential

complexes, expanded Vet LIFT, remodeled the Lindholm Center, and placed intriguing residential projects on the drawing board. The group approved revised fire policies for its 700-plus residential units and established an emergency fund to help good tenants through financial crises.

"The energy and resourcefulness of the SVdP staff have been a continuing inspiration, as these projects have been brought to fruition with what seems amazing speed," Molly said. "For all my 37 years in Eugene, I had never felt connected to the heart of the community until I became involved with the Housing Advisory Board and came to know the remarkable people and activities of SVdP."

Mike Favret joined the Stores Board at the invitation of long-time volunteer Don Lamb. In the 12 years since, SVdP has developed retail stores in Florence, Santa Clara, and Thurston, and the retail/warehouse complex on West Broadway that is also home to Aurora Glass.

An agent with Northland Real Estate, Mike represents SVdP in property searches and transactions.

One year ago, he was appointed chair of the Stores Board, which makes recommendations on store openings, closings, operations, and service. An upcoming retail/commercial project will honor his late friend with its name: The Donald L. Lamb Building.

"The retail side is and has been innovative with approaches that generate sales to aid our less fortunate," Mike said. "I am and have been honored with my involvement with SVdP on many levels."

When John Antone (See page 6.) was named District Council president last spring, a Board position came with the package. The bylaws require that St. Vinnie's founding organization be represented on the Board, preferably by its president.

John's involvement with SVdP began three years ago when he and his wife, Rita, joined the St. Alice Conference as home visitors. As D.C. president, he presides over monthly meetings of SVdP staff and conference presidents, undertakes special projects, and learns all he can about the Agency.

"For the first time, I enjoy being involved in helping people in this manner of giving," he said.

Judy Alison brings "the fresh eye of a newcomer," to the Board, said Anne O'Brien. Judy is a "pinchpotter," active in the Downtown Initiative for the Arts. She gained board and fundraising experience with a nonprofit in Atlanta and is working with a subcommittee of Board members to update SVdP's strategic plan.

"My impression so far is that SVdP of Lane County seems to embody the idea and action of doing well by doing good," she said. "I'm honored to be included."



Molly Westling



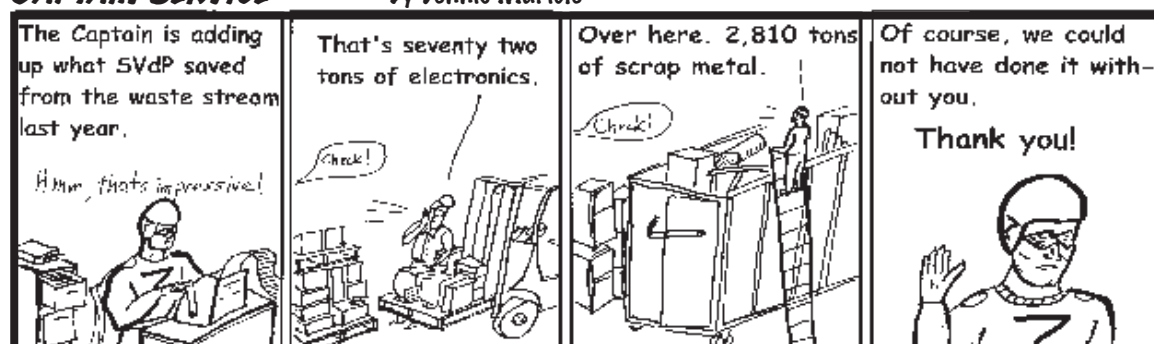
Mike Favret



Judy Alison

**CAPTAIN SERVICE**

By Dennis Maricle



**St. Vinnie's Voice**

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Diana Wise, center, and Mayor Kitty Piercy join in the applause for Ginny Osteen who has raised \$5,000 to help get homeless families into stable housing.



No longer homeless, Mike Dickinson also found a job through his association with First Place.

## 'Unlucky' date no match for good fortune at First Place

For homeless families, every day may seem like Friday the 13th, but on that date in February in Eugene, parents and children celebrated the good fortune to have found St. Vinnie's First Place Family Center. Thanks to the individuals, organizations, and faith



Ariana Archer

communities that were also honored, homeless families can regain the sense of normalcy and security needed to regroup and move forward.

First Place families have access to food and kitchen facilities, clothing and laundry facilities, affordable day care, computers, and phones. Those approved for the Interfaith Night Shelter program sleep in the halls of participating faith communities or in their own vehicles on church lots.

Mayor Kitty Piercy greeted the guests, packed shoulder-to-shoulder in the First Place living room and bedecked with heart necklaces created by First Place's preschoolers. "There's no place like First Place for making a difference," she said, acknowledging their diverse contributions.

"I just wish we didn't have so many hard times for so many people."

Barbara Nelson and Bill Tomlinson represented Living Hope Church, one of

a dozen faith communities that stepped up or partnered with another church to provide two weeks of Night Shelter this school year.

While Living Hope sets a high standard for hospitality to all of its homeless guests, it's the memory of one 4-year-old's birthday party that mists their eyes. It had all the trimmings, including 16 other children eager to help the birthday boy unwrap his gifts.

"It was very heartwarming to see a homeless child so happy," Barbara remembered. "At the end, nobody wanted to leave."

Ginny Osteen was honored for a second year of raising money with family, friends and coworkers at Oregon Research Institute to get homeless families into housing. Ginny's efforts have reaped more than \$5,000 and inspired other groups to do the same. Since her story appeared in the local paper, she has been recognized by strangers as "the lady who helps homeless families."

Michele Gruessing and Mike Dickinson described how, as homeless parents, they turned to First Place, worked hard, and found new lives for themselves and their children.

Michele is attending herbalism school and hopes to own an apothecary.

Mike is a military veteran whose initial career in computers went down in the dot-com bust. He and his family were in Night Shelter just a couple of months. Mike has since found stable housing and a job as St. Vinnie's information-technology guy.

Sandi Etheridge is a former First Place mom who continues to make good on her promise to come back and help. Her son Alexan-

der was all smiles as Diana Wise of First Place thanked Sandi for running the reception desk every Thursday afternoon so the staff can meet uninterrupted.

And Ariana Archer's mom Holly beamed as the 17-year-old was recognized for her school-related work in First Place's preschool. Ariana's child-psychology class at South Eugene High requires that students spend time with one of a half dozen children's programs.

