

St. Vincent de Paul

Spring 2018

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Society of St. Vincent de Paul - Rogue Valley District

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



The Volunteers always get a real "kick" out of the Tap-A-Tooties.

By Dennis Mihocko

Though the annual St Vincent de Paul volunteer appreciation dinner is just that, annual, each year is different unto itself. There are usually, and hopefully, many new volunteers to experience the friendship and fun that the gathering of Vincentians always seems to be. The time away from serving and the supportive work that service requires, is a change that we only get to enjoy a few days of the year.

This year's dinner was held in the Shepherd of the Valley church

hall and hosted by the Knights of Columbus, the church bereavement committee members, and served by the young people of this year's Confirmation class and their adult instructors. Tables were bedecked with bowls of Harry and David Moose Munch, Chocolate Cherries and chocolate mints. Conversation was on automatic, as it always is at such events, and Council President Kathy Begley called everyone together to officially start the annual St Vincent meeting and volunteer

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Letter from the President

Dear Vincentians and friends,
My term as President is flying by, and I have learned so much, some good things and some not so good. I am certain that I am where God wants me to be...and some days I wonder why. Recent articles in the news about the plight of our homeless population and the accompanying cost to society are troubling. How often do we refer to the homeless as “they”...they did this or they did that? At St. Vincent de Paul we are called to a special ministry: to be the ones charged with supporting and caring for the least of God’s children. Not always an easy task....

“...while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him. Luke 24:15-16”

Mother Teresa always saw the poor as Jesus in disguise...like Jesus on the road to Emmaus, even his apostles did not know him.

Our mission is to see the face of Christ in all we serve...most are thankful for our assistance. However, others are very demanding and critical. St. Vincent’s challenge to us is to always be smiling and good-natured. “They are our masters. So, the more unattractive they are and the more dirty they are, the more unjust and insulting, the more love you must give them.” (St. Vincent de Paul)

During this Easter season, may we find the face of Jesus before us in everyone we meet...they are our brothers and sisters, God’s family. We do not know when we will encounter Jesus in disguise. We just need to be ready with an open heart.

To quote Mother Teresa again, “the miracle is



Kathy Begley, St Vincent de Paul of Rogue Valley President

not that we do this work, but that we are happy to do it!”

May the Risen Christ fill your hearts and homes with great peace and boundless joy,
Kathy

Light the Winter Fires

By Kathy Begley

Our annual fundraiser, Light the Winter Fires was started to raise funds to buy tents and sleeping bags. That was 9 years ago, and we are still doing what we can to help the homeless of Jackson County.

At St. Vincent de Paul, we are compelled to try our best to provide enough shelter to keep everyone safe through the winter months. In October, we held our annual tent and sleeping bag give away.

This year we held an open house to showcase our many services. On Sunday, September 24th, we welcomed the public to experience the services we offer every day to the

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poor and needy.

Our kitchen crew, headed by Charlotte Martinson, prepared a wonderful assortment of appetizers and goodies for our guests. Charlotte wanted everyone to see and taste the quality of food that we prepare fresh, daily for two hundred to three hundred clients. The Urban Rest Stop was manned by Lee and TC Myers, the dynamic duo that make sure everyone has a shower and clean clothes. KOB Channel 5 sent a reporter to interview President Kathy Begley about our work in the Urban Rest Stop and our need for more volunteers.

The dining room walls displayed posters showcasing some of the services we provide: food pantry, dental program, Pregnancy Center, haircuts, and school supplies. When all was said and done, we collected over \$22,000 and we gained three volunteers the day after the event. The volunteers who helped prepare and participate in the event, as always were greatly appreciated and enjoyed the day.

Thank you one and all for sharing your time, your talent and your treasure to make St. Vincent de Paul the amazing place it is.

Rich Hansen Awarded

By Dennis Mihocko

At the 2018 annual volunteer appreciation dinner, Rich Hansen, Vice President of Grant Writing, was reporting on the St Vincent de Paul efforts to obtain grant funds. He thanked grant writers Phyllis Douglas, who is also a Social Service counselor, and Vickie Weiss of Our Lady of the Mountain Home Visitation Conference in Ashland, as well as,



Len Hebert (left) and Kathy Begley (right) award Rich Hansen (center) the 2018 St Vincent de Paul's Len Hebert Humanitarian Award.

his wife Elizabeth for editing grants. Collectively, over the past year, they obtained grants totaling \$450,000. Rich briefly described the process of writing a grant while encouraging interested persons to consider learning how to write grants that help fund all the services St Vincent de Paul provides in Jackson County.

