



Happy Holidays!

from (left to right) Security Monitor Tom Clayton, Executive Director Steve Bonnar, Office Manager Elaina Pierson, Case Manager Randy Paulin, and Maintenance Guru Jim Gale.

The Long Road From Client to Case Manager

By Randy Paulin

Life can certainly be full of surprises. I never imagined I'd be introducing myself as the case manager at Sojourners' Alliance—but then neither did I ever imagine I would be a client here. I was, for two years, and I became the case manager on the 1st of June of this year.

Sojourners' is much more than an organization. It is a community of living, breathing, struggling individuals. I am both humbled and gratified to be a part of that community. Life at Sojourners' is life without frills. It is life in the raw—individuals struggling day by day to overcome the circumstances that brought them here and to attain the independence that will allow them to function as productive members of society.

My role in this community, as case manager, is multifaceted to say

the least. Sounding board, motivator, mediator, rule-enforcer, conduit for resources and information... all these and more are things I do on a daily basis. From the time a person calls in seeking a place until the day they move out, the case manager is their main point of contact. My fundamental job is to try to help people transition from the survival mode they are in when they arrive here to a healthy, proactive way of dealing with life and its challenges. At the same time I have to enforce the rules for living at Sojourners'. Developing a rapport with a new client is the first and sometimes biggest hurdle I have to clear.

This job is endlessly challenging, sometimes frustrating, and on occasion heartbreaking. I never imagined I would be doing it, but I come to work every day determined to do the best I can, and let the rest go. It's not about numbers or rules or pro-

grams—it's about people. And the people who arrive here are vulnerable and tired and scared—just as I was when I made that long walk up the ramp to the office three years ago. Getting from that point to walking out of here back into independent living is a long journey, and one that is fraught with pitfalls.

Making that journey, ultimately, is up to the individual client. All of us on the staff try to support and encourage the individual in that journey, while walking the fine line of not enabling an individual in persisting in behaviors that got him or her here in the first place. Not everyone succeeds. Knowing that, and still valuing and respecting each new arrival as an individual, is what makes this such a challenging job. Having a hand in an individual's success is what makes it all worthwhile.



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This issue of *Sojourners' Alliance News*
 was edited by Elaina Pierson.

The Sojourners' Alliance campus includes
 buildings and grounds on both sides of the
 600 block of North Van Buren Street
 in Moscow.

The office is at 627 N Van Buren.
 Phone: (208) 883-3438
 Email: shelter@turbonet.com



Support your local United Way

Mission Statement

Sojourners' Alliance is a private, non-profit
 organization working toward a community
 vision of dignity and equality for all people.

Our mission is to promote the personal
 growth, empowerment and self-sufficiency
 of people in transition by providing basic
 services, and education in interpersonal and
 life skills.

From the Director's Chair

"A good traveler has no fixed plans,
 And is not intent on arriving."

-Lao Tzu

I'm feeling a bit stressed by the need to get articles done for the newsletter. I was supposed to have my stuff done a couple of weeks ago, with the hope of having this mailed around Thanksgiving. Obviously, I didn't get them done within the time frame I had set for myself. This isn't the first time nor will it be the last, unfortunately.

I've been putting a lot of energy into efforts to bring about greater community awareness concerning the issues we see day to day. I'm fortunate to have a wonderful staff that has been able to maintain the flow while I go out and discuss these mounting issues. The Palouse Poverty Forum came about when I approached Mayor Chaney with my concerns about the growing number of households that are facing homelessness. We perceived that one of the limitations facing our community is the lack of face to face contact with those in need. We believed that the faith-based community would be the means in which we could stimulate greater dialogue and discussions on ways to face the mounting challenges. The forum introduced the Family Promise program to our community. The enthusiasm for this program has resulted in the beginning of a new non-profit that will address homeless families. The concept of the Family Promise program is that a church will host the families for one week, during which time they are provided a place to eat dinner and sleep at night. The families are transported during the day to a center where they receive case management and guidance to find stability. A lot of the families that we are turning away could find stabilization within three months if temporary housing was available. I believe this program will help fill some of the needs that are currently not being met. The next area the Palouse Poverty Forum is going to address will be the growing food insecurity of our area. Stay tuned!

