



HEARTS —WITH-A— MISSION

A Community With Heart

SPRING/SUMMER 2024



Thank you Community Partners!



Thank you Medford Rogues!

Giveback Night with the Medford Rogues was a blast! The game was great and the fireworks were spectacular. Meeting with new and current supporters was a highlight for us!



A heartfelt thank you to the Junior League of Jackson County and all the people who supported the incredible Kentucky Derby event!



We have many youth who love a comforting cup of tea. Thank you to Full Leaf Tea for donating an array of non-caffeinated blends for our residents to enjoy.



Thank you Pacific Power Foundation for your incredible generosity and support in helping us continue our mission.

Message from our Chief Program Officer



Dear Friends and Supporters,

"Every child deserves a home." This idea, planted by our founder Kevin Lamson, has blossomed into what we now know as Hearts With A Mission (HWAM).

Our journey began with a focus on providing safe havens for kids off the streets with our 24/7 Youth Shelter for youth aged 10-17. We quickly realized this was just the initial seedling of a much larger mission. Our early efforts needed nurturing and support from our amazing community and dedicated staff to grow strong and meet the needs of those we serve.

In 2014, we sowed the seeds for Safe Families for Children (SFFC). Through a network of dedicated volunteers, this program supports parents in crisis while keeping children safe. Today, SFFC has taken root in Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lincoln, Douglas, and Coos counties, with a primary goal of keeping families together.

As we nurtured our mission, we identified a need to cultivate life skills for foster kids. In 2017, we introduced the Independent Living Program (ILP) in Jackson and Josephine counties, providing young people with the tools they need to thrive.

Recognizing that young adults aged 18-21 were falling through the cracks, we transformed our original youth shelter into a Transitional Living Program (TLP) home in 2020. This program focuses on four key outcomes: stable housing, permanent connections, social/emotional well-being, and employment/education, ensuring these young adults can flourish. We now serve young adults through two TLP homes, one in Medford and one in Grants Pass.

Our growth continued. As we saw the devastating effects of social isolation, we turned our attention to another vulnerable group. Our Hearts for Seniors program aims to nurture and build relationships with our elder population, offering companion care and ensuring they are not forgotten.

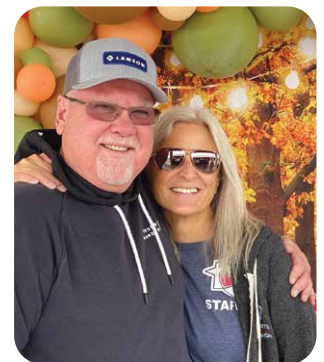
At Hearts With A Mission, we are continually stretching and growing, driven by the belief that everyone deserves a safe place to call home and the support of a loving community to thrive. Thank you for being part of our mission, helping us plant seeds of hope and cultivating a brighter future for all. We could not do this without your unwavering support.

With gratitude,



Sharon Rush

Chief Program Officer
Hearts With A Mission



Founder, Kevin Lamson and Sharon helping set up for the 2023 HWAM annual benefit auction.



THANK YOU SUPERHERO RUN SPONSORS!

You made this event possible!

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Thank you to all our Volunteers
and Community Heroes!



Thank you to everyone who came out to support us!



Great job to all our
race participants!



A season of changes

Riley came to the youth shelter at a very difficult time. She lost her dad at a young age and now her mom, Rebecca, was struggling with a terminal cancer diagnosis. Rebecca had only weeks to live and her stepdad, Jeff, was busy navigating the crisis. Riley was grappling with persistent behavioral issues at school and home.

Anticipating the inevitable loss during her stay with us at the shelter, we took a proactive approach by assembling a therapeutic team, specializing in grief counseling.

Our family counselor played a pivotal role in facilitating effective communication within the family, which had been strained for years. When the time came for Rebecca's passing, the

support system was already in place.

Riley has now successfully transitioned back home. A strong bond has since developed between Riley and Jeff, and the family has availed therapeutic services not just for Riley but for the entire family.

"She was a sweet kid going through a hard time." Bryan Wenzel, Shelter Manager

Ongoing updates reveal that despite great loss, the family is growing closer together with each passing day.

We were so blessed to support them through this very difficult season in their lives.



Turning her space into her place

Amanda is a precious young adult who just moved into her first apartment. She was so excited! When Safe Families put out a "needs list" to our Josephine County volunteer community, they jumped in to help her out.

One day, while she had a meeting followed by work, we set everything up for her - a huge surprise! It was a joy putting together the new dining room table that one of our supporters purchased for her. With her bed frame and table all set up, she wouldn't have to sleep or eat on the floor anymore.



Our wonderful supporters filled her kitchen with dishes, utensils, cooking bowls, and dishcloths. They provided blankets, a dining room table, beds, and bedding. She was thrilled and beyond grateful.

