

St. Vincent de Paul

Winter 2016

Volume 10, Issue 4



Inside this issue:

Letter from President	2
Urban Rest Stop	3
Conference Changes	4
Volunteers Clean-up	4
Christmas Day Dinner	5
Aloha From Maui	6
Christmas Volunteer Party	9

Society of St. Vincent de Paul - Rogue Valley District

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



By Dennis Mihocko

On February 14th, 2016, St Vincent de Paul volunteers gathered in The Inn at the Commons' Banquet room to receive the appreciation of each other on behalf of all our supporters. Vincentian Love was apparent as this was also Valentine's Day; how appropriate. It seemed as if everyone felt truly appreciated. More volunteers were able to attend, I believe, since the event was a luncheon held from 1230-3pm, so driving at night was not an issue. Our President Socorro Holloway and Administrative Assistant Kathy Begley worked for months to make this special day happen seamlessly and memorably. Rosemary Harrington was our flawless emcee with help from

Volunteers fill the Banquet Room at the Inn At the Commons, formerly Red Lion, in Medford

her ever irrepressible husband Garth, guiding us through an agenda that was inclusive, yet efficient in making all feel welcomed and valued. Rosemary and Garth did what they do so well, by running the icebreaker "Heads or Tails", with winner Fr Mike Walker, pastor of Shepherd of the Valley Catholic Church, receiving a lovely basket made by Ann Close, counselor and school supplies program assistant. The rest of her marvelous baskets were given as door prizes to lucky winners throughout the afternoon. Fr Justus graciously led us all in thanksgiving for our food, as well as, for our wonderful Society of St

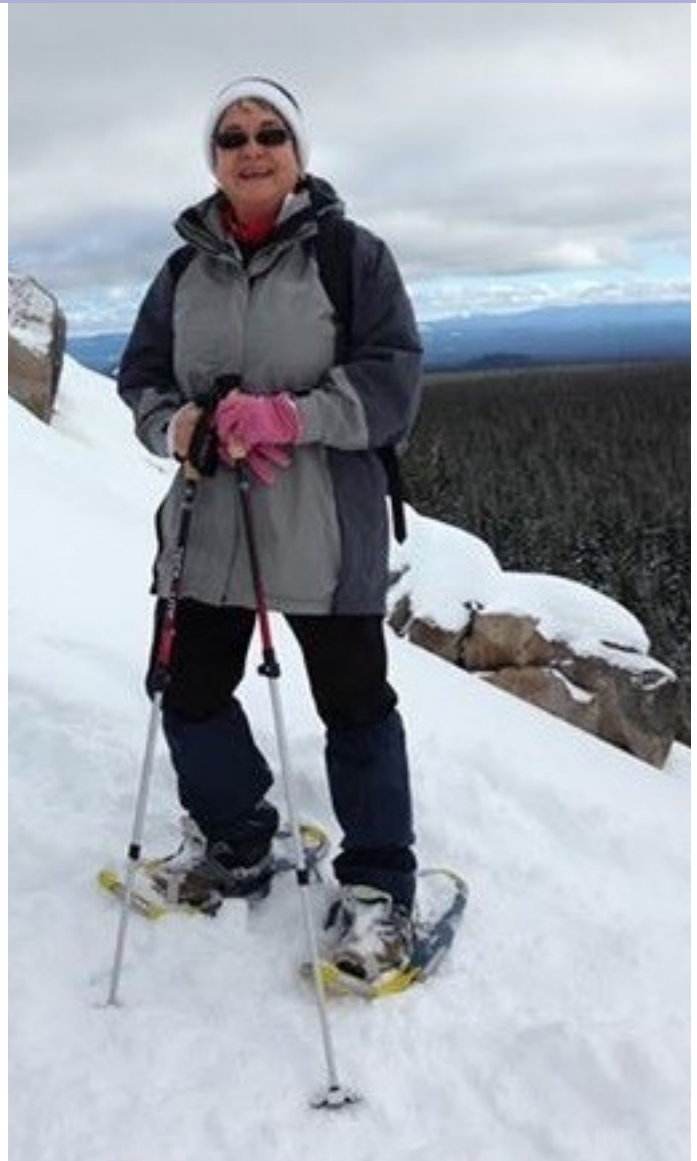
(Continued on page 8)