"I chose First Place because I think it's really important for these kids to have positive role models," Ariana explained. "There are awesome people who volunteer and work here."

"It takes special people to do the work they do here."



First Place mom Michele Gruessing hopes to own an apothecary.

### Thank You for Sharing Your Hearts for the Homeless:

- Alexis Tennison
- Ariana Archer
- Councilor George Brown
- David James
- Cindy Roane
- Ginny Osteen, Family & Friends
- Jan Edwards & Head Start
- Jane Farrell & EC Cares
- Michele Gruessing
- Mike Dickinson
- Sandi Etheridge
- Third-graders at O'Hara Catholic School
- First Place's artists in Night Shelter & Daycare



Barbara Nelson and Bill Tomlinson of Living Hope Church treasure the memory of a 4th birthday celebrated in Night Shelter.

# Thank You!

for helping homeless children at our 2008 Dinner Theatre!

Thank You to our Title Sponsors!



Many Thanks to our Sponsors!



First Place Family Development Center

## Thanks You!

You helped 394 families, with 695 children, in 2008





**St. Vincent de Paul  
Housing Programs**



**Connections Transitional Housing**

Program Manager: Jill Kragh

Serving families that are transitioning from homelessness to stability, providing safe, affordable housing, case management, & referral to other service agencies.

Families enrolled in 2008:	47
Families graduated in 2008:	19
'08 Grads in long-term housing	14
2008 success rate	74%

**Special Thanks... SVdP partners:**

Property Management • Thrift Stores • Resident Services  
Social Service Office • Second Chance Renters' Rehab  
Self-Sufficiency Services • Energy Assistance

**Community partners:**

Dept. of Health and Human Services • Centro Latino  
Options Counseling • Womenspace • Turning Point  
Assistance League of Eugene  
O.U.R. Credit Union • Project Starfish

**LIFT: Living Independently Following Treatment**

Program Manager: Thanh Duong

10 units of SVdP housing are set aside for individuals who have been chronically homeless, have a clinical mental-health diagnosis, and have a history of substance abuse but are in recovery. LIFT emphasizes stable housing, a clean and sober lifestyle, and personal growth.

Current enrollment	15 households
Including	7 men, 8 women, 12 children
Waiting list	3

**Services provided in 2008 include:**

Alcohol/drug treatment, counseling, parenting education, childcare, life skills training, bus passes, car repair and insurance, other transportation.

**Resident Services Program**

Program Manager: Busara Sauda

Providing educational, recreational, referral, and informational services for residents in St. Vincent de Paul's Affordable Housing.

The seven Resident Services Coordinators are an essential component of St. Vinnie's Resident Services Program. They work with community organizations to bring enrichment programs to the residents, including English language, financial literacy, nutrition, and crime prevention. Additionally, the Resident Service Coordinators provide advocacy assistance and informational and referral services, and organize social activities that promote a sense of community among residents.

Last November, Samantha Heath, Resident Coordinator of Oakwood Manor, received the Oregon Opportunity Network's 2008 Star Players Award for her outstanding contribution to the Resident Services Program during the previous year. We congratulate Sam on her accomplishment.

**Highlights of November-December 2008:**

Information and Referral Services:	13 participants
Homework Club:	45 participants
Youth recreational activities:	58 participants
Bread Day:	170 participants
Community Building Activities:	259 participants
Eviction Prevention Intervention:	4 persons
Conflict Resolution Intervention:	2 persons

**Special thanks to our community partners, volunteers, and donors:**  
FOOD for Lane County, OSU Extension Services Nutrition Education Program, 211Lane, NAMI of Lane County, Umpqua Bank, Oregon Family Support Network, GloryBee Foods, Inc., The Literacy Council of Eugene-Springfield, UO Pre-dental Club, Good Neighbor Care, Essex General Construction, Bi-Mart, UO's OH Heroes, and Willamette Valley Company Research and Development Laboratory.

**Thank You...**

**Meyer Memorial Trust**

\$75,000

**The Collins Foundation**

\$25,000 to VIDA (Valley Individual Development Account)

**The Wakerly Family Foundation**

\$25,000 to First Place

**Chambers Family Foundation**

\$10,000, half to assist people with their rent and mortgage payments, and half to First Place

**Elizabeth Wheeler**

\$10,000 for utility assistance for families

**Ms. Candace Callan**

Grants to First Place & Second Chance Renter Rehab

**Hill Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation**

\$4000 to continue working with rehabilitating people and recycling

**The Autzen Foundation**

\$3,000 for Resident Services' Youth Summer Camp

**McKay Family Foundation**

\$2,500 to help the homeless

**The Berge Charitable Fund of the Vanguard Charitable Endowment**

\$2,000 for general operations

**Gray Family Fund**

of the Oregon Community Foundation

\$2000 general support

**Rippee Family Fund of the San Francisco Foundation**

\$1,675 to fund the awning and covered shelter for First Place's outside play area

**A&A Charitable Fund of the Equity Foundation**

\$1,500 to First Place

**R.W. Family Fund**

of the Oregon Community Foundation

\$1000 for general support

**Edwin E. and June E. Cone Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation**

\$1000 general support

**Sterling Savings Bank**

\$1,000 to Resident Services

**The Bankoff / Blanchet DA Fund**

of the McKenzie River Gathering Foundation

\$500 to First Place

**St. Martin de Porres Trust**

\$500 for the Social Service Office

**National Gardening Association & Home Depot**

\$250 for the Santa Clara Youth Garden Project

**A view from across the SSO desk**

BY DENNIS MARICLE

I had thought about volunteering at St. Vinnie's Social Service Office (the SSO) for a long time. Since I am working less and have "retired", it's time to try something new. For me, that means taking my place behind a desk at 456 Hwy 99 each Monday to chat with people who have come to St. Vinnie's to ask for help.



Dennis Maricle

I am a part of a home visiting team through the St. Catherine Parish Conference so I am familiar with the concept of assisting those in need by combining our resources with those of St. Vincent de Paul. Whether on a home visit, or sitting at this desk, my code of conduct is the same: Treat people with respect. The person before me is no different than I. Put simply, life experiences have led him or her down another path.

Every story is different, but with a common thread: These people have used up their resources and have nowhere else to turn. So, they come to this desk. Often, they are embarrassed and uncomfortable in asking for help. Sometimes they apologize for having to beg. If our roles were reversed, and I was the one asking for help, I would expect to be treated with courtesy, as an adult, and with compassion.