We are truly grateful for your continued support of Safe Families for Children and Hearts With A Mission. Your contributions, whether big or small, have made a profound difference. Thank you for helping us create a community of hope and support in Josephine County.



It's not easy, but it's worth it

Jordan was down on his luck, discouraged about life, and feeling alone when he was invited to join the Hearts With A Mission rafting trip. He didn't feel he had much to lose and joined for the 3-day adventure. As the therapist encouraged each participant to consider their goals for the weekend, he determined to take every new opportunity that came his way and not say "no" to anything. (In truth, even coming on the trip was way outside of his comfort zone!)

During the three days, he learned more about "comfort zones, stretch zones, and panic zones" as each of the participants experienced things



like falling out of the raft, swimming through a rapid, or paddling a kayak through rapids for the first time ever. Jordan's approach was much the same as in every other aspect of life; "just go with the flow." This was fine for his first day on the raft. But then, he was asked to take a kayak and didn't say "no"! Others yelled at him again and again to "square up" to the rapids, and to think about what line he would take. He would smile and nod... and go down the rapid backward, failing to paddle at all! But when he flipped, he was faced with a sudden awareness that he could NOT simply go with the flow any longer! He had to think and act

quickly and decisively, and only he would be responsible for the outcomes of his own behavior!

As Jordan reflects on his experience a year later, he routinely refers to this adventure as the happiest time he remembers, the most fun he's had, and the best relationships he's experienced. He continues to learn from the metaphors he experienced there, including that moment in the water beside his flipped kayak, and realizing that he had to choose right then whether to get back into the boat or give up... and how life is a lot like that: it keeps on going, and there's no going back. You can be intentional about your decisions and set yourself up for success or find yourself tossed by the whims of the waves and flailing for safety. It's not easy... but it's worth it!

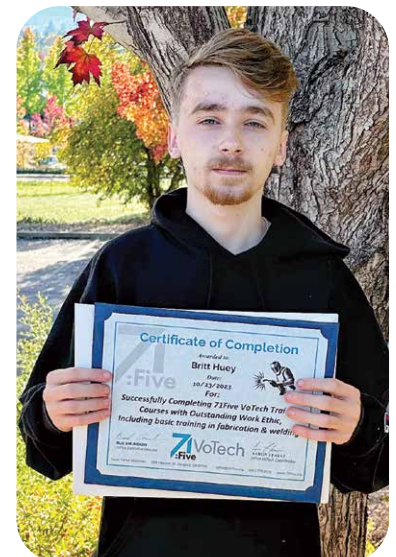


Hard work and dedication pay off for Britt

In June 2023, Britt joined our Grants Pass TLP program. Initially very quiet and withdrawn, Britt gradually opened up through positive reinforcement in case management, skills training, house meetings, outreach projects, and fun adventures provided by our program.

During his time at HWAM, Britt achieved significant milestones. He graduated from 71Five VoTech, an Oregon BOLI-certified pre-apprenticeship career exploration program in Grants Pass, where he gained hands-on, project-based learning and essential life skills training. He also received his GED through Project Youth +, became employed, started building his credit, and learned to snowboard thanks to generous donations from Mt. Ashland. Recently, he passed his Drivers Education course at the college and obtained his driver's license.

Britt has now received his HUD vouchers and housing assistance through United Community Action Network in order to move into his own place. We are incredibly proud of his dedication and hard work. His accomplishments are a testament to his amazing abilities and determination. Congratulations, Britt!



Mentorship makes a difference

Eleven-year-old Alexander, found a new friend and mentor in Tim through the Safe Families for Children (SFFC) program in Klamath Falls. Alexander's mom, Stephanie, needed a break from homeschooling and sought social interaction opportunities for her son.

Tim first learned about the mentorship need at a church presentation by SFFC staff. "I grew up without a father in my life," Tim shared. "I think it's very important for somebody to be there." Inspired by his own experiences, Tim decided to become a mentor and was paired with Alexander.



Initially, Alexander was shy and would often hide under his hood.

Stephanie accompanied them during their outings to help Alexander feel comfortable. Gradually, as Alexander spent more time with Tim, he began to come out of his shell. He became more animated, engaged,

and started to interact more openly.

Their activities together included attending monster truck shows, family fun fairs, and the circus, among other community events. These experiences provided Alexander with much-needed social interaction and allowed him to express himself in new ways.

Bethany Holmes, SFFC Director in Klamath Falls, emphasizes the importance of mentorship, stating, "Mentorship is a way youth can disconnect from stressful life situations and can express themselves and share with someone who will listen and be a role model."

Stephanie noticed significant positive changes in Alexander's behavior over the course of his time with Tim. Tim encourages others to consider mentorship, saying, "If anyone has a chance to ever mentor children who need a big brother or father figure, please do it. It's very rewarding."



