

St. Vincent de Paul

Fall 2013

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Upcoming Events

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Society of St. Vincent de Paul - Rogue Valley District



Rick Weber (left), Mary Jane Howe-Weber (third from Right), and Stan Miller, Kitchen VP (right),
with youth from St Wenceslaus Catholic Church of Scappoose, Oregon

High School Youth Help Out At St Vincent de Paul

On July 1, eight Catholic high school youth from St Wenceslaus Catholic Church, came here during a service trip to volunteer in our dining room and work on our landscaping. They were led by Mary Jane Howe-Weber, who is the Service Minister at their church, along with her husband Rick Weber. St Wenceslaus is in Scappoose, Oregon, about 30 miles north of Portland and the group was traveling to several parishes helping anyway they could in community service. Their first stop was Saturday in Myrtle Creek where they helped the sisters at the seminary in Mt Angel and met with the Augustinians of Our

Lady of Souls, helping with meals, clothes and vouchers. They also worked in the St Vincent de Paul thrift store and attended Sunday mass followed by bible study.

On Monday, the group attended daily Mass at Providence Hospital, and Fr Jim Clifford spoke to the youth about the service that the Catholic church does in hospitals and his experience as a Chaplain. About 10:30 am they arrived at St Vincent de Paul, Medford where they were given a tour of our facility and shown the video which depicts what we do. Half the teens and adults worked

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Youth Help Out... Continued

with the Monday kitchen crew serving the 200 plus diners who came to be feed and to socialize in a safe and welcoming environment. The other four teens and adults joined our own Master Gardener, Bill Hunt, working with gloves and tools, to clean up our large amount of landscaping. It is a never ending task and their efforts were greatly needed and appreciated.

The group spent the afternoon visiting and helping at the Medford Magdalene home for teenage mothers. They had experienced another day of worthwhile service to those in need. Later that evening, they had a chance to swim (it was very hot), read scripture, and reflect on the day's events.

On Tuesday July 2, the teen groups switched areas of service. This time the kitchen Tuesday volunteers got the opportunity to work with travelling teens and adults who had traded their gloves and tools for aprons and ladles. The teens from Monday's kitchen group became horticulturalists on Tuesday with Bill Hunt in restoring our grounds to their intended condition.

For Mary Jane, it was a homecoming because she was welcomed by her brother Jim Howe, who lives here in the Rogue Valley. It was also a homecoming for another reason. If the name Howe sounds familiar, it should, because Mary and Jim are two of the seven children of Lil and Bill Howe, the founding couple of St Vincent de Paul in Jackson County. Mary and Jim have many fond memories of their family's commitment to serve the needy in our community. Mary, the youngest of the family, was a senior in high school in the early eighties, when Bill and Lil helped form our council. Mary Jane is well *continued on page 3*

Letter from the President

We have experienced changes this year but that is always going to happen. New volunteers join us and unfortunately some volunteers find they can no longer serve. They all are and always will be Vincentians and we should pray for them and for each other always.



With all the services we provide that have come about over the last 31 years, started with a soup kitchen, clothing and cold weather shelter at Sacred Heart church. United with Our Lady of the Mountain and Shepherd of the Valley in 1982, those initial volunteers grew in numbers and now we have over a 4 acres campus. We provide shelter, showers, laundry, food pantry, lunches, retail store (our money engine), rent and utility relief, medications, clothing and household vouchers, camping equipment, home visits, school supplies, client counseling, dental services, haircuts, and the list grows.

I cannot say it often enough or with more enthusiasm, how much I appreciate all of you who volunteer, support, donate and pray for St Vincent de Paul. You are true Vincentians and without your dedication to serving others, we would not exist. It amazes me how we provide all the services we do every day because of you. Please keep doing what you do. It makes more of a difference than we know.

God Bless You Always.