From my side of the desk, it's easy to write a voucher for clothing, prescription medication or propane. It's much harder to say "no" when I must. I wish that I could help every person with rent, travel expenses, etc.

Years ago, as a new home visitor, I was as likely as not, to want to "give away the store" to the first family that I visited. But, I know that here, as on a home visit, we must make the best use of our resources. So, the person asking for bus tokens gets two, not a bag full. The landlord

gets 100 bucks from St. Vinnie's, not the entire amount requested by the tenant. The hungry family is told that the Food Room is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, not today, Monday. Even there, we sometimes break our own rule and fill a little box -- just to get them by.

The hardest thing to have to do is explain that because they live on street A and not street B, we cannot help them. One person asked from across my desk, "I live on the wrong side of the tracks, don't I?"

You see, every parish-based St. Vincent de Paul conference has its own territory and a different set of guidelines to be followed when we consider households for home visits. Each is limited by its volunteer numbers, and the amount of cash and goods donated by parishioners and the community. Most folks who come to my desk understand that and accept it.

I wish that there were another way, even as I thank God for those who are able and willing to donate to a parish conference or directly to St. Vinnie's via the attached envelope.

I'll be back at the desk next Monday morning, and the Mondays thereafter. I will hear mind-boggling stories of misfortune. I will share the pain, do what I can to help, and pray that it's enough.

Sadly, I'll say, "No," when I have to. And I'll give quiet thanks for the many times your donations make it possible for me to say, "Yes."

*Dennis Maricle is a longtime St. Vinnie's volunteer. He is chair of the Manufacturing & Recycling Committee and president of the Archdiocesan Council, which consists of SVdP representatives from throughout Western Oregon.*

Donate online! Visit St. Vinnie's at [www.svdP.us](http://www.svdP.us)

**Transitional housing opens doors for veterans**

BY CINDY LEMING  
Vet LIFT Program Manager

The past year saw great growth in St. Vinnie's ability to house chronically homeless individuals who have co-occurring diagnoses, particularly those with no income and little hope of obtaining housing. A third apartment complex for Vet LIFT is near completion, and a transitional-housing program supported fiscally by the Veterans Administration, is paying for a qualifying veterans' housing for up to 24 months, during which he or she can apply for VA disability, go to school, or access vocational-rehabilitation services.

So far, 26 veterans have accessed transitional housing. Of those, 15 remain, 5 are in stable housing, and 6 have left the program. Sixteen veterans have applied for help with disabilities. Ten have attended school, and/or obtained employment.

Overall, Vet LIFT has 30 participants, the other 15 being in the permanent-housing program. Among them they have maintained clean and sober living, landed employment, connected with and/or are raising children, qualified for disability and saved toward purchase of a home. One veteran was able to access surgery for a debilitating

disorder. Another is dealing successfully with severe mental illness and is fitting into the community.

Two veterans in permanent housing graduated from the transitional program. One has accepted employment with the Veterans Administration.

Our latest arrival joined Vet LIFT last month, moving with his son into permanent housing. Both are very excited to be involved with the program.

We have had many positive experiences over the past 4 years of Vet LIFT. Twenty-six of our veterans have volunteered in the community at agencies such as Catholic Community Services, FOOD for Lane County, St. Vinnie's Eugene Service Station, and SAFE. One of our veterans started a non-profit to help homeless comrades transition into housing through the Hope for Our Heroes program. Our veterans participate in Stand Down and Project Homeless Connect. We take pride in their community involvement.

Vet LIFT is blessed with a network of individuals and businesses that express their support for veterans by donating time, goods or money. If you'd like to become one of them please call me at 687-5820 x166.

**To Our Turkey Drive Spokesperson, Betty Snowden,  
Our Generous Partners & Wonderful Volunteers:**



St. Vinnie's

**Well Done!**

Through your efforts 2,500 households received Holiday Food Boxes.

**TURKEY DRIVE 2008**

With thanks to:

- Lane County Commissioners
- Cold Stone Creamery
- Eugene Freezing & Storage
- Eugene Elks Lodge #357
- Eugene Grocery Outlet
- Franz Bakery
- O'Hara Catholic School
- Organically Grown Co-op
- Wal-Mart
- Springfield Grocery Outlet
- McDonald Wholesale
- Umpqua Bank

On behalf of hungry families, FOOD for Lane County, & St. Vincent de Paul Society, THANK YOU!







## Ragozzino & Friends rock the Hilton in First Place benefit

Given a choice between Broadway and an Ed Ragozzino show in Eugene, Kathleen Bosteder would just as soon be entertained in her home town.

"They are so professional," she said of Ed and his Friends ensemble. "And you don't have to get that airline ticket to New York."

More than 300 supporters agreed, packing the Eugene Hilton on Nov. 13th for St. Vincent de Paul's second Dinner Theatre, a benefit for homeless families at First Place Family Center. Business associates, families and friends dined at tables beautifully decorated by Lipa, snapped up an impressive array of silent and oral auction items, and danced in the aisles as Ragozzino and Friends presented their Decades show. The audience responded generously to Auctioneer Sid Voorhees call for donations to what he termed the community's "best-kept secret."

Amid the Dinner Theatre revelry, the audience was reminded of its mission by Kim Hawley and her daughter Alexis who came to Eugene alone in the midst of terrible times. At First Place

*Don't miss St. Vinnie's 2009 Dinner Theatre! To be included in mailings contact Tamara at 687-5820 or by email at tandreass@svdp.us*