Letter from the President

Dear Vincentian Family,
2015 was a year of many challenges for me. Losing Bill, my beloved husband of 25 years, left a void in my life. I try to fill this emptiness by volunteering here at St. Vincent de Paul, trying to make a difference in someone's life. Volunteering is a wonderful gift we give to ourselves, especially the happiness we feel when we have done something good for others. When we share what talent God has bestowed on us, it can make us smile, especially if doing that good deed was challenging.

I see St. Vincent de Paul volunteers always trying to do good for others. The demands we face daily are incredible and the number of people with mental health, anger, and addiction issues is increasing. We need to be understanding of their needs while providing for our own safety and that of other volunteers, clients and customers. I find that staying cool, calm and collected tend to diffuse most ugly situations.

I do believe God challenges our strength, understanding and wisdom in dealing with difficult situations and problems. I have decided to try and maintain a positive attitude and that Life is beautiful. Every morning I wake up and thank God for all I have; for all His blessings like my home, my family, my health, my friends, that I live in Oregon, that I can volunteer at St. Vincent de Paul. I know He is always beside me and takes care of me. When I hike the trails around our wonderful Rogue Valley, I see the beauty of our mountains, lakes and rivers that are a gift God gave us to enjoy. When hiking or snow shoeing I find peace, I refresh my soul, and I give the heavens above



Socorro Holloway snowshoeing at Diamond Lake this February

more than just a glance.

Friends, St. Vincent de Paul exists because of you and I appreciate and love having you as volunteers.

Sincerely,

Socorro

Urban Rest Stop Goal Exceeded!

By Rich Hansen

Fund raising finished 2015 on a very high note. We met, and exceeded, our \$150,000 goal to expand the Urban Rest Stop (URS)! Thanks to an extremely generous \$76,000 contribution from Providence Medford Medical Center, we raised \$151,000 for the badly needed project. Father Jim Clifford, Director of Mission & Spiritual Care and Chris Pizzi, Chief Operating Officer for Providence, presented the check to Council President Socorro Holloway in mid-December.

In addition to Providence, we received \$30,000 from the Oregon Community Foundation of Medford; \$25,000 from the Ben B. Cheney Foundation of Tacoma, WA, and \$20,000 from the Collins Foundation of Portland. Plans review and the permitting process has begun on the URS project. The work will begin as soon as the necessary permits are in hand and construction should be finished this summer.

The \$19,400 originally pledged from the new Jackson County Christian Charities golf tournament, and the \$30,000 from the Light the Winter Fires luncheon will now be redirected to upgrades to our kitchen and air conditioning system.

Steve Vincent, Avista's Oregon Regional Business Manager, secured a \$5,000 gift, which will be shared by the Ashland and Central Point Home Visit



Charlotte Martinson, Kitchen Manager, Avista's Victor Bautista, Avista's Steve Vincent, Fr Carmello Mifsud, and Socorro Holloway, Council President. (L to R)

Conferences. Both need a new laptop to use in the field.

As the cold, wet winter weather set in, we received several donations for sleeping bags and outdoor gear. St. Vincent's received \$5,000 from the West Family Foundation of

(Continued on page 4)



Chris Pizzi, COO of Providence, Fr Jim Clifford, Director of Mission & Spiritual Care at Providence, Rich Hansen, SVDP Grant Writing VP, Socorro Holloway, Council President, and Kathy Sangar, Urban Rest Stop Volunteer and Home Visit Counselor. (L to R)

Urban Rest Stop... continued

Jacksonville and \$500 from the St. Martin de Porres Trust of Portland. West also gave St. Vincent's \$1,500 for Christmas gift baskets. Other Social Service donations included \$2,500 from the Coquille Tribe, \$2,500 from the Chaney Family Foundation, and \$1,000 from the Southern Oregon Hospitalists, (an Asante-based medical practice). Pantry donations included \$5,000 from the Raymond Foundation, \$1,000 from the Dwyer Charitable Trust, and \$380 from Providence. FEMA gave us \$16,960 for the Pantry and \$4,849 for the Kitchen. Finally, the Council received \$1,000 from the Siskiyou Outback Trail Runners and \$9,232 in a stock sale from the Robert D. Coleman Trust.