When Rich was done speaking, President Kathy Begley stopped him from leaving the dais while Len Hebert stepped to the podium. Len thanked Rich for his fifteen years of fundraising and grant writing for St Vincent de Paul. Len and Rich helped raise over \$3,500,000 during our 2003-2006 capital campaign to build our thrift store, remodel our main building, which

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Rich Hansen Awarded continued...

included a new shelter, and made huge infrastructure improvements to our campus. Since then, Rich and our grant writers have won grants for over several million dollars. Because of Rich's tireless efforts in supporting St Vincent de Paul, as well as, his fundraising and leadership of the Medford Parks Foundation, his work in establishing the tiny house project in Medford and his many other community efforts, Len surprised Rich Hansen by announcing him as the recipient of the 2018 St Vincent de Paul Len Hebert Humanitarian of the year Award. Also, Len read a proclamation from Medford Mayor Gary Wheeler declaring Sunday March 11, 2018, Rich Hansen Day. Rich was visibly surprised and honored by the award and thanked everyone for it. Rich received the city proclamation and a plaque from Len and Kathy. Rich said, "My fund raising efforts with St. Vincent's remain both a challenge and a pleasure. I am humbled by this Humanitarian award. My deepest thanks for everyone's support and help. We have developed a great team of grant writers and editors." Rich Hansen's name has been added to a plaque in our office lobby listing all the recipients of the award. Well done Rich and please keep raising those funds!

Christmas Community Dinner

By Kathy Begley

Our annual Christmas Community Dinner was held on Monday, December 25th. Our dining room was decorated for Christmas with green tablecloths, fresh greenery and toys! Over 300 guests were treated to a wonderful meal prepared and served by El Molcajete Mexican Grill.



Santa hands out goodies to all assembled

Our guests were seated and thirty volunteers from the community served our clients with coffee, juice, and a meal of chicken or beef burrito, rice, beans, salad, chips and salsa and dessert. No one left hungry!

Santa visited with our guests and passed out candy canes. Don Krolak, our official Santa, was a great crowd pleaser, as always.

After the meal was finished, gifts were given to everyone by our head elf, Wayne Trefren and his helpers, Trish Trefren, Scott and Brenda Gustafson, and other volunteers. Santa took over our pantry and the shelves were loaded with brightly wrapped toys and clothing for our guests of all ages.

Santa's event team headed by Fran Cox, were on board to help where needed. Len Hebert, Bud and Ray of the Monday Kitchen crew kept the coffee flowing and provided backup help to El Molcajete's crew. The "front of the house" was handled by Socorro Holloway, Tedde Ridley and Kathy Begley. It was a wonderful event and so appreciated by everyone...

Appreciation Luncheon continued...

appreciation dinner.

Our own irrepressible Rosemary and Garth Harrington unleashed the hounds of fun with the ever popular heads or tails ice breaker competition with the lucky winner receiving a wonderful basket of goodies prepared by Ann Close, who also created all the gift bags for the volunteer raffle. Any time you can get a large group of people to put their hands on their heads or buttocks; you know you're having fun.

Council President Kathy Begley next acknowledged all the conferences and special works, who deliver all the services we provide, by having them stand and accept the kudos of applause for another year well done. Though each year gives us all a set of challenges that must be overcome to serve those Jesus sends to us, we did it with his grace and our prayers. Maureen Henderson stood up 5 times for each of the 5 conferences she works with. i.e. the



The wonderful confirmation candidates at the Appreciation Luncheon.

kitchen, the thrift store, the treasurers, the office and social services. To Maureen and all our wonderful volunteers, I say, "Well done good and faithful servants."

Kathy invited Rich Hansen, Vice President of Grant writing, to the podium so he could share his report on raising funds through grant writing. When Rich was done speaking, Kathy stopped him from leaving the dais while Len Hebert stepped to the podium. Len presented Rich Hansen with the 2018 St Vincent de Paul Len Hebert Humanitarian of the year Award and thanked Rich for his fifteen years of fundraising and grant writing for St Vincent de Paul.