Youth Help Out... continued

aware of the countless hours her parents spent, along with all the Vincentian volunteers in our wonderful community, building the St Vincent society we have today. She shared how many Vincentians prayed for her during her pregnancy with her daughter Lily, named after Lil Howe, who was born Oct 30, 1995. She specifically mentioned a volunteer, who recognized her daughter Lily working on the food line. Lily is now 17 yrs old, and she remembers Lil Howe introducing Lilly to the Vincentians when she was only a few months old.

After a very action filled two weeks, the service minded group, headed home to Scappoose. As Mary Jane stated "The youth felt very inspired by this service trip and want to have another next summer! The youth mentioned how impressed they were by the fact that the retirees would spend all day at SVDP. They said, usually retirees are relaxing, golfing, and enjoying their well earned time off- but these people have devoted themselves to the poor! God bless all of your faithful servants."

On behalf of all the volunteers at St Vincent de Paul of the Rogue Valley and all those we serve, I say a heart-felt thank you to Mary Jane, husband Rick, her brother Jim and the teens and adults who came to us for two days in July, for their tremendous help and inspiration. They also renewed in us a spirit and wonderful memory of Lil and Bill Howe and those who helped them start St Vincent de Paul here in Jackson County 31 years ago. God Bless them and us all.

Written by Dennis Mihocko

Jose and Norma Sanchez



L to R: SVDP Vice President Len Hebert, Norma Sanchez, Jose Sanchez, and SVDP President Dennis Mihocko

Jose and Norma Sanchez have been volunteering every Wednesday in our kitchen since 2010, over three years. They have two girls and two boys from teenager to toddler. Jose has worked as an insurance agent since 1996 and also for UPS for over nine years. Despite Norma raising four wonderful children and Jose working two jobs, they take time to come serve at St Vincent de Paul every week.

In addition to their volunteerism, Jose works at Payne West Insurance Agency, where he has obtained the Safeco Insurance Company Community Hero Awards for Len Hebert in 2011 and for Dave Moosman in 2012. Each award was for \$5000 to St Vincent de Paul. On top of that, just this month, Jose was awarded \$2000 for St Vincent de Paul by Safeco Insurance as one of 23 agents recognized for their hard work as volunteers. Though we didn't win an additional \$10,000 for most votes received through online voting, it was exciting to vote every day for Jose and to see his picture on Safeco's website as well as on our website trying to win and highlighting St Vincent de Paul in Jackson County. Also, Jose keeps applying for grants from other

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Jose and Norma Sanchez... continued

companies including UPS who has sent donations to us for Jose's volunteer hours.

Jose was born in Michoacan, Mexico and Norma was born in Zacatecas, Mexico. Jose's family came to the Fresno California when he was one and Norma's family came to Medford when she was also one. After graduating high school, Jose moved to Medford in 1993 and where he became an insurance agent in 1996. Norma graduated from South Medford in 1989. Jose's sister introduced him to Norma in November 1995, they went through the marriage preparation classes the following year and were wed in April 1997. Jose and Norma renewed their visa status every ten years as required but both said they had a growing desire to be citizens of the only country they knew. Motivated by such a desire, on August 9, the Sanchez family travelled to Eugene where Jose appeared in U.S. district court to be sworn in as a naturalized citizen. He was interviewed on Eugene TV9 KEZI and expressed his joy and pride for now having the right to vote in the next elections. Norma is planning on being sworn in next year and expressed similar feelings about wanting the right to vote.

If it sounds like I'm bragging on Norma and Jose and I'm just getting started. They are active members of Shepherd of the Valley Catholic Church raising their children in the faith as they were. Jose works early mornings at UPS before going to his insurance office and still comes to St Vinny's to serve. When Norma helped her sister with twins, she still came and served. Even when Norma's father passed away several months ago, she still managed to come and serve. When she was caring for her seriously ill mother, she still came and served when she could. Norma's mother passed away this August, just

months after her father. Norma is looking forward to coming in on Wednesdays. I know her mom and dad are very proud of her and Jose.

We highlighted them both at the 2013 February Volunteer Appreciation dinner with certificates of recognition. I thought this article was a good idea to show how dedicated our volunteers are. Norma and Jose represent us very well.

