

THE OUTREACH

SPRING

A Newsletter from Siuslaw Outreach Services

2024

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It Happens To Men, Too!

Years ago, Carl*, a man in his 40s was referred to SOS by the Oregon State Police. He had fled his abusive wife with his children and was living in the woods.

Siuslaw Outreach Services put him in a safe house, gave him information and support to help him get his social security disability benefits, a medical card for him and his children, TANF, food stamps, therapy, and a divorce.

They are currently thriving and living in an apartment. He has full custody of the children who have overcome learning disabilities. Carl is working part-time, the children are in school and have friends and they are all doing very well.

*Name changed for Privacy

If you know anyone experiencing Domestic Violence, encourage them to give us a call on our 24-Hour Crisis Line at 541-997-4444. We can help!

Office Hours:

Closed

Monday, May 27, 2024

Monday - Thursday

10:00 am - 3:30 pm

Friday by appointment only

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

SOS Builds Network

Since its inception in 1986, SOS has continually worked to adapt to meet the needs of those experiencing domestic violence, sexual violence, human/sex trafficking, elder abuse, stalking, homelessness and those at imminent risk of homelessness. In 1986, the agency, then known as the Siuslaw Area Women's Center, was set up as a shelter program for women and children escaping domestic violence. They would assist between 20 and 50 individuals annually. As they worked to moving them to a more stable situation, they saw challenges in finding affordable housing. They would soon access state and county funded housing assistance programs to help relocate those individuals. In order to continue to receive that funding stream, they would have to open up services to all low-income individuals seeking housing assistance. They did just that. In 2002, the agency changed its name to Siuslaw Outreach Services in an attempt to reflect the change in clientele. Soon the agency added basic need vouchers to serve nearly 1,000 local residents. These vouchers were for laundry and showers for the unhoused and utility assistance for low-income families experiencing a sudden shift in income.

Fast forward to 2020 when the agency had to restructure due to federal law and funding requirements, the agency adapted once again. SOS had to divide the agency into three distinct departments: Special Victim Assistance, Crisis Assistance, and Outreach & Education. Now, the agency serves nearly 3,000 local residents through more than 25 different programs and services and distributing between six hundred thousand and one million dollars in aid. The need is certainly great in our community. Requests for services have gone up 56% during the past year. The average caseload per staff ratio is 400:1. We are learning issues are becoming more complex as well as some of the barriers to self-sufficiency have to do with things SOS does not provide. In order to provide full-wrap around services to help a client reach a state of safety and self-sufficiency, referrals need to be made and partnerships need to be established.

SOS currently works with Oregon Department of Human Services to help connect clientele to "food stamp" programs, health insurance, parenting resources, secure I.D. and programs in order to help

survivors of domestic violence flee. DHS often refers clients to SOS for assistance with utilities and rent, domestic violence advocacy services, basic living skill classes.

SOS works closely with Food Share to help clients meet their nutrition needs. There are conversations continuing around partnering with Oregon State Extension Services to provide gardening and nutrition education in conjunction with Food Share.

SOS is working with many different developers to create housing opportunities for families and seniors. Most recently, work with Shore Pines, Homes For Good and Oak Manor has helped establish opportunities for homeless families and seniors to get off the streets and into housing. There are efforts underway to create up to 90 more opportunities. Currently Oregon ranks highest in the number of unhoused individuals and rents have gone up at a higher rate than anywhere in the US over the past five years.

SOS also spearheaded the establishment of the Florence Homelessness Resource Team. A ten-agency group of providers designed to work collaboratively to address homelessness and help a number of unhoused individuals become stable and be contributing members of our community.

SOS is currently working to develop other resources for the Florence area. Talks are underway with a couple of Eugene based mental health providers to expand to the Florence area to serve those needs. SOS is working with several county agencies along with the University of Oregon to develop violence prevention curriculum and internship programs. SOS is part of a network of housing assistance agencies to build a stronger network and to streamline housing assistance.

Through these partnership, SOS is seeing positive results. The number of repeat requests have gone down slightly. Some clients have been able to become home owners. Others have secured full time employment. Most importantly, with the support of partners in our Special Victim Assistance program, lives have been saved. All this could not be accomplished without the support of our donors and agency partners.



**SIUSLAW
OUTREACH
SERVICES**

OUR MISSION: "To provide compassionate, respectful and confidential support to people in need."