To the delight of all present, Kathy Begley introduced the St Vinny's Tap-A Tooties performing a line dance to Elvis' "All Shook Up". The gyrating dancers were Kathy Begley, Socorro Holloway, Tedde Ridley, Fran Davis-Cox, Kris Abromaitis, Wayne and Trish Trefren, and Scott Gustafson.

Fr Ben Tapia, Pastor of Shepherd of the Valley Catholic Church, was asked by Kathy, to offer grace for our meal. Fr Ben thanked all



Fr Ben Tapia gives the meal prayer at the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

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Appreciation Luncheon continued...

Vincentians for what they do to serve the needy as Jesus Christ and St Vincent de Paul asked us to do. His prayer for us all and the dinner we were having, was a true blessing to us and this wonderful gathering we were enjoying.

Dinner was served by the Shepherd of the Valley Confirmation candidates to the delight of the volunteers who were enjoying the entire volunteer dinner gathering. Dinner was made up of green salad, potato salad, baked beans and rolls, accompanied by tender, juicy and stellar tasting brisket that Knights' Tracy Moore and Jon Sandlin cooked to perfection. Vincentians applauded the kitchen crew and all those who made it all possible.

Raffle and door prize winners were drawn to the delight of all during and just after dinner. The two 50/50 raffle winners were also drawn and 2 Vincentians went home just a little heavier in the wallet.

The annual service pins were awarded to all volunteers who have served with St Vincent de Paul for 1 year, 5 years, ten years, 15 year, 20 years, 25 years and 30 years. It was pointed out that Elly Loetcher, who had just turned 90 years old with 15 years as a volunteer at St Vincent de Paul, was no longer able to continue serving. Elly initially volunteered in the social service office and then in the Thrift store. Elly was applauded for reaching 90 years young and for all her many years of stellar service to the needy.

The high stepping Tap-A -Tooties again danced for us all to an uplifting "God Loves It When We Dance". That brought the

audience to applause for the performance and for their weeks of practice in perfecting their dance skills. Thank you Kathy Begley and all your Tap-A-Tooties for their great performances.

The last of the raffle and door prizes were awarded and Kathy Begley thanked everyone for their past and future volunteer service and for being a part of something bigger than us all, doing Jesus Christ work to serve all.



Elly Loetcher retiring 90 years young as a volunteer

Visit our Website at:

Stvincentdepaulmedford.info

Print and Share a Volunteer Application!

Maureen Henderson

By Dennis Mihocko

There is a lady volunteer named Maureen Henderson who is volunteering in 5 different conferences. She is doing this Monday through Friday. This fact was driven home to me while at the volunteer appreciation dinner on Sunday March 11 at Shepherd of the Valley Catholic church social hall. When our President Kathy Begley called on the volunteers of each conference and areas of special works to stand for recognition and joint applause, Maureen stood up 5 different times for each of the 4 conferences and one special works group she volunteers with, i.e. the thrift store, the office, social services, the kitchen and the treasurer's office. I was not the only one who noticed her standing 5 separate times. It was pointed out by loooooong time volunteer Bob Hammer. I don't know of anyone who has volunteered in 5 areas at St Vincent de Paul at the same time as Maureen does. Some days she works morning in the office and then afternoons as a store cashier. Well done good and faithful servant and she plans on continuing. In honor of her heroic actions amongst hundreds of hero volunteers, I wanted to find out a little more about Maureen, so I sat down to asked her some questions. Maureen, I found out was born in L. A. and went to San Diego State and she became an English teacher. She taught in the Imperial Beach area while facing the challenges of educating secondary students in difficult schools. She raised a son and a daughter in the San Diego area. Her son still lives there. In 1988, Maureen retired from teaching and



Maureen Henderson volunteers in 5 different conferences

moved to Medford with her daughter and she went to work at Harry and David until 2011. Though she continued to work seasonally for H&D, she started volunteering at St Vincent de Paul when Frederick Berger of Our Lady Of the Mountain home visitation conference invited her to think about it. She did and has not looked back. Maureen says "I needed something to do and volunteering was an option to not working." There are obviously no vegetables in her family. Though Maureen and her daughter are moving to Grants Pass, she will ride into Medford with her daughter on her way to work. Thank you Maureen for your continued service to us all.

Have a suggestion for an Article or wish to write one?

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