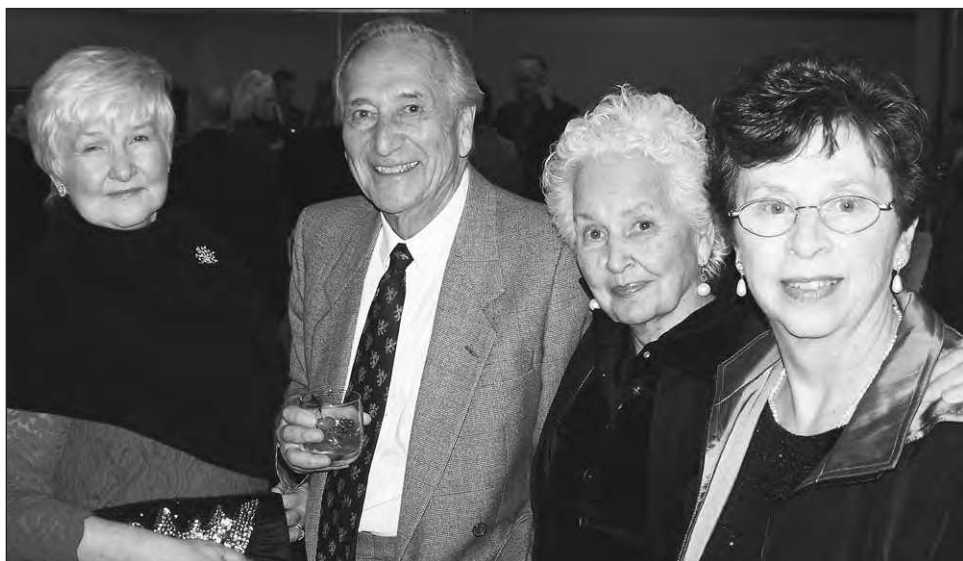
Family Center, they found a lifeline.

"Without their help we would have been on the streets," said Kim. "I can't thank them enough for their generosity, love and kindness."

Alexis added her own gratitude to First Place both for the material items and the emotional support that helped her mother remain strong and willing to move forward.

"I will give back," she promised.

Terry McDonald, SVdP executive director, described the importance of being a good member of the community. He portrayed Director William Wise and Assistant Director Diana Wise as a "wonderful, inspirational team whose love and affection makes what happens at First Place possible."



Scenes from St. Vinnie's 2008 Dinner Theatre. **Clockwise from upper left:** Ed Ragozzino & Friends (front from left, Dan Garret, Jennifer Sculock, Shirley Andress, Marc Siegel, Roxie Ragozzino, and Karen Scheeland; back from left, Jane Chase, Perry Tendick, Michael Stone, Bill Hulings, Vickie Brabham, Richard Pecora, and Ed Ragozzino). **Above,** Mary Sheffer and Sister Margaret Graziano, and the temptations of the silent auction table. **At left, above,** Kim Hawley and daughter Alexis, formerly homeless, are back on their feet thanks to First Place. **At left, middle,** Heidi Coleman and Phyllis Brassler are SVdP treasure hunters by day. **Below,** long-time friends from St. Jude Church, from left, Kathleen Bosteder, Ed Ragozzino, Marty Lynch, and Mary Jo Shaw.

## First Place Kids Center addresses devastating affects of homelessness

BY JAKE SPAVINS

Director, First Place Kids Center

Homelessness has devastating effects on children, affecting their development, physical health, mental health, and behavior. Homeless children exhibit significant behavioral difficulties like tantrums and other aggressive behaviors. In a study of 81 preschool-age children in Boston Homeless shelters in the late 1990's, 47 percent of the children exhibited at least one serious impairment in their social skills, motor development, and language. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless over one-third of homeless mothers have a chronic health condition and almost 40 percent have been hospitalized for some kind of medical treatment. The problems that homeless children and families face are daunting, and that is where we at First Place come in.

Our state-certified Child Development Center, called First Place Kids Center, is a one-of-a-kind therapeutically oriented preschool designed to support homeless families and children. With specially trained staff, community volunteers, Head Start, EC CARES, and students from the University of Oregon all working together, we help children ages 30 months to 6 years to develop strong self-

management and self-care skills, and strong social skills.

The idea is that our Kids Center will function as a "home-based" classroom, serving as a consistently safe, and supportive place for children and families. Daily, we provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. We have a daily body rest time, where kids can get the rest they need in a safe place.

We work to empower children to find solutions to their own conflicts or problems. Utilizing solution kits, a break area, and the Turtle Technique of anger management (Stop, tuck, breathe, think!), children learn to share their feelings with adults and peers rather than acting out.

Through quality and positive interactions with interns, staff, and volunteers children learn to play, take turns, and share. We utilize the principles of positive behavioral supports. In this, we choose to focus on positive behaviors of children. Through praise and recognition, we want to teach children that following rules, listening to teachers, and making good choices is fun and healthy, and the right thing to do.

First Place Kids Center is a place where children at risk can learn, grow, and develop in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

*St. Vincent de Paul's*  
**First Place Family Center**

*In 2008, it was the privilege of First Place staff & volunteers to serve families with children as follows:*

**DAY SHELTER**

Unduplicated Families	394
Adults	589
Children	695

*Of the 394 families, 188 were NEW to First Place in 2008. They include 281 adults (23 of whom are pregnant women), & 311 children.*

**Person Days of Day Shelter**

17,581

Meals	14,053
Bus Passes	216
Bus Tokens	3,652

**NIGHT SHELTER**

Families Served	41
Adults	63
Children	73

**Person Nights of Night Shelter**

6,075

**OVERNIGHT PARKING PROGRAM**

Families Served	30
Adults	46
Children	57

**Person Nights of Parking Shelter**

6,066

**PRESCHOOL**

Average monthly enrollment	16
Volunteers	85
Volunteer hours	1,393.5

**Hours of Preschool Provided**

16,125

**Yes! You CAN donate online! Visit St. Vinnie's at [www.svdp.us](http://www.svdp.us)**



## VIDA savers earn homes

Home ownership once seemed out of the question for Lane County residents John and Teri, but with the help of the Valley Individual Development Account (VIDA), both are welcoming spring in homes of their own.

St. Vincent de Paul is a partner in VIDA, which offers a savings match to low-income participants serious about controlling their finances and willing to save for life-changing investments such as the purchase of a house, schooling, or home rehabilitation. VIDA is administered by CASA of Oregon which, in addition to developing farmworker housing, is a Community Development Financial Institution.

VIDA success is hard-earned. Participants must complete classes in personal finance and home ownership, and save. The program provides \$3 for every dollar saved, up to the three-year maximum of \$3,000.

When Teri heard about VIDA, she thought it was too good to be true.

At the time, Teri and her cats were living in a cold, moldy rental, in the least-moldy room. Everybody's health was suffering.

Through persistence with her VIDA plan and the real estate market, Teri

now owns a home in rural Lane County. She has realized her dream of having a garden and a safe place for her cats. She plans to share her bounty with those less fortunate.

"When you're so blessed, how can you not," she asked.

An Oregon National Guardsman, John was de-



Teri

ployed to Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina and to the Middle East. Personally, he was plagued by anxiety associated with change.

