



Roseburg Rescue Mission

Men's Shelter • Samaritan Inn • Thrift Stores

A Beacon of Hope for the Homeless

FEBRUARY 2022

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A Place Of Community

An accident began the path to homelessness for Chris. His employer had him help move a heavy, soft serve ice cream machine. The excessive strain caused a hernia. A few days later, he was sick to his stomach and in a lot of pain. He had been working full-time for a couple of years at the convenience store. He earned enough to not qualify for the Oregon Health Plan. After the injury, he tried shorter hours and lighter duty, but he needed surgery. Because of his then reduced income, he was able to get OHP and have the operation. He anxiously awaited returning to work.

While recovering, another unexpected problem arose. This one was on the home front. Perhaps it was because of all the time on his hands, evaluation of conditions, frustration. His girlfriend of several years announced that their relationship was over. Chris said, "I was thrown out on the street." He went to his daughter's place for a few days, but she has her own family. It was his first time being homeless.

That is when he found community at the Mission. He was still recovering from surgery and separation of relationship. He said, "I have a lot of drive. It was really hard not doing anything, not having a purpose, and being alone. I kinda feel like a victim of circumstance. These guys (at the Mission) are good guys. They treat you like you want to be treated, with respect." As he was able, Chris (picture above), worked in our warehouse sorting clothes for his stay here. He appreciated the involvement and comradery.

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His plan was to return to his old employment position the day after his doctor released him. However, he had no gas money to drive his car to that job in south county, so he lined up a new job within walking distance and still on schedule. Now, he is working overtime and renting a room in our Transitional Housing Program.

Chris said, "I have always sought God, when I am in crisis. I know that when I seek God, my life is better. I enjoy going to chapel and the fellowship of brothers. I have gone to church since I was five-years-old, not always as an adult. I have turned my back on God, but He has never turned His back on me. I didn't feel alone anymore as soon as I got here. He is answering prayers and inspiring me." Chris said his favorite Scripture verse is, "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" Psalm 119:105.

Understanding Homelessness

One cannot understand the nature of homelessness by visiting people in homeless camps, anymore than comprehend addiction by talking to clients in recovery programs, or criminology by interviewing inmates in prison, or mental illness by visiting patients in psychiatric hospitals. The one making social calls only hears the story from a troubled person and cannot discern the real situation. Yet, the novice diagnoses a homeless problem, prescribes a remedy, then walks away self-content, having no idea what the actual outcome may be. Homeless camps are uncontrolled environments, open to whoever happens by to be scored upon. Both parties are victims.

outside looking in

It is not until a homeless camper enters a shelter 24/7 and is held accountable for behaviors and following through with required action for success, that one can observe his true desire. And it is not until the social visitor becomes a staff member in the role of holding people accountable, that he sees reality. Only then can the staff member understand how much he did not comprehend when he was only on the outside looking in.

Still, self-proclaimed homeless advocates continue to arise without understanding the big picture. Thirty years ago, I started my own nonprofit. But, I soon realized that I was only being taken advantage of, and was just riding on the coattails of the Mission in that city. I shut down my charity and joined the staff of that Mission with no regrets. So much more can be accomplished within a proven organization, than with the inexperience of start-ups.



Where Clients Can Become Staff

More than half our paid staff man-hours are from men and women that were on programs. Seven such positions are now occupied, including four thrift store clerks, a maintenance person, a men's supervisor, and a women and children's supervisor. An eighth position is open at Samaritan Inn. The remainder of our staff is currently comprised of just four full-time and two part-time persons.

This is a vocational rehabilitation and employment service for the homeless. They have responsibility that builds confidence, develops resumes, and provides income. Its supported by private donations, thrift store sales, and transitional housing rentals, not government grants. Here is a community of shared success that is an encouragement to everyone around it. There is opportunity, trust, value. Its a win-win situation, in that, clients have employment possibilities and donations are used efficiently. Most of these part-time employees receive a private room and board as part of their compensation. A couple of them live off-site.

Individuals join our staff for a variety of reasons. Some want to gratefully give back by serving, work in social service, serve in a ministry, learn a specific career field, have a last leg of employment to retire, earn money to move on, or make their way back into the job market. And move on they do, out into the community to various employment positions.

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Shelley (pictured above) had a great career working for Child Support Services. For 15 years, she worked in the intergovernmental department with families that had one parent living in another state. She was the main breadwinner, because her husband has military related PTSD. Then tragedy struck, when she was diagnosed with stage four cancer. She went through six months of chemotherapy, then surgery, radiation, and another six months of chemo. After that year long ordeal, she returned to her job part-time for three years, until the severe migraines made it impossible to continue. When they could no longer pay the rent, Shelley and her husband moved into their pickup with just a canopy for a couple of weeks, even a tent for a few nights.

Then Shelley went to our Samaritan Inn. She said, "I was petrified. I had never been in a situation like this. I sat in a corner and cried for the first week." She was dealing with the effect of chemo medication, memory loss, stress, as well as, losing her home and career. Three months later, she was on our program and cooking in the commercial kitchen. In another three months, she was on our paid staff as a supervisor. That was nine months ago. Her experience has been very helpful here. She has stabilized with new medications and redefined herself in this ministry. Shelley said, "I want to give back. I believe this is my calling."

Thank you, Lynn Antis, Executive Director



ministry opening

Employment Position

Samaritan Inn

Supervisor

Mature woman to supervise women and children, provide weekly chapel message, work evenings.

Live off-site.

30 hours per week.

Send resume to:

rsbgmission@aol.com

items needed

Quilts 72"X90"

Egg Noodles

Tomato Sauce

Diced Tomatoes

Mushroom Soup

Refried Beans

Gravy Mix

Spices, Salt, Mayo

Canned Fruit & Veggies

Pancake Syrup

Diapers Size #4 & #6

Disinfectant Spray

Disinfectant Wipes

Bottles of Water

Women's Deodorant

Twin Strollers

Bath Towels

Wash Cloths

used bikes & parts

are for sale in our

Furniture Store.

thrift stores

shop our stores to help homeless men, women and children.

estate planning

leave a legacy of hope at Roseburg Rescue Mission.