



# Roseburg Rescue Mission

Men's Shelter • Samaritan Inn • Thrift Stores

*A Beacon of Hope for the Homeless*

**JUNE 2020**

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## Working From Home At Mission

Chris is a customer service representative at a local information call center. He answers telephone calls from consumers with questions about the products they have purchased. Normal business practice has been for dozens of such employees to be in the same call center in small cubicles close together. However, recent concerns over physical distancing, because of the coronavirus, has caused the center to reduce the number of work stations used on-site. So they had the telephone company route Chris' incoming calls, through a secure line, to his Transitional Housing Program rental room at the Mission. He kept his job and had physical distancing. Its interesting that when a product service call is made, it could be answered by someone in an old single room occupancy hotel at a homeless shelter, or anywhere else in the world. And its a part of the new normal.

### **He kept his job and had physical distancing.**

For the past four years, Chris' private room here has been his home and the call center his job. When he arrived, he had just completed a time of being the live-in caregiver for his parents. He managed their funerals and estate arrangements and was still grieving his loss. During his first few months here, he stayed in our dormitory. Previous experience allowed him to easily get this job. Chris said, "The Mission gave me peace and quiet, a time to gather my thoughts. I know that sounds very simple, but its a very valuable asset." He said that here it is consistent in how it is run, safer and more secure than other places.

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In the photo above, he sports a Navy hat, being a veteran of the first Gulf War era. When his voluntary military service ended, he went back to school. He earned a degree in Environmental Science from an Oregon university. He worked in hazardous waste management for years until a downturn in the economy. Now, his underlying condition of diabetes prevents him from returning to the exposure of dangerous chemicals and possibly the close quarters of the call center.

Beyond the double rescue of home and job, there is another rescue operation underway. Being both a military brat and a serviceman, he is well traveled through the Middle East, seeing many historical Christian sites. He has been able to connect actual locations with Biblical messages told at the Mission. Chris is a Christian. He said messages here have thrown a light on some things and been encouraging.

## Homelessness Stops Here

Homelessness ends when there is a plan, not a handout. There has to be a means of accomplishing that goal, not just good intentions. Sustainability is necessary, not a temporary patch. Freedom is found in knowing our Creator, not living outdoors in His creation. Bondage is in addictions, not employment. Sobriety is in accountability, not isolation. Homelessness stops at the Mission, not in a campsite. Homelessness ends with the design of our "no obvious use" mission, not the enabling of a "damp" or "wet" drop-in center. We are a place of opportunity, encouragement and hope, not one to support an alternative lifestyle.

### **Not In A Campsite**

Other kinds of shelters and drop-in centers have no accountability, but allow drug and alcohol influence, possession, and use on-site. New terminology labels facilities allowing clients under the influence as "damp" houses, and those approving possession and use as "wet" houses. It lets alcoholics and drug addicts into the system, hoping to encourage them into treatment. However, theory and reality differ. Permitting such behavior actually legitimizes and perpetuates the destructive behavior to self and others, as well as increases crime. The experiment has been a failure, enabling people to self-destruct. There has been limited success for a few, but at a great cost to most and to the community.

Addiction recovery programs generally require an individual to be clean of drugs and sober of alcohol for a period of time by their own effort to be admitted to inpatient treatment. If that program also has to provide a detoxification facility, the success rate is considerably lower. Ultimately, it is up to the will of the individual to achieve a sober life. And without the Lord, it is very difficult.

# A More Secure Future

Viruses and violence require security and screening. The same protective measures can work to monitor for both. People need to be safe and separated. It was unexpected that a virus, rather than violence, would be the catalyst for increasing security. In fact, the virus scare caused some misbehavior and policy change. When people know that their convenience has been reduced so their security is increased, they are more accepting of the upgrades. When they understand that they are safer than before, any sense of restriction is lower. Both our Men's Shelter and Samaritan Inn have developed over the past few years to have dayrooms and courtyards large enough to not feel confined. Our progress to improve security has been pushed to the front of priorities and taken years off their completion times. We are better than we were before. The front gate at Samaritan Inn is now locked for entry day and night, but free for exit. Security cameras are now at that gate and



other areas. The courtyard gate and Dayroom door of our Men's Shelter are now locked for entry, but they can leave at any time. People are screened for entry at both campuses for symptoms of their medical condition and behavior. Meals are now to go for those not sleeping at either of our shelters for physical distancing and peace. Our administration office now has a window at the receptionist desk, and our stores have shields at the registers. Additional hand sanitizing stations have been installed and their use made a requirement for entry. Additional ultraviolet light fixtures have been installed in ductwork to kill airborne germs.

## We are better than we were before.

Even so, our staff have been shaken because of concern for themselves and their families, stress, underlying health conditions, and thrift store closures. Prior to the virus, we had 4 full-time and 11 part-time employees. At the lowest employment point, were down 7 part-time staff, leaving just 8 employees in place. For various reasons, some employees will not be returning to work. Recruiting and maintaining staff has become a greater challenge. Without staff and program supervisors, there is no Mission operation. Protection of personnel and clients is driving policy as much as provision of services. Word-of-mouth on the street is a powerful source of information regarding our assistance. Ultimately, it is up to the individual to want help and enter our more secure facilities.

## Protection of personnel and clients is driving policy as much as provision of services.

Other aspects of our daily operation have been affected as well. Chapel services had to be suspended during the crisis for physical distancing of our clients and to not have volunteers coming and going. Major projects were put on hold, so we could focus our organization and finances on the present condition of maintaining and improving safety and security. Even a restroom remodel, in the middle of completion, was delayed, waiting on contractors. Our Thrift Store, Furniture Store, and warehouse recycling were closed to the public, temporarily stopping a vital source of operating income. We do not receive government funding, nor do we qualify for their relief package.

When the restrictions are lifted, our Men's Shelter and Samaritan Inn will be different, better than before. Much of the change will remain as improvements, and we will have a more secure future.

Thank you, Lynn Antis, Executive Director



## Rescue

"I sought the Lord,  
and He answered me,  
And delivered me  
from all my fears."

Psalm 34:4

### job opening

Employment Position  
Maintenance Man  
Must have handyman  
skills and driver's  
license.

20 hours per week.

Send resume to:  
rsbgmission@aol.com

### items needed

Spaghetti, Macaroni  
Tomato Sauce  
Diced Tomatoes  
Mushroom Soup  
Refried Beans, Salt  
Oatmeal, Pepper  
Cooking Oil, Mayo  
Canned Fruit  
Baby Diapers #5 & #6  
Baby Wipes  
Disposable Razors  
Deodorant  
Disinfectant Spray  
Disinfectant Wipes  
Strollers 1 & 2 Seats

### items accepted

At Our Dock  
806 SE Pine St  
Mon-Sat 9am to 6pm  
Furniture  
Household Items  
Kitchen Wares  
Sporting Goods  
Electronics  
Clothing  
Bicycles

*Items need to be in good  
condition and working order.  
Mattresses not accepted.*