

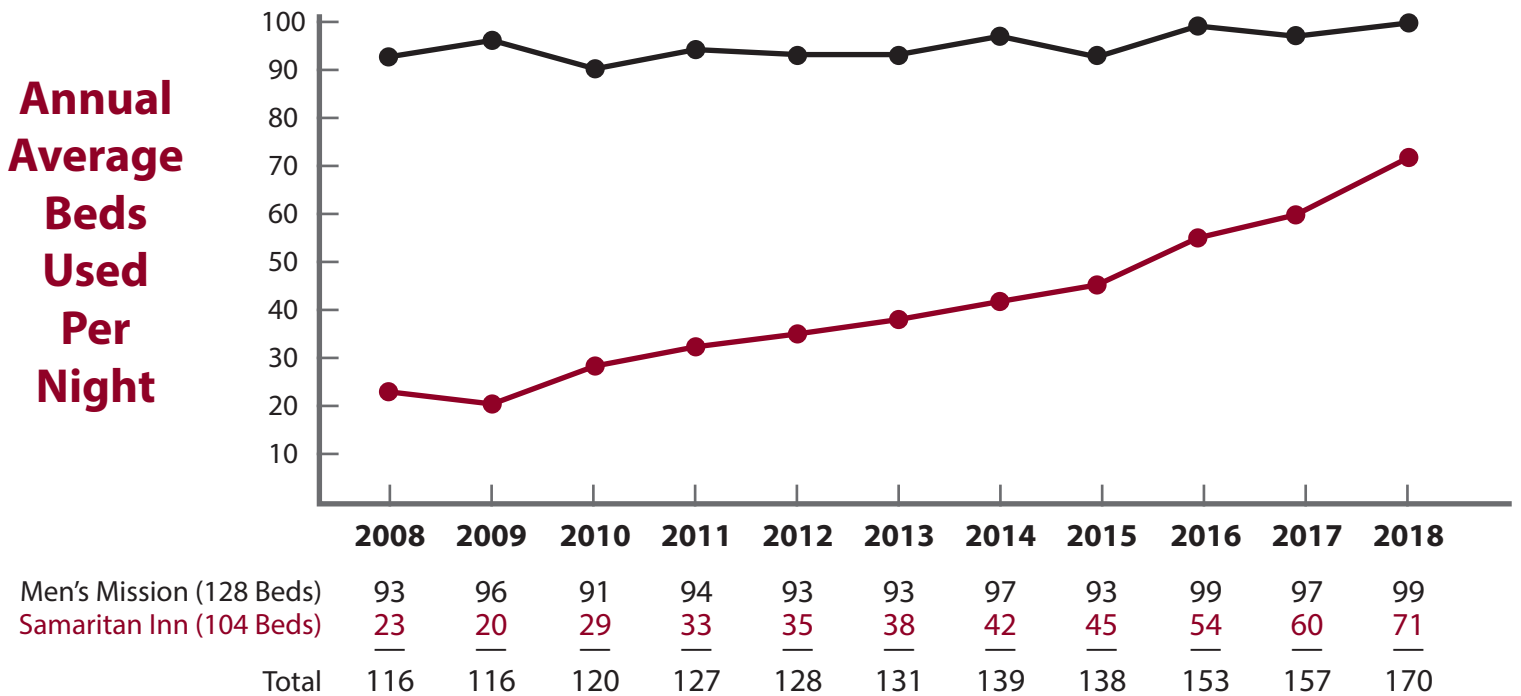


Roseburg Rescue Mission

*A Beacon of Hope
for the Homeless*

FEBRUARY 2019

752 SE Pine St • PO Box 1937 • Roseburg, OR 97470 • (541) 673-3004 • www.roseburgrescuemission.org



Homelessness Rising

Men at the Mission

Before the Great Recession began in October of 2008, during it, and afterward, the men's population at the Mission was not affected. The Occupy Wall Street and Occupy Roseburg movements did not change our occupancy level for men. Our men's bed usage, and lack of usage, has been remarkably consistent. We have successfully worked with homeless men and expect little change again this year. Any increase in issues regarding homelessness is not from a growth of men at the Mission.

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We added men's beds in 2010 to ensure enough capacity, but it has gone unused. There are 128 men's beds. In the past eleven years, we have averaged using between 91 and 99 beds per night, leaving from 29 to 37 men's beds empty every night.