He rotated in and out of treatment programs and worried more about landing in the big house than in a small one. He finally mustered enough support to maintain sobriety and qualify for St. Vinnie's LIFT program for adults "living independently following treatment." The program provides case management, housing, advocacy, and goal-setting. John earned his driver's license, found a job as a delivery driver, and enrolled in VIDA.

Now, in his own West Eugene condo, John takes pride in homeowner duties as he prepares for a second deployment to the Middle East. Instead of calling a landlord, he replaced his own refrigerator. He is thrilled with his home, friendly neighbors, and precious serenity, and satisfied that his monthly mortgage payment is an investment.

"I would have never dreamed I would be living here," he said. "If I can do it, anybody can do it."

Both Teri and John relied on personal and professional support systems as they worked toward home purchases.

John credits the Threshold course, presented by the Neighborhood Economic Development Organization, and Jill Kragh, Thanh Duong, and Anne Williams of St. Vinnie's Housing Programs.

Teri was encouraged and empowered by Ann Rudy of the local housing authority, Corey Johnson of the Department of Agriculture, life-long friend Carol Ford, and Colleen Stewart, manager of St. Vinnie's VIDA program.

"This process made me grow," Teri said.

While still "in the process of relaxing," Teri is enjoying greatly improved health and eager to get digging.

"I am overjoyed that my dream of owning land to grow food and 'pay forward' has come true," she said.

"I dance in my home and give thanks to God."



John

## Impromptu shelter effort reveals love, empathy in Springfield

We parked the car and ducked into wind and sleet. It was just four days before Christmas, but the breezeway of St. Alice Church was not so festive. There, in a low cloud of cigarette smoke, were our early arrivals – people of all ages, hungry and cold.

They could have been any one of us at a bad time in our lives. Each wore the face of Jesus, and a look of anticipation at what might come next.

A coalition of individuals and faith communities in Springfield had risen to the challenge of housing the homeless through the pre-Christmas cold snap. The threat had become real: Thomas Egan, a homeless veteran, had frozen to death as the storm set in and temperatures dipped to the teens.

Springfield First Baptist and Ebbert Memorial UMC had already opened their doors. Now, it was St. Alice's turn, a second night for people in quarters once known as "The Convent." Our parish hall had already been spoken for.

The operation took some fast planning, with ideas coming from church members and the homeless themselves. They helped set up the cots provided by the local V.A. or made places for themselves on the floor using their own bedding or that delivered by volunteers.

Roger Grinstead brought in an old television and rigged rabbit ears with a paper clip. And it worked!

Thanks to the generous parishioners of St. Alice and our shoppers, Marie Grinstead and Theresa Elliott, food was abundant – pork and chicken burritos, salad, coffee, milk, and chocolate and vanilla pudding. I saw one fellow eat seven burritos and wondered if he might burst.

A volunteer brought in a load of brand-new socks to be distributed among our visitors. Our parish priest, Fr. Roy, stopped in for a visit.

Later in the evening, a man brought in an 18-year-old he had found alone in the pouring rain. Her light clothing was soaked. She wouldn't make eye contact. She had issues, physical and mental.

After a hot meal, my wife Rita found the girl a clean washcloth and towel, and a bathroom she didn't have to share with anyone. She was delighted. She said she had been kicked out of both parents' houses.

The girl napped then rejoined the group, which would grow to nearly 50 for the overnight stay. Her changed appearance and attitude were a testimony to the power of human kindness and concern.

Not every guest was so easy. The very few that came drunk were managed with authority and compassion. Some were in desperate need of a shower and clean clothes. Some were tired and sick. Some definitely enjoyed the attention.

For the volunteers and church staff, rewards came with morning as our guests put away cots, picked up garbage, swabbed tables, and mopped floors, leaving the janitor without one iota of extra work. Then our guests disappeared, each with a bus token from White Bird, leaving us with mixed emotions – elated that we were privileged to help and had pulled it off, yet saddened that we would now go to our homes – an option not open to those who have none.

Our hats are off to those who launched this impromptu shelter effort, including Marion Malcom, our friends at Springfield Baptist and Ebbert UMC, and our fellow parishioners at St. Alice. In hindsight we were lucky. The subsequent operation and early closure of the Thomas Egan Warming Center demonstrated what diverse and potentially difficult people comprise "the homeless," especially in



John Antone

large numbers. But we got our feet wet. We have lived the gift that God gives to each of us: The wherewithal to get out and help others, not be silent in our words and actions. We combined our resources with those of our guests, and we did okay.

In Springfield we need a system for helping those who are homeless. We need rules, direction and education. The love and empathy are already there.

May the spirit of the Christ Child protect our homeless and guide us further in our endeavors.

*John Antone is president of the Lane County District Council, composed of church-based SVdP conferences in Lane and Benton counties. He also serves on the SVdP Board of Directors. John and Rita Antone are home visitors with the St. Alice Conference.*

### VIDA\* FACTS

\*Valley Individual Development Account

Program Mgr: Colleen Stewart

Providing case management, financial ed., & matching funds of up to \$3,000 per year to qualifying households for designated goals of home ownership, schooling or self-employment.

#### 2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

New homeowners in '08 2

Persons contacted 150

Families enrolled in '08 12

Applications in process 20

'Finding Paths to Prosperity' course offered in Florence & Oakridge:

2008 graduates 26

'Lifeline' Financial Education course offered in Cottage Grove

2008 graduates 9

#### Special Thanks:

O.U.R. Credit Union

Woodard Family Foundation

VIDA welcomes your donations!

Call 687-5820 x 142

### Downsizing?

Donate that unneeded car, truck or RV to

St. Vinnie's!

Proceeds are used to provide emergency services to low-income individuals & families.

It takes about 15 minutes.

We handle paperwork & provide free towing.

