

FAMILY IN DISTRESS: A Success Story

Twilla and **Chris**, with their two boys **Theo** and **Trent**, joined SIHN in March after living with relatives and in their car at Wal-mart parking lots. After Chris was laid off of his job with an RV company in the Estacada area, they decided to return to Salem where they had family connections and a job opportunity for Chris. Unfortunately, the job only lasted ten days. Sharing an apartment with family didn't work as planned either: it was crowded, the children couldn't sleep, they had money stolen, and meth was being used by some of the relatives. Returning to Wal-Mart's parking lot felt like "going home." There was a nearby MacDonald's where the boys could play on the equipment, and they showered at friends' houses whenever possible. At first, it was like camping for Trent and Theo. Ghost stories at night kept everyone laughing, but the water condensation everywhere became a major problem. They had to roll over at the same time in the night, hold up plastic bags on the windows to provide each other with privacy for dressing, and constantly find ice for the lunch meat kept in a plastic tote for meals. But what could they do? \$6000 in savings had been used up on motels since the fall, and with no phone or address, employers and landlords had no way to reach Chris or Twila. "Interfaith saved us," says Twila with her gracious smile. Participation in the RENT Program will help clear their eviction record. Four weeks with SIHN allowed them to get ahead, and Chris' new job gives them a future of independence.

We give thanks to all the people in Interfaith who contributed to the happy ending of this story.

NEW DIRECTOR FOR SALEM IHN

A warm welcome to our new Director, **Richard Zielke**, who joined us May 15th. As an ordained pastor, his experience dealing with people will be invaluable. He has a MDiv/CE from North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago, with post-graduate studies in Leadership & Organization from George Fox University in Portland. He is also a student of Celtic Spirituality. Prior to moving to Oregon in the late 90's, Richard served on the Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity in Whatcom Co, WA. He and his wife, Kelly, are members of Trinity Covenant Church where they have volunteered to host families during Interfaith's weeks there. Their "passion for pugs" includes family pooches "Brigid" and "Padraig." We are blessed to have his experience, training, and passion for servanthood.

BREAKFAST UPDATE

As we move forward meeting the needs of Salem's homeless, let us not forget the financial support of the community that makes this happen. A record **237** people attended our Annual Breakfast March 7; a record **\$20, 646** was raised, compared to \$16,354 in 2005. Isn't it inspiring to see what people of faith can accomplish together?

GRANTS EXTEND SERVICES

Since January 1, we have received **\$8,650** from grant proposals submitted to some very generous corporations and foundations. Thanks so much to the **Presbytery of the Cascades, Wal-Mart (Turner Rd), Wells Fargo, Salem Foundation-Virgil and Elma Kubin Fund**, and the **Juan Young Trust**. In addition, we received **\$5,000** from **FEMA** for help with our mass shelter expenses.

Since the first of the year, Volunteer Grant Writer **Jan Taylor**, on behalf of Salem IHN, has submitted 18 grant proposals to organizations that support various aspects of homeless shelter. We will keep you informed of the response.

IHN Salutes a Faithful Partner

As Salem IHN marked its 7th Anniversary in May, we noted that another faith-based ministry in town celebrated its 10th Anniversary. In fact, Salem Leadership Foundation (SLF) is one of the founding members of Salem IHN and has been a steady partner since our beginning.

Salem Leadership Foundation was founded in 1996 when a group civic leaders, pastors and lay people noticed that there was a gap between the faith community and the public sector: schools, government, law enforcement, and social services. With all the partnership SIHN enjoys these days—city, state, county, schools, foundations—it's hard to remember there was a time when such relationships were virtually non-existent.

SLF started primarily by supporting after-school and reading programs at high-needs elementary schools: Grant, Highland, Bush and Richmond. The School District's Homeless Education Outreach Program was also an early partner. In 1998, when Pastor Doug Dobson of Holy Cross Lutheran Church started hosting meetings to form an Interfaith Hospitality Network in Salem, SLF eagerly joined the diverse table.

As SLF's Executive Director Sam Skillern often says, "SIHN is a perfect example of 'church and state' working well together." When the Network

was formed in 1999, our Day Center was a room at the YWCA; we got \$42,000 in funding from the Dept. of Human Services; and our ‘staff’ was on loan from the Homeless Education Program. Two years later, when SIHN bought the Day Center in West Salem, it was made possible by a no-interest loan from the City of Salem. “Salem IHN serves as a tremendous example of faith-in-action,” Skillern said. “Congregations are opening their homes and their hearts to people in need, just as Isaiah 58 and Matthew 25 ordain. It’s a wonderful ministry.”

SIHN at 7, SLF at 10. May the Lord continue to bless these and all faith-based ministries in the City of Shalom.

WHO WILL NOTICE?

For any of us who have been forced to buy a new water heater or replace a leaking roof, household necessities aren’t flashy, but they sure are appreciated. This winter, staff and families will give thanks for the *new furnace* due to be installed June 12th. Special thanks to Board Member **Jerry Bochsler** for overseeing this and many other repair projects.

RED CARPET TREATMENT

Guest **Cyndi S.** was with SIHN for about a month in March, during which time she used her personal equipment to clean the Day Center’s carpets. Our new carpeting gets a lot of use; taking care of it will extend its life. Our sincere thanks to Cyndi for her labors, and best wishes for continued success at her new job in Lincoln City.

STAFF CHANGES

*Our thanks to **Amy Groom** for her loving support to SIHN families as Director from May 2004-March 2006. We wish her well.

*Welcome to **Bob Ruck**, Salem IHN’s new Treasurer. He brings a wealth of experience to Interfaith, both as a CPA by profession, as well as having served on several local non-profit boards. He replaces long-time Board Member **Gordon Diss**, who has relocated to Arizona.

Monthly and annual family statistics

“Occupancy Scorecard”:	FYE 12-31-02	FYE 12-31-03	FYE 12-31-04	FYE 12-31-05	2006 YTD 4-30-06
# Families	22	25	32	26	15
# Adults	33	33	47	36	22
# Children	39	51	65	55	24
# Total Guests	72	84	112	91	46
Avg. length stay (days)	50	49	37	48	29
% Occupancy (bed nights)	66%	75%	80%	88%	84%

DAY CENTER NEEDS

- *toilet paper*
- *paper towels*
- *garbage bags (13 gal)*
- *VCR machine (our old one died)*

Human need: **Bilingual volunteer** to assist with inquiries and translations. Please call Day Center (503-370-9752) if you have some time to share.