Conference Changes

As many of you may be aware, there have been some changes in our conferences. The Store has gained an excellent replacement for Thrift Store President John Hoffman, who left at the end of 2015. Ralph Browning is our new Thrift Store Conference President, so please welcome and thank him for assuming that role. He has been doing a wonderful job since he was elected in 2015 as I can attest to from my experience with him. His involvement with the Knights of Columbus, Shepherd of the Valley, Kiwanis Club, City of Medford as well as St Vincent de Paul has been legendary. He is a blessing to all. Thank you Ralph for over filling some big shoes. We all appreciate it.

(Continued on page 10)

Volunteers Clean-up SVDP Campus

By Bill Hunt

As you may know, the Saint Vincent de Paul campus consists of several acres of buildings, warehouses, parking lots, and the Thrift Store. Included are several hundred shrubs, trees, and plants, which add their green foliage, summer flowers, and fall color to the landscape. Dennis Mihocko and President Socorro Holloway have been keen on keeping the property in tip-top shape and safe for the clients, the volunteers, and the public.

So, on Sunday, October 11, Socorro's friends, some 30 in number, including a large Hispanic contingent, turned out for a general landscape spruce-up party. We picked up trash, pruned shrubs and trees, pulled weeds, and 4 hours later, the grounds looked well manicured. This group has gathered the past two years, spring and fall, to do this chore, and their labor is much appreciated by all of us. Special mention should go to Jim Hoitink, the volunteer who cleans the parking lots each Sunday. Great job, Jim! To top off our day, Socorro treated all to Wild River's pizza. Be sure to admire our clean and neat campus.

Submitted by Bill Hunt (editor's note: Bill Hunt is a retired construction educator and Master Gardener, along with his wife, who is our council secretary. Bill also volunteers in our thrift store fix-it shop and helps to maintain our facilities, as well as, our landscaping.)

Christmas Day Dinner

By Dennis Mihocko

Christmas comes every year with an abundance of expectations and cheer for most of us. For those who may lack for necessities and fellowship, there is a place in Medford where hundreds of people gather to experience the Spirit of Christmas. I am speaking of St Vincent de Paul's Annual Christmas Day Dinner.

Approximately fifty volunteers, including some of our regular volunteers, came on Christmas Day to set up the dining room and help Sergio Arias, his wife Sara, of El Molcajete Restaurant, as well as, their sons and their daughter Maria, to serve a delicious Mexican meal, jointly provided by the El Molcajete Restaurant and St. Vincent de Paul. In prior years, numerous volunteers would come together days in advance, to prep for the usual Christmas fare of turkey or ham, or both, with trimmings and sides. During 2014 Sergio, the proprietor of El Molcajete, and his daughter, Maria, came to St. Vincent's with a unique proposal. Sergio suggested that he would like to donate 100 Mexican meals to be served at St Vincent de Paul on Christmas Day. Sergio and Maria soon found out that over 300 people were usually served on Christmas day. Within a few days, Sergio and St. Vincent's agreed that he and his family would help supply the needed Mexican food to serve all the 317 Christmas day guests. At the 2015 Christmas Day dinner, again, over 300 meals were served to a very appreciative group of diners.

