St. Vincent de Paul Rogue Valley Council **Newsletter**

Winter 2022

St. Vincent de Paul - Medford Annual Meeting



Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



Serving the poor and needy of Jackson County with a hand up, not a handout

St. Vincent de Paul Rogue Valley District Council Leadership Team

Council President – John Vinatieri

Executive Committee

Dennis Mihocko Len Hebert Rich Hansen Tom Fleming Socorro Holloway Kathy Begley Don Krolak

VP Facilities Dennis Mihocko
VP Grants Rich Hansen
Treasurer Tom Fleming
Volunteer Coordinator Maureen Swift
Publicity Michael Morgan
Spirituality Fr. Jim Clifford

CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

Sacred Heart / Social Service	Marilyn Gradwell		
Blessed Anna Maria /Store	Ralph Browning		
St. Teresa / Kitchen	Curt Swift		
St. Francis Assisi / Urban Rest Stop	Lee Myers		
St. Anna / Office	Nancy Fleming		
Our Lady of the Mountain / Ashland	John Engelhardt		
Shepherd of the Valley / Pantry	Glen Cote		
St. Anthony / Family Shelter	Dennis Mihocko		
St. Augustine / Home Visit	DonKrolak		





Dear St. Vincent de Paul family and friends,

Sometimes we forget to tell our special family how grateful we are that you are here. I am sure you know we are all volunteers here so none of this possible without you.

We would love to add to our family. If you know someone who might be interested and would like to tour the facility, let us know.

I'm sure you know my presidency is over March 1, 2023. I would like to thank all my SVDP friends for the help they have given me. We have been through a lot these past 3 years, starting with the pandemic and then the terrible fires that hit us. Many people did double duty to keep us operating. Thank you for your service. We are gradually working our way back to the services we provided prior to the pandemic. A special thanks to all the incredible donors from around Jackson County and around our country.

May God bless you all,

John Vinatieri

The History of The Rogue Valley District Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

In December 1981, Fr. Robert "Bob" Krueger announced from the pulpit at Sacred Heart Parish that a large family needed help to replace a hot water heater. They had no money or employment. Several parishioners stepped up to assist this family. That was the beginning of St. Vincent de Paul in Medford, OR.

Lillian Howe was one of those first to help. Lil and her husband Bill and a few others met with the St. Vincent Council in Eugene. After much discussion, a Medford Conference was formed and attached to the Eugene Council. Officially, January 5, 1982, was the start of the Sacred Heart Conference.

The Conference became very busy visiting and screening people in their homes to provide utility payment aid, clothing, food vouchers, and medical bill aid. While many people were showing up at the Rectory, hungry, Fr. Krueger, Fr. Ryan, and Fr. Slater were kept very busy making sandwiches for those in need.

During this, time the Gospel Mission and Salvation Army limited the number of meals served to each person monthly, so the need was great for food support.

In September 1982, Lil Howe asked Fr. Krueger for permission to use the old Sacred Heart rectory for a "Soup Kitchen". By October 8th, after many volunteers helped to rehab the downstairs area, a Grand Opening was held, and volunteers stepped up to bring casseroles, soups, and desserts. At that time Glen and Gloria Ray, long - time volunteers with us, began bringing gallons of homemade soup on a regular basis.

In 1983, the second year of operation, over 10,000 meals were served to the poor and hungry of Medford. By 1985, SVDP averaged 1,500 meals a month. They served singles and families, regardless of race, creed, color, or origin. Many came for the companionship which they lack, and for the warmth in cold, wet winter months. The kitchen was open from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

It seems there was absolutely nothing the St. Vincent de Paul volunteers could not or would not do to aid the poor and needy! Lil felt strongly, "It is one thing to

sit across a desk listening to the homeless, it is another to sit across the table sharing with them, as they eat a meal."

On February 8, 1984, SVDP received a Charity Non-Profit Tax Exempt (501 (c) (3) Status. The first three Conferences that formed the beginning of the Rogue Valley Council were:

1.) Sacred Heart of Jesus	January 5, 1982
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2.) Shepherd of the Valley October 8, 1982

3.) Our Lady of the Mountain (6) March 1984

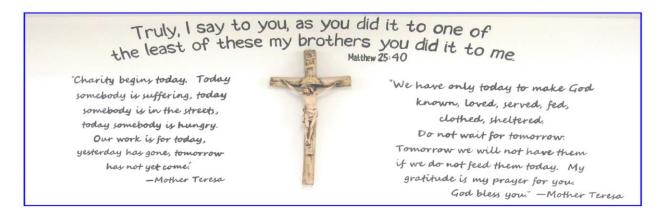
The Rogue Valley Council added 6 more Conferences:

4.)	St. Anne – Office (5)	February 1, 1	1983
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2.	SOV - (reorganized)	ا - Pantr	<i>i</i> (7) July	/ 10, 1983
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The Conference grew from a "soup and sandwich" lunch for the hungry to a multifaceted charity that provides meals, clothing, furniture, toys, medical assistance, food and shelter to poor and homeless families, Ashland Social Services/home visitations, and any other charity assistance as needed.

