

“That no one in our community go hungry...”

February 2015 Vol. 32, No. 2

Beyond Plowshares: A Continuum of Care

By Marlene Kurowski, Executive Director

I recently was speaking with a potential Board Member who posed a good question for me, “We at Plowshares are feeding many needy people but what is being done to break the cycle of poverty that keeps folks dependent on our services?”

That is an important question and one that also concerned me when I took office last March 2014.

The truth is that Mendocino County is a caring community with a wide variety of services and organizations whose missions are to serve challenged individuals who are homeless, or mentally ill, drug/or alcohol dependent or physically limited in other ways. Plowshares endeavors to keep current information available in our “Personal Care” area so that our Program Assistants can make referrals to agencies or services that can provide help for our Guests.

My first step in familiarizing myself with available services was Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency which is the center where most county supported social work takes place. The services offered by our county are too numerous to mention in this article. More importantly I was invited to participate in the Mendocino County Homeless Services Continuum of Care. This task force brings together non-profits as well as government agencies which manage a range of resources to address the needs of families and individuals at risk of homelessness and currently experiencing homelessness. The monthly meetings are a wealth of information that I strive to bring to the attention of our staff who regularly speak with those we serve.

Next I familiarized myself with 2-1-1 (211Mendocino.org), the phone number is a direct link to specialists that can connect folks with services including health care, elder care, child care and support for seniors and persons with disabilities. This service is available 24 hours a day in several languages.

Lastly I connected on-line with Mazon and a few other political action groups that keep me abreast of legislation which impact funding for such programs as SNAP (which is the new acronym for Food Stamps). Through this network we participate in letter writing campaigns that influence legislation.

While there are times that I feel overwhelmed by the situation of some of our guests, I personally feel deeply inspired by the people I have met who go “where angels dare to tread” and choose to engage with some of the most difficult or challenged people in our county.

Here’s to the Staff, Volunteers and Caregivers who get up each day, put on a smile and quietly serve!



Save the Date

- Empty Bowls

April 18, 2015 5:30 P.M., Plowshares Dining Room

- Human Race

May 2, 2015

Meals Served December 2014

	Total	Daily Average
Lunches - Adults	1367	62
Lunches - Children	45	2
TOTAL LUNCHES	1412	64
Dinners - Adults	1199	55
Dinners - Children	70	3
TOTAL DINNERS	1269	58
DINING ROOM TOTAL	2681	122
MEALS-ON-WHEELS	2669	121
TOTAL MEALS	5350	243

THE PLOWSHARES ADVOCATE

... is published eleven times a year and mailed to supporters of Plowshares, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation (#68-0218781). Donations are fully tax deductible as allowed by law.

Do you have a new address? Please let us know!

Plowshares Peace & Justice Center Location and Contact Information

1346 S. State Street 707-462-8582 phone
 P.O. Box 475 707-462-0302 fax
 Ukiah, CA 95482-0475 plowshares@pacific.net
www.plowsharesfeeds.org
www.facebook.com/PlowsharesUkiah

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or call Patrice at 707-462-8582

Wish List

- Broccoli
 - Carrots
 - Apples
 - Cheese**
 - Pasta
 - Butter**
 - Cooking oil
 - Cornstarch **
 - Sugar
 - Salt and black pepper
 - Poultry seasoning
 - Coffee**
 - Ziploc bags
 - Pump bottles of hand sanitizer
 - Socks**
 - Travel size shampoo and conditioner**
 - Bath wash**
 - Deodorant**
 - Razors**
 - Soap
 - Small bottles of mouth wash**
 - Feminine hygiene products
 - Dog & cat food**
 - Postage stamps
- ** Items we are currently out of

Winter Appeal Update

Many thanks to the hundreds of community members, businesses, and faith based organizations that contributed to our recent Annual Winter Appeal and helped us exceed our goal of \$60,000. Our total net proceeds were \$67,370.95.

Special thanks to Nathan DeHart, Chief Photographer at the Ukiah Daily Journal for his donation of the wonderful pictures of our Staff, Volunteers and Guests that were featured in the Winter Appeal direct mail piece. This mailer went out to 20,000 residents in our community.

Volunteers and staff come together to create meals at Plowshares each weekday knowing that folks in the greater Ukiah area support our Mission: "That no one in our community go hungry."



The season of giving would not be complete without Santa, aka Jim Williams, providing donated gifts to the children who are guests of Plowshares.

Let's Make Sure Everyone Counts!

It is January 22nd and at 5 a.m. a coalition of social workers, volunteers and homeless people are meeting at Plowshares, and several other staging areas, to prepare to carry out a directive from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. They must conduct a survey of unsheltered people sleeping in places unfit for human habitation, such as doorways, creek beds or in cars. The early hour helps ensure that homeless individuals are at their home-base and won't be counted more than once.

Teams of 3-5 are formed, given maps with suggested areas to canvas, clip boards, and flashlights. They are not to risk their safety, or rouse sleeping people, but simply to observe and count those who are inhabiting encampments. They will answer simple questions that can be determined by observation. Should they find people who are awake there are more detailed surveys to be completed by each individual or family.

Counting unsheltered homeless people is a daunting task. Not only are many unsheltered people hard to find, but members of some homeless subpopulations such as youth and lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender individuals, congregate in different areas. Months of planning have gone into determining methodologies and mapping out locations.

Each county is also required to do a survey of homeless people who are in temporary shelters, such as Buddy Eller, or those issued hotel vouchers. Agency staff devote considerable time to assuring compliance in getting the surveys filled out.

In the week that follows, surveys will also take place at locations that homeless people regularly frequent.

This count, which is done annually, establishes a baseline of our homeless population so that we can track our progress towards ending homelessness. It also provides evidence for the need for federal funding for homeless services in Mendocino County.

Kudos to the dedicated individuals who left home before the crack of dawn today to carry out the Point in Time Count!



"Our lives begin to end the day that we become silent about things that matter.

-Martin Luther King Jr.



Plowshares

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