St. Vincent de Paul's Cars for a Cause

607-4541 • 1175 Hwy 99

### St. Vincent de Paul Manufacturing & Recycling

Through its recycling programs, St. Vincent de Paul Society in 2008 diverted the following from the Lane County landfill:

Textiles 1,463 tons

Scrap metal 2,810 tons

Glass 110 tons

Paper fiber 450 tons

Belts/purses 75 tons

Electronics/computers 72 tons

Composite plastic & upholstery foam 25 tons

Rigid plastic containers 78 tons

Wood waste 180 tons

Total weight diverted in Lane County:

**5,263 TONS!**

At its DR3 facility in California, SVdP recycled 122,417 mattresses, diverting from regional landfills:

**2,700 TONS!**

### Looking for a fan? I found one at St. Vinnie's.



It's worth pecking around at

### St. Vincent de Paul thrift stores

Boutique & Books: 555 High, Eugene • 344-2115

Division Store: 201 Division, Eugene • 762-7837

Seneca Store: 705 S. Seneca Road, Eugene • 345-8036

Tea & Crumpets: 100 East 11th Ave. (at Oak), Eugene • 868-0200

West Broadway Store: 2345 West Broadway, Eugene • 284-5024

West 11th Store: 1880 West 11th Ave., Eugene • 683-8284

Thurston Store: 4555 Main, Springfield • 747-5811

Florence Store: 2351 Hwy 101, Florence • 997-8460

## Pro-Bone-O clinic caters to pets and their friends

It was a gorgeous Sunday. His name was Dusty. He was one week old. A man was preparing to throw him off the Hwy. 99 bridge. His crime was that he was an unwanted mixed-breed puppy.

A homeless man walking on the bridge saw what was going to happen. He offered to buy Dusty for every penny he had. He had \$4.16. He bought Dusty and carried him another mile to the Pro-Bone-O clinic at St. Vincent de Paul--to get him examined and get food, a collar, and a leash.

The dogs that waited at the Eugene Service Station on a Sunday in late January had less dramatic stories, but Pro-Bone-O's services were equally important to their owners who were clearly feeling the economic downturn. Most were there for the first time.

Don, 43, brought his apricot poodle for her final round of first-year shots. A freelance graphics/computer-systems guy, he had seen 80 to 90 percent of his client base vanish in the previous nine months.

Samsun, a 7-year-old Chihuahua, got caught up in a county crackdown on unlicensed dogs. His owner, who is disabled, was referred to Pro-Bone-O for the shots necessary for a free tag.

"It's really hard to keep going and maintain a pet," she said. "But he's my companion and my best friend."

In 1998 HALO (for Helping Animals Living Outdoors), was formed to provide free veterinary care for the companion animals of the homeless. The program was later

See PRO-BONE-O, next page



# Sanctuary a long time coming for Service Station assistant

As a homeless man, Ed Caraveo never spent more than an hour at a time at the Eugene Service Station. Now he's there four days a week, getting paid to shepherd a growing clientele of adults who rely on the facility for meals, showers, laundry, and an address and phone.

He understands their various challenges and for some, the oddly seductive nature of homelessness itself. He's been through it all. As a result, he's a zealous guardian of the right of each person to use the facility in peace.

Ed signs folks in, directs shower traffic, and ensures that immediate needs are met. Anyone who would hinder that process is asking for trouble.

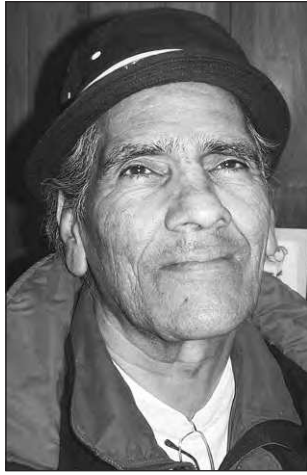
"This isn't the environment to act out or impose issues on people," he said. "This place is for people who, for one reason or another, need a sanctuary."

Ed spent nearly 50 years seeking sanctuary. When he was 3, his dad abandoned the family. When he was 10, his mom died. No relatives came forward to adopt.

Ed was shuffled from a juvenile facility to Boys Town in Nebraska. At 17 he enlisted in the Army, serving two years as a medic in South Korea.

He joined the hippie scene in San Francisco and acquired a drug habit that seemed benign through the many years that he worked in heavy construction. Then a mid-life crisis tipped the scales. Lacking emotional skills and a personal support system, he made bad choices, self-medicated to escape, ran afoul of the law, and was incarcerated for four months. His addiction threw the final punch, stretching three years of probation to 10.

Ed hated prison, but he recognized that many inmates were guys like himself, products of calamitous childhoods,



Ed Cavareo

devoid of nurturing. He embarked on a path to change, starting with inpatient treatment, followed by outpatient counseling and support groups.

That was 12 years ago. A lot of layers have been peeled away since.

"I was like a passenger in a car, and a little boy was the driver," he said. "I have learned to sit my butt down, filter out the noise in my head, stay focused, and practice making the right choices."

"It does get easier."

It didn't prevent Ed from becoming homeless in the late 1990's, his second time in 10 years. This time, homelessness was reminiscent of addiction, a slow, oddly appealing process.

"Physically, you start getting adapted to the environment," he said.

Then he began to appreciate that he had no obligations or responsibilities. The availability of food and the relative comfort of the public library lessened his motivation to get "unhomeless."

Ed was in counseling and support groups at the V.A., which had partnered with St. Vinnie's to develop Vet LIFT, a program of case management and housing for veterans

who have been chronically homeless. Ed met the sobriety requirement, was steered onto the waiting list, and received the next apartment that came available.

It's his own, long-sought sanctuary.

"Being clean and having a roof over your head go hand in hand," he said. "If a person is sincere about getting their life together, getting clean and sober is the number one priority."

He is coming to terms with his tumultuous past. "If my

## Pro-Bone-O

renamed Pro-Bone-O and in 2000 began using the Eugene Service Station as a clinic site.

Now, more than 25 local veterinarians donate their time and expertise to Pro-Bone-O, making possible the care necessary to stop the spread of parasites and infectious disease. Two veterinarians serve on the Board. Others donate supplies, equipment, spay-neuter services, and emergency procedures. Oregon State Veterinary School students serve as vet technicians.

Jenny, a geriatric Golden Retriever mix, was all smiles in the hands of Lindsey Leppard, Hanna Rothman, and Jocelyn Riehl. Lindsey is finishing her degree in animal science and awaiting word on her application to the OSU vet school. Hanna and Jocelyn are second-year vet students.

"We spend a lot of time just sitting in lectures," said Hanna. "It's good to touch animals and get hands-on experience."

Brian, Jenny's owner since puppyhood, had thought two weeks earlier that he might have to have her put down due to her arthritis. Pills had helped, but he was concerned that she was still in pain. He watched as the technicians conducted their examination.