With the food for Christmas day pre-arranged, scheduling of volunteers was



Santa handing out candy canes during Christmas Day Dinner

effectively handled by our volunteer coordinator, Ginger Vanek. Christmas presents for children and adults alike, have been given out each year thanks to Wayne Trefren and his helper elves. This year, as in the past, students from Sacred Heart School and Sacred Heart Church worked for months to collect and package many of the presents. Mae Richardson Elementary School in Central Point, provided much needed socks and hygiene items, and an anonymous donor provided pillow cases filled with personal care items and other Christmas fare.

On the big day, Don Krolak brought Santa Claus to St Vincent de Paul, and Santa greeted, spoke with, and gave out presents and candy canes to the thankful guests. Wayne Trefren, his wife, Trish, along with one of our counselors, Marta Wilson and others, played elf and resupplied Santa with plenty of Christmas gifts.

With the festivities in full swing, and lots of

(Continued on page 6)



Santa giving gifts and candy canes to Christmas Day diners

Christmas Day Dinner... continued

cheer to go around, a local TV news station came and interviewed one of Sergio's sons about El Molcajete Restaurant providing the prepared food.

It was nice to see a continued Christmas tradition started years ago by Leo and Rita Dull who served the kitchen conference for so many years.

The dining room was abuzz with joyous activity, while music was playing in the background to help the spirit of the season be maintained. There was a feeling of camaraderie and joy that blessed all who were there, and I think it provided a gift that money cannot buy, nor time steal away, **LOVE.**

Thank you, Sergio, Sara, Maria, and family for giving of your time, talent, and food to make a Christmas meal come alive. And thanks to all the volunteers who gave of their Christmas day, to help make someone else's Christmas be one to remember. **God Bless Us Everyone.**

Aloha from Maui

By Kathy Begley

On October 8th, Christina Wernecke, our Office manager and President of St. Anna's Conference, married Travis Rider.

They were married on White Rock Beach, MAUI! The best part was that I got to be with Christina and Travis for all the festivities.

We arrived in Maui on Monday afternoon and settled in our respective Hotels. Chris, Travis, and Dee, Travis' Mother, stayed at the Grand Wailea, and I stayed at the Marriot in Wailea; just up the beach from the wedding party.

Tuesday evening the group attended a Luau at the Royal Lahaina with lots of food and good times. Wednesday was a shop 'til you drop and lay by pool kind of day. Absolutely beautiful place to be lazy and just relax. All too soon it was Thursday -- the big day! Christina had everything planned to the minute: hair dresser, makeup, wedding gown freshly pressed after a long flight. I had an opportunity to take lots of pictures of the pre-game show. Travis mostly looked bored by the makeup and hairspray, etc. Finally it was time for Travis to get ready, 5 minutes for a guy, as he appeared from the bathroom. Christina chastised him for wearing the wrong shorts; not the ones she had picked out. Changing was a quick fix. It was then time for Christina to get into her wedding clothes, which was way more than Travis had to wear.

Dee and I helped Christina to dress, Corset, slip, dress, shrug...lots of hooks and buttons. Everyone was ready, and we began the journey to White Rock Beach; just a short drive.

We caravanned, parked, and walked to the most incredible beach that seemed to be a mile long crescent of white sand. There were, of course, a smattering of surfers and a few people enjoying the serenity of the day, but no preacher.

We waited for a photographer, wedding planner, and preacher, someone who had been scheduled for this event. After a few minutes, Travis and his sister walked to the other end of the beach to see if we were in the wrong place. We were at the wrong end of the beach! Back into the cars and back down the road to another entrance of the beach.

We finally got organized, 45 minutes late, but everyone was there! Christina and Travis stood in a circle of flowers on the beach surrounded by their family. The preacher sang and played his ukulele. They exchanged vows, and at the end of the ceremony, Travis and Christina were each given a tall, slender vase with colored sand. One was pink and the other was blue. Together they held a larger, empty vase. As the preacher described the sand, they each poured their sand together into the larger vase. "As the sands are joined together, they cannot be separated..." a lovely visual of the Marriage bond.