A caseworker does an intake interview with every man staying in our dormitory. He evaluates their situations, giving each one a requirement to stay here. For some, it may just be a basic requirement to attend addiction recovery meetings before they are ready for further expectations. Some are given the task of getting their birth certificate or identification, applying for employment or housing, going to the Department of Human Services, Social Security or VA, seeing a doctor, dentist or mental health worker, or joining the Mission's New Life Program. Everyone eligible for age related income or considered a likely candidate for disability income is required to apply for that income. Some clients are disappointed to discover that the Mission is not here to support an alternative lifestyle. Some believe they have a right to be here, even one provided by the government. That is not the case. We are a non-profit organization, governed by a local board of directors. We do not receive any government money or food.

The basic condition of entry into the Mission, other than sobriety and good behavior, is that a person be able to care for their own personal needs. That includes being ambulatory, eating, showering, using a restroom, and administering their own medical needs, independently. Drug and alcohol testing is not done as a condition of entry, only if their behavior indicates a problem, or they want to join one of our programs. We are a no obvious use facility, not a zero tolerance one, so we can help as many as possible.

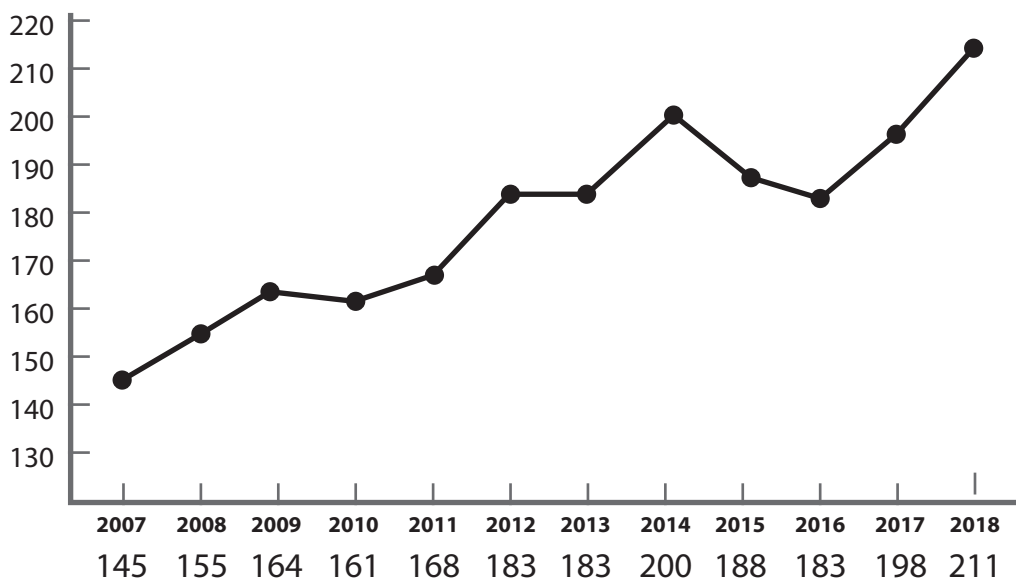
Women and children at Samaritan Inn

Since we moved into our new, larger Samaritan Inn in 2015, no women or children have been turned away for a lack of beds. In 2018, we averaged 71 per night in a 104 bed facility, leaving 33 beds empty every night. The projection is for continued growth of homeless women and children at our shelter this year.

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Locally and nationally, homeless women and children are increasing faster than men. There is a lack of marriage commitment, more divorces, increased addictions, even a sense of entitlement. Most homeless women are victims of domestic violence and were abused as children. Women and children have decreasing networks of family and friends. A crisis in the Foster Care System has greatly increased the number of mothers and children, as well as, single women waiting to get custody of their children, at our Samaritan Inn. Families that would have otherwise been separated are allowed to stay together only because of the accountability that our shelter provides.

Today, women and children outnumber the men at the Mission, if the 40 rental rooms for men are not counted, and some nights even if they are counted. That growth is not



Annual Average Meals Per Day Downtown Dining Room Only

because of an increase in the Douglas County census, nor from people moving here for our social services. These are local people. It is because of a change in our society, lifestyles of how we treat ourselves and others. A recent shortage of rental units appropriate for women and children has caused them to stay at Samaritan Inn longer. Mothers are required to apply for state housing grants and are given move out dates that coordinate with available housing.

Homeless campers outside the Mission

The graph of meals served at our downtown dining room is an indication that homeless camping is increasing in our community. Average daily meals downtown have gone up 46% in the past 12 years, suggesting a similar increase in homeless camping. During that same time period, our men's bed usage hardly changed.