With a vet and three other technicians on hand that Sunday, every animal that came to the clinic was seen and treated. The average clinic accommodates up to 50 animals. Most are dogs and cats, but reptiles, rabbits, birds, and even rodents have been clients – that's more than 7,500 pets to date.

Before the current lottery system of admission, owners began lining up as early as 4 a.m., in all kinds of weather, demonstrating their dedication to their pets.

Services are provided free and include flea control, treatment for skin problems, vaccinations, heartworm tests, and general wellness exams. Pet food is offered and so are any supplies and treats that become available.

Pro-Bone-O also offers financial assistance and education, and requires that dogs and cats be spayed or neutered within six months of their initial visit.

Assisting at each clinic are some of the 75 citizen animal lovers that devote time to the cause. They do intakes, fill out rabies certificates, complete and dispense spay/neuter vouchers, provide resource information, distribute food and supplies, and extend friendliness and support to a vulnerable population. Many volunteers have been coming for more than 10 years, expecting no more than pats, hugs and an occasional puppy kiss.

Jennifer has been helping at clinics with her foster mom, Cathy Bill, since 2003. A cat owner, she bags pet food and sometimes distributes dog treats to those awaiting services.

"Jennifer gets her dog fix here," Cathy explained.

"I feel like I'm helping people," Jennifer added.

On those occasions when an animal needs to be euthanized, volunteers cry along with the owners; they have



Jenny is a cooperative patient for Lindsey Leppard, a senior in animal science at OSU.

from page 6

known some of these pets for many years and consider them old friends.

This wasn't that day for Brian and Jenny. The OSU team declared the stout old dog to be in pretty good shape for her age.

By the 1 p.m. opening time for the Service Station, the Pro-Bone-O volunteers were packing up. After some clinics, the veterinarian arranges with colleagues to treat more serious problems such as distemper, cancer, parvo, broken bones, removal of hematomas, and tumors.

Veterinarian Jodi Wiktorowski has attended more Pro-Bone-O clinics than she can count and once ran a program that utilized kids from the Serbu Youth Campus as assistants.

"These people do the best they can with the resources they have," she said of the Pro-Bone-O clients. "They absolutely care for these animals."

"It feels very good to come here and do whatever I can to help."

*Pro-Bone-O clinics are held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the second Sunday of May, November and December, and on the second and fourth Sundays of other months.*

*Monetary donations to Pro-Bone-O help finance spays and neuters, emergency medical procedures, tests and X-rays, vaccines, flea treatments, and medicines. Also needed are pet coats and sweaters, especially large, durable, washable ones. Collars, leashes, harnesses, toys, carriers, beds, shampoos, vitamins, brushes, bowls, treats, and blankets are welcome.*

*For more information call 541-607-8089 or email proboneo@comcast.net.*

### Special thanks to Rita Castillo



Samsun awaits his shots. Volunteer Jennifer, at back, has been getting her dog fix at Pro-Bone-O clinics for nearly six years.

life wasn't meant to have happened as it did, it would have been different," he said. "That's even more reason why being anxious and fearful are such a waste of time, and yet they are stimulants to motivate us."

"Even anxiety can be useful."

Come April, Ed will have been on the Eugene Service Station staff for one year. He was targeted for the job by Bud Dickey of the V.A. and St. Vinnie's human-resources director.

"I think I have a good rapport here," he said. "It has taken a while, but the people have come to know I am non-sense but fair and willing to listen to any one."

"Sometimes people think they can act out, but because of my own past I won't tolerate it."

Ed is proud of his role in St. Vinnie's larger program of services.

"I can say from my heart, St. Vincent de Paul provides a really good service to the community," he said. "I know a lot of clients are appreciative of the facility and that they have the opportunity to have their needs met, even if it's only a shower, a hot meal, or clean clothes."

"They have a place where they can come and feel safe."

## St. Vincent de Paul's Richard W. Lindholm Center

Roxanne O'Brien, Director

In 2008 the staff and volunteers of the Lindholm Center were privileged to provide the following assistance:

### Social Service Office

Furniture	\$18,250
Clothing	56,000
Electricity	15,500
Greyhound tickets	500
Bus passes	5,000
Propane	13,000
Rent	25,000
Prescription medications	18,000
Total:	151,000

### Eugene Service Station

Total visits	44,946
Showers	22,265
Meals	82,938
Laundry	24,586
Phone	6,364
Mail	12,153
Bus tokens	12,000
Bus passes	25
Clothing	52,000
<i>Including \$6,000 provided at Homeless Connect</i>	
Toiletries	25,200
Used goods	18,000
New goods	25,000

### T. Atkinson Food Room

Food boxes	15,800
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### Vocational Services

Jul Orr, Director

This past year St. Vinnie's Vocational Services Department has served more than 280 individuals for skills assessment, job training, and placement. We started a new program with the Community Transitions Program for youth through the Springfield School District called C-WEX (community work experience). Youth are placed within St. Vinnie's for work experience and ongoing training, which compliments their continuing education.

We are expanding our facility into the former site of the Bethel community policing station. This will give us with much-needed space for private consultation with our clients as well as an employment resource area (providing online job search, resume service, I-Match and e-mail), and case-management services. In late April we will host an open house along with our community partners and other departments within SVdP. For information on the date on time please call 607-0439 or email jorr@svdplanecounty.org.



## Locals respond generously to Obama's call

Enthusiasm for a new president and a renewed spirit of cooperation were evident on Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as folks of all ages streamed into Cozmic Pizza with armloads of cold-weather items for vulnerable neighbors. The outpouring capped a two-week Warmth Drive that was launched at Euphoria Chocolate outlets in response to President Barack Obama's call to service. St. Vincent de Paul was one of several recipient agencies chosen on the basis of need and its ability to distribute items quickly.

Vivienne Friendly

spoke for many after handing over heavy coats, good blankets, and fleeces to the mountain that had long since spilled off the stage.

"My president asked me to do this," she said.

Rhian Takush and his mom Melissa came straight from the dedication of a statue of Rosa Parks. Earlier they had delivered edibles to the Relief Nursery and FOOD for Lane County, and they were headed to First Place Family Center with yet another food delivery.

"It's time for us all to step up and contribute to our community," Melissa explained.

Like most, Laurie and Roger Hall learned of the opportunity via the USAservice.org website and seized it to share clothing outgrown by



Rhian Takush, 7, delivered a big bag of warm items.

their grandchildren. And Anita Belt delivered "a Boston coat" she brought when she moved to Lane County.