I appreciate and value all of the support we receive. I've been overwhelmed by the receptiveness and willingness in our community to listen to the message. I believe that we as a community will accept the challenges facing us and find the solutions that will work to reduce poverty, hunger and homelessness. Thank you!

The journey without an end continues.

— Steve Bonnar

*Join us for the
Seventh Annual Academy Awards Gala
Sunday, February 26, 2012
at the 1912 Center*



Watch the stars on the big screen, enjoy a delicious dinner, and bid on live and silent auctions, all while supporting the area's only transitional housing facility for the homeless.

A Night
AT THE
Oscars

Tickets: \$50
Reduced rates for couples and tables

Call 883-3438
for more information

Sojourners' Alliance would like to thank the following individuals, businesses and organizations for providing invaluable assistance in a wide variety of ways

Grants, in-kind and monetary donations were received from **AmericanWest Bank**, the **Home Partnership Foundation**, **Moscow Mardi Gras**, **United Way of Moscow/Latah County**, the owners of the **Sandpiper Grill**, **ADK Moscow Teachers' Philanthropic Organization**, **Kiwanis Club**, **Unitarian Universalist Church**, **Moscow Cares**, **Emmanuel Lutheran Church**, **Moscow Garden Club**, **Moscow Cares**, **McKinstry Co. Charitable Foundation**, **Living Faith Fellowship**, **Moscow Food Co-op**, the **Gap Foundation Gift Match Program**, **St. Mary's Catholic Church**, **First United Methodist Church**, and **Peterson Barn**. Massive food and toiletry drives were organized by **WSU's Rogers Hall**, the **Eagles Ladies' Auxiliary**, the **College Strategies** class at the University of Idaho, **Northwest Nations Upward Bound**, the **Moscow and Troy Wards of the LDS Church**, and the **Women's Giving Circle**. Regular contributions of food and other items are provided to our shelter residents and foodbank clients by **Safeway**, **Winco**, **Pizza Hut**, **Backyard Harvest**, the **Rotary Club of Moscow**, **First Presbyterian Church**, and many, many generous individuals. Our annual Fall Breakfast was a success, due in no small way to **Sam Dial**, **Cowgirl Chocolates**, **Deb Rupp**, **Jay Mlazgar**, **Old European Restaurant**, **Print Shop**, the **Pierzchanowski Family**, **Wheatberries**, **Breakfast Club**, the **Catholic Women's League**, **Sisters Brew**, the **Billing Family**, **One World Café**, **C& L Meats**, **Peter's Farms/Green Creek**, **Safeway**, **Rosauers**, the **1912 Center**, **Copy Center**, **Ellen R.**, and **Kappa Sigma**. **WSU's Center for Civic Engagement** also helped at the breakfast, as well as numerous other volunteer activities around Sojourners'. Boxes and boxes of Girl Scout Cookies were brought in this past spring by the young ladies of **Moscow's Girl Scout Troop 2200**, who then returned this fall with 15 dozen homemade Christmas cookies. As always, **thank you to all of our supporters**, large and small, one time and regular. We could not do it without you!

Wish List

If you can help by contributing any of these items, they would be greatly appreciated.

- Toilet paper
- Large garbage bags (30+ gallon)
- Hand soap & sanitizer
- Men's deodorant
- Dish soap
- Cleaning supplies
- Mops & mop buckets
- Brooms & dustpans
- Coffee
- Coffee makers
- Coffee filters
- Vacuums
- DVD players/VCRs

Our needs are always changing. If you are unsure about particular items you would like to donate, don't hesitate to give us a call at (208) 883-3438. Thank you!



The garden produced, but not as well as in years past, thanks to our crazy Palouse weather. The raspberry patch, however, couldn't have been happier!

From the Director's Chair: Problems and Solutions

Financial Affairs

We recently received a glimpse of our financial future which happened to coincide with our yearly on-site visit by the auditor; the continuation of our financial shortfall is forcing us to take a hard look at various ways to balance our budget. The budget for our Transitional Housing Program is the same today as it was eight years ago, and the three of us who are full-time are doing the work of what four full-time people were doing six years ago.