THERE IS NO CHARITY FOREIGN TO THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT de PAUL



OFFICE NEWS

The office is most often a whirlwind of phone calls: incoming and outgoing, our administrative staff and Conference heads checking for their mail, and computers clicking away responding to emails and searching for Client information. Our office volunteers answer questions regarding all aspects of our work here at SVDP and are always willing to help fellow Volunteers.





Longtime Volunteer, Al Zon is our Monday mail sorter. Al has been a Volunteer at St. Vincent de Paul since its inception in the early 80s. Al was President of our Shelter Conference for many years. Al was the 2014 recipient of the "Len Hebert Humanitarian of the Year Award". Additionally, Al has been recognized by Jackson County as Volunteer of the Month and has been instrumental with our local Medford AA office. He says he just really loves to come to this place that has meant so much to him in his life, to connect with people he has known for decades and to get the

mail ready to be delivered for our unsheltered friends. Al says one of the things he most appreciates about volunteering at St. Vincent's is the positive attitudes and goodness of the volunteers with whom he serves.

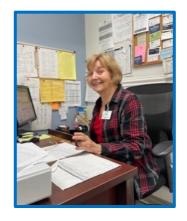
As Al approaches his 90th Birthday, he continues to find purpose and fulfillment volunteering and only misses a day when he is sick. All is a reminder to all of us of the joy it is to be of service to others and to volunteer alongside other dedicated volunteers.

Welcome to Social Services: We're Here to Serve!

Our office is where, five days a week, our counselors interact with community members in need who are reaching out to us. They come to us primarily by telephone and are seeking financial assistance with a utility bill or a rent payment or a housing move-in costs or a medication or some other "out of the box" request. Two days a week, our clients can enter our lobby and request camping gear, personal hygiene supplies, vouchers for clothing and furniture, and assistance with payment for an Oregon ID or Oregon driver's license.

All interactions begin with listening. Information is collected and a request is recorded in our database. Then the counselor determines what action is to be taken to complete the process - which might be a payment, a referral to another agency, a voucher or products, or sometimes a denial. There are times when the process and outcome is straightforward, often completed in one visit. Other times it takes one or two phone calls (and/or emails) and can require several days.

Our workday begins with prayer, and the day itself perhaps will become a prayer as we are challenged to be efficient but patient, compassionate but challenging - especially when understanding is elusive - creative, encouraging and hope-giving. Our work is never dull! I would venture to say that by the end of the day, we walk out the door grateful for the opportunity to serve, grateful for the conversations and interactions we had, and grateful for the assistance we were able to give and the lessons learned - lessons often in humility!



Long-time Social Service Volunteer, Marilyn Brady truly lives the St. Vincent de Paul spirit, to help all who come to us in need. Marilyn's commitment to help the poor and needy of Jackson County always encourages her fellow counselors and volunteers to go the extra mile!

Thank you Marilyn for all you do!

"People Give Money to People":

A Lesson in Fundraising

Yes, people give money to people. When hunting dollars for St. Vincent de Paul, we all know it pays to meet the local folks who have a hand in the decision-making. That person just might listen to the story of what St. Vincent de Paul contributes to the local community. This approach takes a bit more time and effort than simply firing off a grant proposal to a distant entity, but anyone involved in writing grants for St. Vincent de Paul will tell you that it definitely pays off.

It definitely paid off recently for Our Lady of the Mountain's St. Vincent de Paul Conference, serving Ashland and Talent. In September, John Engelhardt, conference president, and Vicky Weiss, volunteer grant writer, were invited by the bank manager to come to the Ashland branch of First Interstate Bank to meet the new bank manager as Debra Ingram, the current bank manager whom they knew, announced she was retiring. When John and Vicky came to the bank on a Friday afternoon, a big surprise awaited them. They were greeted by the bank staff, huddled together, all wearing special tee shirts and carrying balloons, to announce that Our Lady of the Mountain's St. Vincent de Paul Conference was among 40 organizations from a pool of 400 nominees from 14 states to receive a grant of \$25,000 from the Bank's foundation as part of its inaugural "Believe in Local" campaign.

Prior to this award, John and Vicky had made it a point to meet with the branch manager, Debra Ingram, to let her know about the work of St. Vincent de Paul in Ashland and Talent. John and Vicky updated her regularly on the work St. Vincent de Paul was doing in the community, particularly with victims of the Almeda fire that destroyed over 2500 residences and businesses in Ashland, Talent, Phoenix, and Medford in 2020. The local First Interstate Bank was also well aware of the depressed economy in the area resulting from the closing of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the economic driver of the local economy, in the wake of the Covid pandemic. Prior to this "Believe in Local" grant, Our Lady of the Mountain conference had received several grants of \$2,500 awarded by the local branch. While we have long been grateful to First Interstate Bank for their

continuing support, adding a "0" on to the end of the usual grant amount was a most incredible and welcomed surprise.