If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please use the QR code to connect with the SFFC program in your county.

Socially isolated to social butterfly

Amanda lived on a boat with her dad, Doug. He drank excessively and struggled with mental health issues. Doug had not enrolled Amanda in school, leaving her socially isolated. Amanda received all her information from YouTube and TikTok videos. She was 12 years old.

Doug knew he needed help and reached out to Safe Families in Lincoln County. The goal was for Doug to go to treatment and then find a host home for Amanda. Things took a turn when Doug had a breakdown and Amanda needed a host home right away.

Shelly and Jack stepped up to take Amanda in. They lived on a farm and had spent a lifetime fostering kids. During their first meeting, Amanda did her best to avoid eye contact and pretend they weren't there. It took a little while but eventually Amanda started coming out of her shell.

Shelly took charge of Amanda's education, focusing on fundamental skills. Today, Amanda thrives in the homeschooling program, Classical Conversations. No one is more amazed than Amanda herself.

"I didn't know I was smart," she said. Indeed, she is not only smart but also talented, enjoying activities like painting rocks and leather design. Shelly and Jack have embraced Amanda as part of their family, and they love going on trips together. A stable living environment has made a world of difference for Amanda.



It's been four years since Safe Families met Doug and Amanda. Doug still struggles with addiction and has been in and out of treatment. Amanda has remained close with her dad and visits him regularly.

Marisa Hayner, SFFC Director in Lincoln County, remarked, "It is mind-blowing to see the change in her. Before, she would just isolate, but now she is a social butterfly, silly and goofy. It has been wonderful to see her blossom."



New beginnings

At age 23, Theresa was a young mom with a toddler and a baby on the way. She was in an unhealthy relationship, stressed, and overwhelmed. She needed a new start. While staying at a women’s shelter, she reached out to Safe Families in Douglas County for support. The Safe Families team came alongside Theresa to help support her.

Prior to the birth, the team worked on helping her get back into her home. Her new baby was due in

May and Theresa was very cautious about who came to the hospital. When the time came, other than her doula, her friends from Safe Families were the only ones invited to the hospital. Safe Families hosted her toddler, Sean, while Theresa was in the hospital.

“Theresa is the sweetest thing ever,” comments SFFC Director, Liberty Dryden, “as a young mom with two little ones to care for, she has worked so hard to be a good momma. We have been blessed to help her get her footing at this crucial time in her life.” Safe Families continues to provide day hosting for Sean and mentoring for Theresa.

Now, Theresa works from home, is getting her insurance licenses, and building skills in her job. Her children are thriving—the baby is growing, and Sean is adapting and doing well. Theresa loves taking her kids to community events and Wildlife Safari; Sean especially enjoys books. She is focused on building healthy relationships and maintaining boundaries, striving for the best for her boys.

Safe Families for Children celebrates 20 years



Stephanie!

Safe Families for Children staff from across the country gathered in Chicago, IL to celebrate 20 years of the Safe Families movement. Stephanie Linseisen, Coos County Director, was among those in attendance. The event was filled with celebration, sharing stories, prayer, and encouragement. It was a blessing to witness the significant impact Safe Families has had both locally and globally, and it reinforced the strength and unity of our community.

Remember when?

Do you remember when the cost of gas was 1.28?
Our senior population does.



As you can imagine, managing price increases are difficult with limited resources, but harder still is the ever-shrinking circle of people that used to populate their lives.

Luckily we have been building an army of volunteers to help alleviate some of these hardships.

Our newest program, **Hearts for Seniors** has been rapidly expanding with both clients and volunteers. We just want to say thank you again, to all our volunteers who have made this possible! Your acts of kindness continually touch our hearts.

Hats off to CAPS!



Thanks to funding from the Red Cross (CAP) Community Adaptation Program and our amazing volunteers, we’ve installed new railings and ramps for safer home access for our seniors.

This funding will help us provide essential home maintenance allowing seniors to maintain independence and remain in their homes.

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Contact megan.j@hwam.org



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A Community With Heart

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FAITH | HOPE | LOVE | SERVICE | COMMUNITY



Mailing Address	711 Medford Ctr #334, Medford, OR 97504
Youth Shelter	517 Edwards St, Medford, OR 97501
Hearts For Seniors	505 Edwards St, Medford, OR 97501
Jackson/Josephine County	521 Edwards St, Medford, OR 97501 1504 NE 9th St, Grants Pass
Lincoln County	PO Box 299, Newport, OR 97365
Klamath County	PO Box 6510 S 6th St PMB# 292, Klamath Falls, OR 97603
Douglas County	PO Box 2245, Roseburg, OR 97470
Coos County	PO Box 626 North Bend, OR 97459