"It's perfect for here," she said.

Jeanne Jackson-Gistelli was one of a core group of volunteers who started planning for the drive in December. Initially, about 50 people signed up to help, but she figured that more than 180 had participated on the holiday alone.

"That was way more than we expected," she said.

St. Vinnie's gratefully received two truckloads of items.

## First Jones & Roth tourney has miniature course, huge cause

It's a rare tourney that brings golfers indoors on a glorious fall day, but the Jones & Roth Mini Golf Classic did just that as it raised funds for St. Vincent de Paul. Despite a looming tax deadline, J&R teams labored after hours on a nine-hole parody of the CPA business that wound through hallways and past the open doors of busy staffers. Seventy-two golfers putted through sand traps in the senior-services paradise and a veil of computer mice hanging by their cords at the tech-group hole. They savored the spring of tax loopholes before entering the House of Tax Audit Horror with its auditor portraits and "tacks" hazard. St. Vinnie's hole challenged golfers "tired of waste" to loft their ball through a recycled tire.

Thanks to hole sponsors and paying golfers, the first-time benefit raised \$2,400 and helped break the stereotype of humorless tax accountants, said J&R's Phil Sutton. As an organizer, even he was stunned at the result and pleased to honor

its creators with "previously awarded" trophies from St. Vinnie's. The firm chose St. Vinnie's for its longevity, breadth of programs, and business partnership, he said, adding, "Also, the money goes back to Lane County instead of somewhere else."



Lisa Heath putts her way out of the Tech Group's trap as excerpts of "The Office" loop in the background.

## Vinnie's volunteers honored at Angel Dinner

They usually work quietly behind the scenes, but St. Vinnie's volunteer angels were called into the limelight at this fall's annual Angel Dinner. Thanks to Jones & Roth CPA's, more than 200 volunteers dined for free on a tasty spaghetti dinner prepared by the Self-Sufficiency Services staff. Proceeds from other ticket sales supplement emergency services at St. Vinnie's Lindholm Center.

Keynote speaker was Teresa Danovitch who described the spirituality and intricacies of icon writing -- the process of rendering religious images in various media. Her gilded images illuminated one wall of St. Mary's Parish Hall as servers from O'Hara Catholic School scurried to serve more than 300 guests.

Emcee was John Antone, District Council president. This year's Angel honorees include Ray and Yvonne Choate, Jim and Rose Mootz, Marie Grinstead, Virgil Heidecker, Jack



Bev Coplin has dressed women for success through Ruby Tuesday.

Walker, Lori King, Barbara Nelson, Gloria Obenshain of Warehouse Demonstration Services, Teresa Rositer of Best Friends pet store, Mike Gansen of Gansen Construction, Bev



Jim and Rose Mootz, long-time members of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Conference in Cottage Grove.

Coplin of Ruby Tuesday, Tom West, Rae Brown and Traci Bomquist, Liz Canizales and Nancy DeSpain, John Taylor, Housing & Community Services, and Head Start.



Ben Mondragon and the Southtowne Rotary underwear are welcomed by Thanh Duong, LIFT manager.

## Rotarians, Guaranty put undies under the tree

After a meeting of the Southtowne Rotary, as he loaded bags of new socks into his car, Ben Mondragon was approached by a curious stranger. As he explained that the items were destined for people served by St. Vincent de Paul, Ben noticed the man was wearing only one boot. Layers of socks substituted for the other.

Ben offered a package of 10 socks. As the man fumbled to remove one pair, Ben assured him that he could keep them all.

Later, Ben described how glad he was to have been in a position to help. He touched his hand to his heart as he said, "That's going to stay with me for a long time."

The value of the basics -- new underwear and socks -- can't be overstated. Thanks to the continued generosity of Southtowne Rotary and Guaranty RV in Junction City, low-income individuals, families and veterans once again received new sets at Christmas.

Guaranty's fifth annual socks donation was delivered personally by co-owners Shannon and Barbara Nill. The project evolved out of Travelers' Club barbecues and grew to an inter-departmental competition that this year yielded 2,000 pairs of new socks.

"The first thing people in trouble need is warm, dry socks," Shannon explained. "If you're feet aren't dry and warm, you're basically out of commission."

Barbara and Shannon Nill added St. Vinnie's share of 2,000 pairs of socks collected by Guaranty employees.

On hand to help unload the Southtowne delivery was Thanh Duong, manager of St. Vinnie's LIFT program, which provides housing and case management to adult men and women with the dual diagnosis of mental illness and addiction. Thanh stocked up on thick socks for his men's group.

"All the guys got a box of hygiene items, and the socks were something to add," he said. "It's one less bill for them to worry about."

"Especially with the cold weather during the holidays, it was really nice."

For Ben Mondragon, who coordinates the Southtowne Rotary program with J.R. Irwin, the sense of giving is year-round as items and checks are collected at every meeting. Back when they launched the program, they took stock of other drives and opted to be different.

"(Underwear and socks) is a pretty basic human need," Ben explained.

And giving feels much better than getting.

"I have been very blessed my whole life," he said. "My parents told me I would never be able to give more than I receive."

"It's very special, a good feeling," said Shannon Nill. "It makes everybody proud to be part of the community and sharing what we can."

## St. Catherine's BBQ set for July 26

St. Catherine of Siena Church will hold its 54th Annual Fernridge Beef Pit BBQ on Sunday, July 26, from noon to 5 p.m. in the Church Park at the end of West Broadway in Veneta. More than 1,500 pounds of beef will be cooked underground overnight in a secret sauce. Enjoy the live music of Coupe-de-Ville Band, auctions, Bingo, games for all ages, and a raffle, all at the longest running annual picnic in Lane County. For more information call 935-3933.

**DOING IT YOURSELF?**

For extra savings shop the

### HBA Garage Sale

Sponsored by the  
Home Builders Association of Lane County

**April 18, 9-5 & April 19, 10-2**

Wheeler Pavillion • Lane County Fairgrounds

A portion of proceeds go to St. Vincent de Paul Society!

For more information call 687-5820 x121

**Thank You!**

for supporting families in need through our Social Service Office at the Angel Dinner!

Thanks to our Dinner Sponsor:

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Thank You to St. Mary's Catholic Church for hosting, O'Hara Catholic School for serving, and our Social Service Office for cooking!