Homeless camping is increasing in our community.

Many homeless campers are counterculture people, choosing not to live the same way as the majority of society. They do not want a home, however they got to that frame of mind, whether by drugs, alcohol, mental illness, rebellion, or uncontrollable circumstances. Some just want the freedom of not having responsibility. They willingly receive handouts, would even accept free housing, but not change their lifestyle. Many are young adults. There is an increase in women campers, especially couples. The biggest issue appears to be drugs, undoubtedly beginning in their youth. They might enter our men's or women's shelter, but will return to camping when the conditions of working on independence are imposed. For some, their situation is temporary, like the prodigal son that returned home when he came to his senses. We are here for them.

Addressing the rise in homelessness

In Douglas County, we are not going to end homelessness, and it has nothing to do with available shelter beds, low-income housing or employment. Homelessness is not the problem; it is a symptom. We cannot get into the minds and hearts of everyone to stop bad thoughts and actions. We cannot stop accidents and natural disasters. And we cannot force people to accept help. Even adding needed mental health treatment does not cause a person to receive it.

The three groups of homeless people described in this newsletter (men, women, and campers) have different needs. Men have sufficient capacity for now. Women need for us to add staff as we are able. Campers need well-meaning organizations to stop providing them with the resources to continue in a hopeless lifestyle.

The Gospel is humanity's only hope.

The core value in Rescue Missions has from our beginning been to preach the Gospel. Chapel services are required here, because without chapel there is no real rescue. Human nature is such that when something like chapel is made optional, even thinking that people would be more receptive, it is only a matter of time before it falls out of favor and no one would attend. The Gospel is humanity's only hope. We have lost foundation grants over it, even been ridiculed. But without appealing to our internal nature, we cannot properly address the external state of homelessness.



Thank you, Lynn Antis, Executive Director

Rescue

"Preach the Gospel
to the poor...proclaim
release to the captives
...set free those
who are downtrodden"
Luke 4:18

ITEMS NEEDED:

Oatmeal
Pancake Mix & Syrup
Canned Fruit
Egg Noodles
Tomato Sauce
Salt & Pepper
Cooking Oil
Deodorant
Disposable Razors
Diapers & Baby Wipes

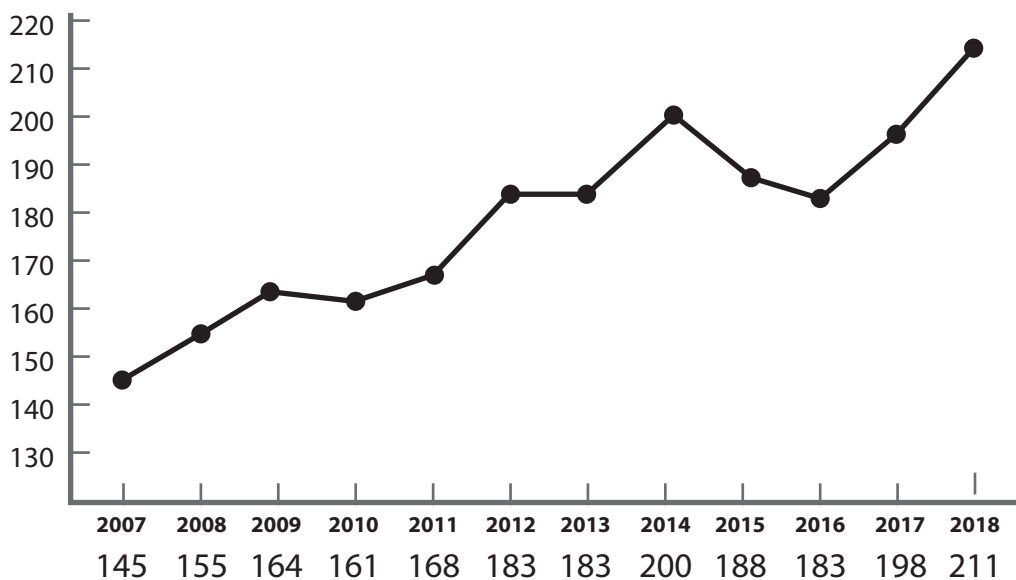
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Mon to Sat 9am to 6pm

Furniture
Household Items
Kitchen Wares
Sporting Goods
Electronics
Clothing
Bicycles

*Items need to be in good
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Mattresses not accepted.*

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