



Roseburg Rescue Mission

*A Beacon of Hope
for the Homeless*

FEBRUARY 2017

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Abuse Caused A Rebellious Life

When Noel was two-years-old, his father died. For several years, his single parent working mother raised him and his younger brother. Then an abusive stepfather entered the family and life changed. He said, "The littlest of things would get us in trouble, which made us act out all the more, because of the injustice. We lived way out of town. If people had known, it would have stopped." He was treated so meanly as a teenager that his response was to not give life a chance to show itself any different. So he rebelled. He said, "It took years to overcome it. The drinking was a reaction to the injustice. It became a habit, we couldn't break. It became a reward for a hard day at work, self-medication. But it had more drawbacks than benefits. If you use too much of it, it is poison. You don't function, mistakes can be made."

Noel graduated from high school and held various minimum wage jobs. He said the small town on the Oregon coast had been a fishing and lumber town, but now is a tourist town. He did not see any great opportunities there. He held a job as a gas station attendant for several years, off and on, while him and his brother slept under bridges and in legitimate campsites. Park rangers kept them moving from one campsite to another. A friend would drive him to work. His employer knew the situation and eventually helped him get a trailer. His brother's drinking problem was worse; he would bring other alcoholics to their home. One night his brother passed out on the beach; a wave overcame him and he drowned.

"I am really glad the Mission is a no drinking place. I do not want to smell it or see it. That is not why I came here."

It was time for Noel to leave that coastal town. He came to the only mission in Douglas County. Roseburg is the hub city of the county, a center of social services. The photo shows him working for his stay here by serving food in our kitchen. He said, "I am really glad the Mission is a no drinking place. I do not want to smell it or see it. That is not why I came here. The Mission provided me a place to succeed and grow, providing information through networking and local services. It is a safe, secure place. It is within walking distance of employment opportunities. People are really nice, helping each other here. They want to see you succeed and go somewhere. The programs and chapel are great. I became a Christian when I was eight-years-old. It has been a struggle to keep fellowship, to keep going back to church. I have learned more in chapel than in my entire time in church settings."

After three weeks of searching for a job, walking from place to place, Noel landed a job washing dishes in a restaurant. Now the rebellious, addictive behavior has stopped, and a new life has begun.

In From The Cold

Winter weather outdoors has conditions that can cause hypothermia, frostbite, pneumonia, influenza. Camping has no accountability for drug and alcohol addiction, no support for mental illness. On the street, there are dangers of being beaten up, raped, robbed. Some die out there. It is lonely, depressing and aimless. As a society, we collectively say that we want to end homelessness, yet so many continue to support the very practice. Providing camping equipment and supplies does not end homelessness. We need to bring people in from the cold, not enable them to avoid responsibility. Individuals want dignity, not toxic charity. Handouts end up as litter under bridges and along waterways, then additional tax dollars are spent on cleanup. Charity needs to be done with a determination to specifically help a person or situation, not for the giver to feel good about himself. We do have responsibility not to enable a destructive lifestyle in the receiver, or cause him to become dependent on charity.

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The Mission is not full. We have beds available. If the Men's Mission were to fill up, we would put mats on our Dayroom floor and continue to receive men. At our Samaritan Inn for women and children, we have not filled the 104 beds. At the Mission, there is no food, clothing or shelter to go. Our services are here and for people who are here. Word-of-mouth on the street is very strong; homeless people know where the help is at. A person can enter the Mission as long as he or she has no obvious use of alcohol or drugs, determined by smell and behavior. We do not use a breathalyzer or urinalysis to screen for entry, because we want to be as inclusive as possible. Urinalysis is used to determine certain behaviors. Once a person has a positive for drug use, he or she will be screened again as a condition of re-entry. Some people are temporarily disallowed services, pending a timeout period or meeting a condition for return. We have a Cold Weather Policy that waves most of those conditions, when the temperature goes down to freezing and their present behavior is acceptable. Special attention is made to the elderly and disabled to rescue them from cold weather.

"Go into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor. Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in." Luke 14: 21, 23

The Kingdom of God is a gathering of people and provision for them; it is not about isolation, ignorance, or want.

Social services and chapel services meet the need of the whole person. At both the Men's Mission and Samaritan Inn, we have dayrooms that are open all day for people to come in from the cold and rain, whether they stay the night or not. We provide three meals every day of the year at both shelters. There are restrooms, showers, hygiene items, laundry facilities, warm clothing. We have a New Life Program for men and women separately, and a Transitional Housing Program for men to rent rooms. Information and assistance is given to meet the needs of medical, mental health, employment, housing, disability benefits. Self-respect is achieved through required work chores to stay the night. Light duty chores are given to the disabled and medical bed vouchers, waving chores, to those unable to work. Self-sufficiency is our goal for our clients, not a dependency on us for their ongoing needs.

We need to focus on long-term solutions. Homelessness can become an addiction, and we have to not feed it. When we have the attitude that, "they are going to do it anyway", we have already lost the effort to bring them in. The Roseburg Rescue Mission averaged 152 men, women and children per night in 2016. They all had hope.

Thank you, Lynn Antis, Executive Director



Rescue Roseburg

BASIC SERVICES

For Men, Women and Children

Food: 3 meals every day at Men's Mission and Samaritan Inn.

Clothing: Available to all who are staying at either shelter.

Housing: 128 beds for men in Dormitory, New Life Program, and Transitional Housing Program. 104 beds for women in Dormitory, New Life Program, and Family Rooms.

Recovery Program: Open to men and women.

Dayrooms: Open all day at both shelters. Restrooms, showers, laundry, telephone, social service help. No requirement to stay here to use these services.

ITEMS NEEDED:

Pancake Mix
Syrup
Oatmeal
Egg Noodles
Elbow Macaroni
Corn Meal, Rice
Salt & Pepper
Diapers, Baby Wipes
Car Seats, Strollers
Walker, Wheelchairs
Pajamas

Vehicle Donations Accepted



Receipts for
Tax Deduction
Provided