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 19000 Florence, OR 97439

Physical Address: 1576 West 12th Street Florence, OR 97439

Phone: (541) 997- 2816 Fax: (541) 997- 7257 Crisis Line: (541) 997- 4444

E-mail: exec@florencesos.org Website: www.florencesos.org

All-In Against Homelessness Continues

On January 10, 2023, Governor Kotec declared a state of emergency in regards to homelessness. This was in response to Oregon having the distinction of having the highest rate of homelessness per capita in the nation. The rate of homelessness increased nearly 63% during the past five years. Lane, Marion, Polk and Jackson counties saw the largest increases in homelessness. In Florence, rent rates increased nearly 70% on average during that same time period. As a part of that declaration, Governor Kotec and the Oregon legislator designated \$200 million to create shelter programs and prevention programs to keep vulnerable families housed.

Lane County received \$18.5 million. Those dollars went to creating 304 new shelter beds, moved 220 families off the streets and into permanent housing and staved off eviction for over 800 households. Locally, SOS was awarded up to \$700,000 to place homeless families into permanent housing and stave off evection for low income families at immanent risk of homelessness. Qualifying families had to be at or below the federal poverty line. During the past nine months, SOS helped to get 24 families off the streets and into permanent housing. This was due in large part to the addition of the Shorepines housing development on highway 101. "There was a great deal of concern when we took on this program because there were not a lot of opportunities for families to move into," said SOS Executive Director Bob Teter. The average cost of move-in for a residential rental in Florence is \$4,800 to cover rent, last month rent, cleaning and security deposit. These funds allowed staff to help families get a fresh start by purchasing beds, dressers, dining set and dishes and glasses to help those families get a start. The funds also were used to stave off evictions for 30 households.

Lane County gave partnering agencies until January 10, 2024, one year after the state of emergency was declared, to fully spend those appropriated dollars. Due to challenges of available rentals and several applicants had incomes slightly above the federal poverty line, SOS staff spent just under \$300,000 of the \$700,000 designated for the agency. Lane County and SOS worked with the governor's office to extend the January 10th deadline. The state approved an extension only for households who are currently homeless to assist them in securing permanent housing. SOS is continuing to work with government and private entities to secure dollars to help those households with eviction notices to keep them in their homes.

If you or someone you know is struggling with homelessness, come by our office at 1576 W. 12th Street in Florence, OR.

Red Bags of Warmth from Idyllwood

Each year, a local Realtor, **Laura Wilson**, organizes an opportunity for a local neighborhood to give to the community. She provides big red bags she purchases herself and drops them off to those who live in a familiar neighborhood in Florence, OR. The ask is for items badly needed in the winter to



Bob Teter & Laura Wilson

benefit clients from **Siuslaw Outreach Services**. Coats, blankets and socks are always needed, but much more in the winter. Tarps, boots and sweaters were also donated and much appreciated by those in need. Thank you to Laura Wilson with **Winderemere Real Estate company** and to those friends and neighbors who donated items from **Idyllwood** neighborhood. Our clients and staff thank you for your continued donations during these cold winter months!

Landlord Liaison

SOS Crisis Assistance Program Manager, Kevin Furber, invited property managers and local landlords to a meeting on January 17th to talk about housing challenges, SOS assistance programs and new resources for residential landlords. The purpose of the meeting was in part, to improve communication between SOS staff, landlord and clientele. It is also make those in attendance aware of new programs and resources for landlords provided by Lane County and the State of Oregon. The hope is this will be a semi-annual event.



Kevin Furber explains housing assistance offered by SOS to those in attendance.

The meeting at Siuslaw Library began with Executive Director, Bob Teter, thanking those who chose to attend this informative meeting and expressed hopes of further collaborations and partnerships. Teter also provided the 15 area landlords with an overview of SOS programs and funding. The meeting shifted gears to Program Manager, Kevin Furber explaining the mechanics and requirements of the various rent and utility assistance programs offered by SOS. Furber created an opportunity for landlords to have dialogue to create best practices between landlords and staff.



Nancy McReynolds shares new program information

programs are accessed and well as ways she can support residential landlords and property managers.

There was a great deal of positive feedback and support for future meetings as well as support for collaboration to address housing insecurities in western Lane County.

The last 30 minutes of the meeting was Lane County Landlord Liaison, Nancy McReynolds explaining the new programs and the resources offered by Lane County and the State of Oregon. The focus was on risk and damage mitigation. McReynolds also shared how those

Chipping In For The Cause

Saturday, May 11th is the date and Florence Golf Links is the place, for the 14th Annual Siuslaw Open. The tournament sponsored in part by Oregon Pacific Bank, PeaceHealth/ Siuslaw Region, Three Rivers Casino Resort, Abel Insurance and Elks Lodge #1858, raises funds to help some of our most vulnerable residents. This scramble format using the Calloway Scoring Method is limited to 25 teams. The tournament is host to its signature Putting and Chipping Contests.