Lots of photos later, we all gathered for a wedding meal at the Grand Wailea Hotel. It was a lovely evening in a special place. On October 17th, Christina and Travis had a reception at the Inn at the Commons, and many volunteers joined in the celebration of

(Continued on page 9)

Volunteer Appreciation... continued

Vincent de Paul, of which we are all a part. Kathy Begley's picture and music presentation was a production of love and a commentary on who we are. It featured a video of our own Tap-A-Tooties , Kathy Begley, Maureen Henderson, Pat Dumas, Socorro Holloway, Tedde Ridley, when they performed at a Light the Winter Fires event a few years ago. Kathy also led us in a game of "Know Your Board", with childhood pictures of council board members, and everyone tried to match the picture to the board members listed. Dave Moosman, our spiritual advisor emeritus, won a nice basket for his perceptive eye.

The slide show keyed in on what we do and who we are, with glimpses of numerous Vincentians at work and at play. It was very well received and provided us all with a sense of pride for what was accomplished over the past and humility for the service that Jesus Christ calls us to do.

Socorro Holloway, our beloved fearless leader and Council President, thanked all the volunteers and their conferences and areas of service, by having them stand up for recognition. She announced that the Urban Rest Stop is in the process of becoming a conference which will bring our total to nine conferences. Our volunteer treasurers, barbers, Dental program volunteers, Jimmy (who cleans our parking lot), Gerry (our computer genius), Michael (our newsletter, website, Facebook, and photographer guru), Tom (our bike fixer), Don and Loren (our shed give-away people), along with many others, were all acknowledged and praised for their endless good works.



Fr Mike Walker (L) and counselor Norma Sanchez (R) compete in "Heads or Tails" with Rosemary Harrington ready to announce the winner.

The presentation of service pins was made to Vincentians with 1-5 years of dedicated service, 5 to 10 years, 10-15 years, 15-20 years, 20-25 years, 25-30 years, and 30 years and more. It seems like such a little token of esteem for all that our volunteers do. But a blend of the humility of a servant and the pride of being part of something so much greater than ourselves, inspires us to keep coming back day after day.

The 2 winners of our much awaited 50-50 raffle were finally drawn, with the help of our own "Vanna White", Kathy Begley, who also drew the winners of our door prizes. The winners were glad to receive a sizeable sum, followed by a round of applause for them and their luck.

Thank you is so inadequate to express the sentiment for the love shown to those we serve by all of our volunteers day after day and year after year ; but it will have to do.
THANK YOU.

Aloha from Maui... continued



Travis and Christina getting married on the sands of Maui

their wedding. Definitely a Hawaiian theme was carried out with everyone wearing “Maui wear” and colorful leis! Dinner, dancing, and lots of toasts to the Bride and Groom! It was an honor for me to be able to participate in such a wonderful event. May God continue to bless you both. Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Travis and Christina Rider!

Christmas Volunteer Party

By Dennis Mihocko

On December 20, 2015, Socorro Holloway, our fantastic Council President, was the Emcee of our 2nd Annual Volunteer Christmas Party. Hopefully, it is safe to say we have a new tradition. Socorro was in familiar form with plenty of fun activities, prizes and praise for another wonderful year of service to others that all our conference volunteers provide so well.

Santa Claus was present to give each of us a white and red sugary crooked treat. Don Krolak, Needy Meds and Augustinian home visit Vincentian, however, was noticeably absent during this time frame.

(Continued on page 10)

Christmas Volunteer Party... continued

The food was mostly from Costco, thanks to the help of Kathy Begley, Socorro Holloway, Fran Davis Cox, and other helpful Vincen-tians. It was nice because all volunteers could enjoy the festivities with minimal im-po-sition on these kind souls who facilitated the food and beverages for the soiree.

Many door prize winners were treated to marvelous baskets made up by Ann Close, and all were enjoying the anticipation just be-fore the next winning number was called.

The celebration was definitely accented by a fun atmosphere with a great deal of socializ-ing that we always do well, but never often enough.