When bank manager Debra Ingram was notified that the First Interstate Bank Foundation was launching this new grant opportunity, she was so well informed about the work St. Vincent de Paul was doing in Ashland and Talent that she was prepared to nominate the organization for one of these new grants. As she put it, "Giving back to the places we call home is central to who we are as a community bank. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to further support Our Lady of the Mountain St. Vincent de Paul in its work to better the Ashland community." She and the other employees of First Interstate Bank in Ashland were nearly as excited as John and Vicky were when they arrived at the bank. As John Engelhardt put it, "Having a personal connection with Debra was the driving force behind us receiving this grant. We are delighted to be the recipient of this significant investment in our work for the benefit of our community. We truly believe in local. Now it is our job to be good stewards of their contribution." "People give money to people" proved to be true once again!

Vicky Weiss, Grant writer Our Lady of the Mountain





President John Vinatieri presenting a donation to Social Service President Marilyn Gradwell from Zion Lutheran Church of Medford

"Zion Lutheran Church has been a part of the Rogue Valley for over 125 years. This year the congregation made the difficult decision to close its doors. Though we will no longer be a physical presence in the Rogue Valley the remaining congregation wanted to leave a legacy to honor the memory of Zion Lutheran."

Debi Bowman
Church Council President

We have been blessed to have been chosen to receive a large donation from our friends at Zion Lutheran. We acknowledge their desire to use the funds to benefit the poor and needy of the Rogue Valley and are honored to help continue their work of charity.



Donations Received

In Memory of

Patrick & Diana Clancy Ramona DeVaul

Dale Formanek Thom Gilsdorf

John Hiles Danny Hochstatter

Frankie Krayer Roberta Laber

Jim Leroy Ed & Peggy Morgan

Mary P. Nelson Jane O'Connor

Ted Peplinski Ron Vinatieri

James (Jim) Walker David R. Warren

Carl Wieland

In Honor of

Lee & Connie Erickson

Jim Hardman

In our Prayers

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

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Annual Meeting

Our Annual SVDP Meeting was held this year on Sunday, July 24th. It was wonderful to be able to gather in our Dining room, like we did pre-pandemic! Over 100 Volunteers joined in to make this meeting extra special. Music was provided by Scott Perry and Buzz Thielman, and they played all our favorites (Oldies and Goodies).



Our meeting started with the introduction of our Surprise MC's...Retired volunteers

Rosemary and Garth Harrington. Everyone was thrilled to see them back at St. Vinny's.

Of course, we got things started by playing "Heads & Tails", always a crowd pleaser! President John Vinatieri welcomed all the Volunteers and thanked them for all the work they do to make our mission successful. Fr. Jim blessed our meal, our work and all our volunteers.

Our "Business" segment was started with Past President Kathy Begley giving a brief history of St. Vincent de Paul Medford, from its humble beginning to our present campus and the many services we offer to help the poor and needy of Jackson County.

A short video, "Throwback Sunday" was shown, and many past volunteers were remembered. It was good to look back at some of the things we have accomplished and the volunteers that made them happen!



Our Conferences were recognized one by one...each asked to stand as John and Kathy took turns briefly stating the purpose of each Conference and what they do. We often hear from a volunteer that they were not aware of what a different conference did. This was our opportunity to showcase all the hard work done by our volunteers.

As our meeting was ended, Socorro Holloway, Past President/Hispanic Outreach, introduced Jeannette Bournival and her Line Dance group, *Happy Feet*. The *Happy Feet* group entertained us with two lively numbers: "Boot Scoot Boogie" and "Lonely Drummer". The group is led by Jeanette, who teaches Line Dance at the Medford Senior Center and Rogue Valley Manor.



Raffle prize drawings were interspersed throughout the afternoon and over 20

volunteers won a surprise! Each volunteer was given a raffle ticket at their place setting. As always, we had a 50/50 raffle. We always split the pot and give half to each ticket winner. Our volunteers are so special, one winner gave ½ of their prize back to SVDP and the other winner donated ALL their winnings!

Our dinner was served buffet style, a summer meal of Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Potato Salad, Green Salad, Pasta Salad, French Fries, chips and all the fixings. Dessert was lots of chocolate and sweet treats.

We finished the afternoon by awarding service pins, a special moment for all who earned them.



Join our Vincentian Family Volunter

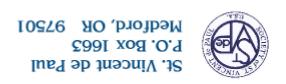


Thirty-five dedicated Kitchen volunteers, working in small teams, have been preparing restaurant quality lunches for approximately 140 clients daily, Monday through Friday. We have recently begun to open our dining room for clients to enjoy their lunch out of the elements. We continue to serve our meals in to-go boxes to accommodate clients who wish to take their meal with them. Tuesdays and Thursdays seem to be the busiest, due to Mail delivery, but overall the number served seems to be increasing.

We receive many thanks from our clients. We have great volunteers who work hard each day to plan and prepare delicious entrees for all to enjoy.

WE ARE ONE BIG FAMILY. Come and see!





St. Vincent de Paul

Light the Winter Fires

Campaign for 2022

A Special Thank you to all our Supporters of this year's appeal