Our major fundraising activities have consisted of the Annual Fall Breakfast and the Academy Awards Gala. These two events have netted \$10,000 yearly for the last couple of years. We realize that our community is overflowing with worthy events seeking support for their just causes. I appreciate all of the support we receive and know that our organization is valued and appreciated. But there is still a shortfall. The corporate foundations are experiencing greater demand and fewer funds available for distribution. Government is hard pressed and basically there is no more money in the well. I've recently been quoted as saying that we cannot rely on government to solve our problems. In no way was I being disrespectful to our local officials or even the folks from HUD. It was an acknowledgment that limited funds and tightening budgets are forcing people to become more self-reliant to solve their problems. The partnerships we have with the City of Moscow, Latah County Commissioners and the agency that provides oversight to our organization, Idaho Housing & Finance Association (IHFA), are providing all the support they can. I believe the recent economic times are actually a wonderful opportunity to become more creative and

imaginative in the ways we support our mission.

Program Overview

Our Transitional Housing program has remained at full capacity: two families, four women and 12 men. As soon as an opening occurs, the bed is filled. We are turning away between 10 and 20 households a week; two thirds to three quarters of those households are families. The main reasons leading to their situations are loss of employment, medical bills, or change in household status resulting from divorce.

Project Warmth is a program we administer that provides rental assistance for an adult with a diagnosed disability, giving stability to a population that is at high risk for homelessness. We currently have funding for six one-bedroom rentals, two two-bedrooms, and two three-bedrooms. The yearly budget for this program is \$68,640. We recently had an opening for a one-bedroom, but other than that, the program has been full for a year. All of our clients in this program sign up for Section 8 Housing Assistance, for which there is an average waitlist of two years.

We are administering Homeless Prevention funds for the region in collaboration with State of Idaho Health and Welfare Navigators. Thus far, the funds have provided assistance to 30 households that would either have been evicted or had utilities shut off. The funds for this grant came from HUD (\$4,900), Home Partnership Foundation (\$6,000), AmericanWest Bank (\$2,000), and private donors (\$2,192). We have approximately \$4,500 remaining.

Solutions

The housing painting business we started this year began slowly. We were able to bid on three homes, two of which ended up needing to shift their finances toward more pressing needs. The third home became a partial opportunity and was limited due to financial constraints. We will resume our advertising for housing painting next spring.

We have continued to develop our Sojo Dogs and hope to be able to sell them at the Farmers Market next spring.

I am hoping to collaborate with a Service Learning group through the University of Idaho to start a yearly Dance-A-Thon in March. A fundraising event like this will require a lot of external support to see it through. "If you don't succeed, try and try again".

Staff Review

I've been in my role since July 2006. Elaina Pierson has been the Office Manager since January 2007. Jim Gale has been providing maintenance for our facilities since February 2007. Tom Clayton has been our Security Monitor since August 2008. Our most recent addition, Randy Paulin, has been our Case Manager since June 2011. All of us have experienced homelessness and two are ex-clients. I am proud to work with such amazing, dedicated, loyal, and deeply committed individuals. Without them, I would not be able to be a voice in our community.

— Steve Bonnar



Sojourners' Alliance
Bringing the Pieces Together

627 N Van Buren St
Moscow ID 83843

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Moscow, Idaho
Permit No. 8



Sojourners' Alliance has a tasty new way you can help fight poverty and hunger on the Palouse: we are holding a raffle for a holiday meal!

We will provide everything needed to make a holiday meal for six. This includes ham, potatoes au gratin, crescent rolls, green beans, dinner salad, jello salad, cranberry sauce, wine or sparkling cider, soup, a veggie tray, yams, olives, mixed nuts, mints, and pumpkin pie with ice cream. All you will need to do is cook!

Tickets are \$20 each, and can be purchased from the Sojourners' Alliance office, or via the PayPal link on our website (www.sojournersalliance.org, click the "How Can I Help?" link on the left side of the screen).

The drawing will be held on December 19, 2011.

Only 100 tickets will be sold. Get yours now!