Len Hebert, our own indomitable, if not well practiced French tenor, led us all in the fond-ly remembered, and sometimes cacophonous version of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." Though the rather new acoustical tiled dining room ceiling, made conversation more feasi-ble, it did not add to the lively and upbeat vo-cals of this Christmas favorite. It doesn't seem to be Christmas without hearing "The Twelve Days of Christmas", regardless of the rendition.

For Len's musical efforts, and to help with his golf game, Socorro presented him with a toy golf club and ball, and she gave Dennis Mi-hocko an executive putter set, just because he needs all the help he can get.

The gathering was very well attended, and considering those from whom I heard, it was a total success. It was a truly, Merry Vincen-tian Christmas.



Volunteers play "Heads or Tails" at the Christmas Volunteer Party

Conference Changes... continued

With the retirement of Debbie and Bob Chris-tian as President and Vice President of the Pantry last September, Beth Hunter, Jim Betschart and Glen Cotes have met the chal-lenges of running the daily and monthly opera-tions of such a vital service as the Pantry. From sorting and bagging needed groceries to organizing semi-monthly food distributions and bi-monthly Medford Food Project collec-tions and food pickups from various locations, they are constantly there along with the many other volunteers, making what they do well choreographed. Thanks to all of them for their dedication and hard work.

The Urban Rest Stop (i.e. URS) has been growing very fast over the last several years. With the remodeling of the existing facility where many come to shower and do laundry and the soon to be built URS expansion, capac-ity will again increase and bring more people in need of these basic services. Under the leader-ship of Lee and TC Meyers, the URS has thrived and continued to serve more people all the time. Because of this excellent ongoing

(Continued on page 11)

Conference Changes... continued

service, it has been decided by President Socorro Holloway and the council, to make the URS a conference as defined by the St Vincent de Paul rule. The process is not quick but in every sense the URS will now be treated as the St Francis of Assisi Urban Rest Stop conference with Lee Meyers as President, TC Meyers as Vice President and Treasurer and Vickie Vehrs as Secretary. Thank you and all the volunteers who make this irreplaceable oasis what it has become; a glimmer of hope.

We will be saying thank you and continued blessings to Christina (Wernecke) Rider as she transitions to the Social service conference to become a counselor and eventually moving along with her new husband Travis to Portland probably. They are seeking careers that will take them out of our area. Christina has been our Office Conference President for three years now and has past the reins to volunteers Nancy Fleming and Laurel Alexander, who will collectively continue to make the daily functions of our office work magically and efficiently. Thank you all for all you do. Thank you, Christina, for your constant efforts and excellent leadership of the office. We will miss you and always remember your smile and laugh.

Volunteer Appreciation Photos



(L to R) Tedde Ridley with Ann and Loren Close at the prize table.



Volunteers enjoying the fun time together!



Kathy Begley and Socorro Holloway show off some of the prizes

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



NONPROFIT ORG

US POSTAGE

PAID

MEDFORD, OR

PERMIT 348

SVDP Hours

Office & Social Services

541-772-3828

Monday—Friday, 10 - 2

Thrift Store

541-779-3648

Monday—Saturday, 10 - 4

Dining Room

Monday—Saturday, 11 - 1

Pantry

Last two Fridays of each month, 10 - 1

La Clinica

**Medical - Monday, 9am—1pm,
warehouse in rear parking lot**

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

Dental Van

Call office for hours, 541-772-3828, ext 6

Large furniture pickup

Call store to schedule, first floor only

Full Color Newsletter

See the newsletter in full color at

stvincentdepaulmedford.info

Email stvincentmedford@gmail.com for full color newsletter as a pdf file in your email instead of being sent by snail mail. Please put "SVDP newsletter" in the email subject line and include your full name(s). You'll receive it days before it arrives by mail, and save printing and shipping costs to SVDP.

Newsletter Editors/Design:

Dennis Mihocko, Kathy Begley, Rich Hansen, Socorro Holloway and Michael Morgan