Participants will have an opportunity to have their name drawn to putt for a change to win \$5,000. Our hole-in-one contest sponsored by Johnston Motor Company is back for a chance to win a

Ford truck! There will be raffles for gift baskets, poker contests, long drive and accuracy contests and more! Hyak is also back with their BBQ on hole #7.

The tournament supports programs that promote safety, resiliency and self-sufficiency for those experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, elder abuse, homelessness and unexpected crisis events. Last year we raised over \$14,000 after expenses. If you would like to play or support this event, please contact Mary at 541-204-1639 or Bob at 541-205-9011 or stop by Florence Golf Links. Teams should be registered before May 1st. Don't miss out on the fun!

SOS Night At The Emeralds



Siuslaw Outreach Services and the EUGENE EMERALDS have partnered up to support needy families in our area.

June 29, 2024 will be **SOS** night at the **EUGENE EMERALDS** home baseball game at PK park. The Ems will take on the Tri-City Dust Devils and will be playing as their alter ego, The Exploding Whales.

SOS will be selling 250 tickets at a special price to raise funds for SOS programs. There will some fun activities at the game as well to raise funds. Specially priced tickets will go on sale at SOS beginning May 1, 2024. Tickets will also be on sale at the SOS Siuslaw Open Golf Tournament on May 11, 2024 and at our booth during the Rhody Days Car Show on Saturday, May 18, 2024 held at the Middle School from 9 am-3 pm.

For more info about tickets sales or the game itself, contact **Bob** at **541-205-9011** or stop by **SOS** at 1576 W. 12th Street.



Welcome To The Team Christy

Christy Chinn is our newest Special Victims Assistance Advocate. Christy will be working with survivors of domestic and sexual violence as well as trafficking and stalking. Christy has been a long-time resident of Florence and very involved with several youth serving organizations. Christy has also been involved in Foster Parenting programs as well as Child Protective Services as a volunteer. Christy says, "There are a lot of hurting and vulnerable people in our community. I want to help them and let them know someone truly cares. I want to be there to support them be a part of that healing process." We are so excited to have her as a part of team!



Christy Chinn

2023 STATISTICS

TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED IN 20232,774

Males—1,562 Females—2,001 Other Genders—12 Seniors—788 Disabled—638 Children—445 Veterans—118

Clients Receiving Domestic Violence Advocacy Services.....367	Sheltered Nights For DV/SA Survivors.....1,086
Clients Receiving Sexual Assault Advocacy Services.....44	DV/SA Survivors Participating In Support Group.....190
Clients Receiving Energy Assistance (LIHEAP).....370	Households Receiving Emergency Rent Assistance.....117
Response To After Hours Calls From Police/Hospital.....23	Participants in Parenting Education Classes.....1
Total Number Of Trained Volunteers.....27	Participants in Self-Sufficiency Classes & Workshops.....51
	Total Contacts.....15,060
Clients Served with Emergency Vouchers, Clothing and/or Rent Assistance (unduplicated).....1,914	

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and PROTECTIONS to BENEFICIARIES**

Siuslaw Outreach Services, Inc. operates its program, services and activities in compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws. No person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), disability, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of our programs.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write Office of Civil Rights, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice (OCR), 810 7th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20531 or call 202-307-0690 (Voice) or 202-307-2027 (TDD/TTY). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may also contact OCR through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339 (TTY), 877-877-8982 (Speech) or 800-845-6136 (Spanish).

Classes Available to the Public*

- ◆ Budgeting Square Pegs Into Round Holes
- ◆ Financial Management/Banking Basics
- ◆ Managing Stress So It Doesn't Manage You
- ◆ Employment Tips & Tricks
- ◆ Tenant Tips & Information
- ◆ Introduction to Family Law

For more information about attending these classes, please visit us at 1576 W. 12th Street or call us at 541-997-2816

*** Reservations are required**

~ Leave A Lasting Legacy ~

If you are 70 or older please consider a legacy bequest to Siuslaw Outreach Services. Your gift will help you with financial planning and ensure Siuslaw Outreach Services will continue to be here for people in need for many years to come. Those who contribute to our Legacy Campaign will receive special tax benefits, have their gift forever recognized and remembered, and gain the satisfaction that they have made a long-lasting impact on the health and livability of our community.

Please contact SOS Executive Director:

Bob Teter at 541-205-9011

or a member of our Board of Directors for more information.

**SOS is looking for committed volunteers to staff our Focus 4 Crisis Line.
Please contact us for more information by calling (541) 997-2816**



SIUSLAW OUTREACH SERVICES
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