Written by Dennis Mihocko

In Memoriam, Tagashi Hirenzaki



Tagashi Hirenzaki and SVDP President Dennis Mihocko

If you spent any time at all in the dining room or kitchen over the last several years, you undoubtedly knew and heard "T" - Tagashi Hirenzaki. He was the hard working, irrepressible, boisterous Japanese man with one suspender strap hanging off his shoulder and often talking in a loud and excited fashion. You may not have known that "T" received dialysis frequently and was often sick and weak. But he came into set up for the day and do

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many of those things that others disliked doing. He was a faithful servant. He had spent most of his career as a chef in the Bay area after immigrating from Japan and he had no family in the US. He became part of the local Japanese community in the Rogue Valley after moving here several years ago. When he passed away December 15, 2012 unexpectedly, that same community led by our own Yoshi Pehl, had a memorial service for "T" at the Phoenix library on Saturday February 2, which was the 48th day of his 49 day journey to eternity by Japanese tradition. "T" will be fondly remembered by us all as a Vincentian from the land of the Rising Sun. Enjoy your well earned rest. You are missed.

Written by Dennis Mihocko

New St. Augustine Conference Prez

Bill Holloway, the new President of the St. Augustine Conference, may have been born with his feet firmly on the ground. But he spent much of his life earning his sea legs serving aboard aircraft carriers in the oceans of the world.

Volunteers who know Bill see a man with a ready smile, a kind heart and a sense of humor.

Bill spent his early life in the then booming "Copper Capital of the World" - Butte and Anaconda, Montana. He joined the Navy at the age of 17 in 1954, and bid goodbye to the Big Sky Country.

As a sailor, he was in ports of call all over the globe. But his world changed when he was stationed in Japan in 1977. There he met his late wife, Kiyoko. He speaks fluent Japanese, and spent 23 years in Land of the Rising Sun. A country and people he loves.



Louie and Bill Holloway, New St. Augustine Conference President

He is now married to fellow Vincentian, Socorro. The two have been with the Society for 14 years. They married in 1990, at Shepherd of the Valley, and began a new chapter of life.

"Dave Moosman got us started at St. Vincent de Paul," he says. "He gave a talk after Mass, and here we are. Dave is persuasive."

Dave is proud of his recruit saying he is long overdue to be president of St. Augustine. "Bill has the St. Vincent de Paul bug," Dave says, "A humble man willing and able to help the poor."

Bill is a man with a purpose and lots of talent as well. He also is used to calling the shots. When he was at sea, he served on *smaller* aircraft carriers - The Yorktown (which had 4,000 sailors; and the Midway, which had a few more.) Both ported in Japan. When he wasn't at sea, Bill spent his time as a loving husband dedicated to Kiyoko and her family.

As a signalman at sea, his worked on the deck of the carriers using flags to guide the giant ship to tactical render turns, fueling, and making sure it didn't get too close to other ships on the open sea. After 30 years in the Navy he retired a Master Chief Signal Man.

His love of the sea and Japan quickly translated to a
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New St. Augustine Prez... Continued

love of the poor and his new wife. Socorro and Bill met in Barstow, California. Her husband had died and she owned a store in Barstow. They fell in love and decided to marry. "People had told us how pretty it was up here," he says.

They moved, but faced some hurdles to marriage. "I left the fold for 35 years," Bill said. "But I always believed." They first tried to get married through Sacred Heart Church, "But nothing was done – they just kept plodding and plodding," he says." So they went to Father Jim Clifford. "I don't have the words to describe how wonderful Father Jim is," Bill says. "He gave me back my faith. To this day I give him a call when I need to go to confession."

The new-found faith led him to St. Vincent and he traded in his sailor whites for jeans and a shirt. A shirt that soon had its sleeves rolled up as he did home visits, needy meds the Urban Rest Stop.

As the new president of his home-visit conference based out of Shepherd of the Valley, he isn't planning many changes. But they do need more volunteers. Conference members go out in pairs and cover from Central Point to Phoenix and beyond. "People are more comfortable sharing their plight in the privacy of their homes."

Now that he's a land-lubber, Bill says he sees life a bit differently: "You don't get to heaven by faith alone; you have to do something else."

"Thanks to Dave Moosman and Father Jim, I know I'm on the right road." he says.

That sounds like a man who is once again firmly planted on the ground in the Land of the Setting Sun.

Written by Kathy Morgan

Thank you Amelia Torres



Amelia Torres

The kitchen is going to have to get along without the help of 12 year volunteer, Amelia Torres. The diminutive lady has been serving all these years especially with the Tuesday crew, providing lunches for ever increasing numbers of diners. She has seen those numbers increase from less than 100 per day to often close to 300 currently. She came to Medford in 1995 to attend the wedding of her daughter Iris Strage at St Joseph Catholic Church in Jacksonville. By 1999, Amelia decided to move to Medford from Redondo Beach, California and by 2001, she was introduced to St Vincent de Paul by Leonard and Katie Kressy, long time Vincentians and parishioners at Sacred Heart Church. Amelia soon started working with Helen Smith and Mary Hogue and has spent the last 12 years serving so many in need alongside so many wonderful volunteers. She will be leaving us to move to her daughter's home in Petaluma, California at the age of 82 (shared by Amelia's permission). The kitchen will continue serving meals six days per week to those who come to St Vincent's but those who serve and who are served, will be remembered for the impact they made on us all. Amelia will be so remembered. God Bless you Always Amelia.

Written by Dennis Mihocko

Robert Goodhead

Robert Goodhead might be a name you recognize. He has been a Vincentian for many years, helping in the kitchen, even cooking on occasion. He last volunteered in the Thrift store where he helped cashiers and customers and acted as St Vincent's ambassador. Robert's mother, Joanne Berggren, still volunteers in our office where she greets and helps those coming to social services, often more than one day per week.

Though Robert has challenges in life due to cerebral palsy, he has not let anything stop him when he is determined, including long bike rides, helping others or inspiring others to help. And helping St Vincent de Paul has been high on his list of places and people to help. Last year, Robert raised more than \$500 for our school supply program, by inspiring his fellow members at the local Fraternal Order of Eagles to help out. He was interviewed on local television to also help with publicity for the program. This year Robert was again interviewed by local television when he presented a check on behalf of the Eagles and leader John King for \$1360 to Dianne and Dennis Mihocko of St Vincent de Paul's School Supply Program. Because of Robert and the Fraternal Order of Eagles, ST Vincent volunteers were able to give grade specific school supplies to over 3900 K-12 students. These students might not have been able to start school with such supplies like most students. We are very grateful for Robert's hard work and that of his friends at the Eagles and he is already planning more events to help raise even more funds for the 2014 school supply program. Thank you, Robert and the Fraternal Order of Eagles. God Bless You Always.

Written by Dennis Mihocko



L—R: Dennis Mihocko, Dianne Mihocko, and Robert Goodhead

Light the Winter Fires 2013 Luau was a huge success!

Thank you for all that you do; for making Light the Winter Fires such a huge success!

Thank you to all who donate or volunteer throughout the year.

We are on Facebook now!

Come check us out at:

www.facebook.com/stvincentdepaulmedford

Share, Comment, and Like!

Help spread the word of all the good St Vincent de Paul is doing in the Rogue Valley.

Be sure to visit our website too:

www.stvincentdepaulmedford.info

Thank you and God Bless

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

2424 N Pacific Highway
Medford, OR 97501

Phone: 541-772-3828
E-mail: vincent@mind.net
Website: www.stvincentdepaulmedford.info



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Thrift Store

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Monday—Saturday, 10 - 4

Dining Room

Monday—Saturday, 11 - 1

Pantry

Last two Fridays of each month, 10 - 1

La Clinica

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Dental - Every Thursday, 1-6pm,
warehouse in rear parking lot

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Newsletter Writers/Editors/Designers

Dennis Mihocko, Larry Mullaly, Kathy Morgan, and
Jennifer and Michael Morgan

