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National Websites:

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
www.aa.org or
www.alcoholicsanonymous.org

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)
www.na.org

Cocaine Anonymous (CA)
www.ca.org

For Family & Friends:
Al-Anon & Alateen:
www.OregonAl-Anon.org

Adult Children of
Alcoholics (ACA)
www.adultchildren.org

Serenity Lane...
1-800-543-9905
www.serenitylane.org



Stepping Together

Serenity Lane's Alumni Newsletter Winter 2014

Saving lives and helping put families back together since 1973

We've Broken Ground!

A diverse group of 150 neighbors, donors, politicians, contractors, board members and treatment professionals gathered on Wednesday, September 10th to celebrate what some thought might never happen- the official groundbreaking ceremony for Serenity Lane's new treatment center in Coburg, Oregon. After seven years of perseverance, it was finally time to put a shovel in the ground. When the day finally came, Mike Dyer, Serenity Lane's president and CEO, told those in attendance that this was about much more than putting up new buildings.

"It's not about bricks and mortar," he said. "It's about saving people's lives and putting families back together. This facility is just a physical asset that will allow us to do that. It's really the lives that this will impact that I want people to know about."

Father John Kerns, a Serenity Lane board member and the son of Serenity Lane's founder, Dr. Thomas A. Kerns, echoed the same theme in his keynote speech.

"Serenity Lane is about saving lives," he said. "Unfortunately, the disease of addiction continues to wreak havoc on individuals, their families, and our society.

"Today, we thank God for our generous benefactors and partners who now make it possible for us to be standing here and looking toward a stronger future and a greater capacity to save lives."

The new treatment center is projected to open in the spring of 2016. It will double the bed capacity of Serenity Lane's present facility from 65 to 130 and is designed to double again to 260 beds as funds become available.

Mike Dyer emphasized the need for more funds. "There are four buildings (including the Fitness Center and the Meditation Center) for which we have drawings and plans that we can't build right now because we don't have the funds. We are going on the faith that we will be able to raise that money from the community during the construction phase."



Serenity Lane Board members break ground at the new campus.

Letter from the Editor



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR & ALUMNI COORDINATOR; SHELY RAHIMI

“Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony.” – Thomas Merton

When you have achieved a state of stable recovery, the key to maintaining a healthy and successful life is balance. We all have our natural strengths and weaknesses, but by looking at the larger picture, we can make an effort to supplement some of our shortcomings. Embrace and celebrate the areas where you excel, while pushing yourself to grow and expand into uncharted territory. Broadening your horizons will help you live a more rich and fulfilling life by challenging yourself to step out of your comfort zone and routines.

If you typically keep your nose to the grindstone, remember to take a vacation day once in a while. If you are a free spirit, add structure to your day and find ways to get organized. If you are a wallflower, take a public speaking course. If you are a social butterfly, practice meditation. Your partner or loved one can also be a positive influence by acting as a counterpart to your personality traits. If you are confrontational and your spouse is passive, each of you can grow together by adopting the other's strengths, learning to be less combative or more assertive.

When you live a balanced life, you will have more tools to protect yourself from the harm of potential triggers or threats of relapse. We've all heard the expression “don't put all your eggs in one basket.” My interpretation of this is to avoid being entirely dependent on one thing to provide fulfillment. This way of thinking can easily lead to co-dependence and obsession, forcing you to rely on external sources of happiness. When you develop your own internal resources, if one area of your life is under construction, you will have a strong and stable foundation to weather the storm.

The concept of balance extends to all facets of life, and this holistic approach becomes especially important at this time of year. During the rush and chaos of the holidays, stay centered through adequate sleep, gratifying exercise, festive time with loved ones and tranquil time with yourself. During this season of excess, focus on quality instead of quantity when it comes to shopping, cooking, decorating and planning. Don't become preoccupied with the stress and obligations of the season, and instead remain committed to the principles of stability and self-care.



Newsletter Team:

Shely Rahimi: Editor, Alumni Coordinator

Mary Daniels: Marketing Director

Angie Delaplain: Graphic Design

Larry Bradley: Vice President of Development

Jennifer Slater: Development Coordinator

Upcoming EVENTS & Happenings

Albany Holiday Celebration Potluck:

Wednesday, November 26th, 3-6 p.m., Alums & families welcome! Serenity Lane office, 1050 Price Rd. SE, Albany.

Bend Annual Holiday Potluck Gathering

Friday, December 5th, 6-9 p.m., Alums & families welcome! Sons of Norway Hall, 549 NW Harmon Blvd, Bend.

Eugene Alumni Holiday Party

Saturday, December 6th, 2-5 p.m.. Unitarian Universalist Church, 1685 West 13th, Eugene. Bingo with Santa, crafts, food, and music. Bring the whole family!

Roseburg Holiday Potluck Gathering

Wednesday, December 17th at 5 p.m., Alums & families welcome! Serenity Lane office, 2575 NW Kline St., Roseburg.

Salem Alumni Holiday Potluck

Friday, December 12th, 6-9 p.m., 1885 Fisher Rd. N.E., Salem. Current RS, IOP, alumni and families welcome!

Portland Alumni Holiday Party

Saturday, December 13th, 1-4 pm., Our Lady of the Lake Parish Hall, 650 A Avenue, Lake Oswego. Bingo, music, and homemade Southern cooking! Bring the whole family!

Bend Alumni Meetings

1st Monday of every month at 5:30pm at Round Table Pizza, 1552 NE 3rd Street, Bend.

Albany Alumni Meetings

1st and 3rd Thursday at 6:00pm each month at Albany Serenity Lane office, 1050 Price Rd. SE, Albany.

Roseburg Alumni meetings

Wednesday, 12/31 will be movies & pizza

Wednesday, 1/14/15 will be a chili cook off with the counselors as judges.

Wednesday, 2/11 heart shaped pizzas.

Call for alumni event and meeting times, **541-733-6698** or e-mail mykejohanson@yahoo.com

Interested in starting an alumni group in your area?

**Contact Larry at lbradley@serenitylane.org,
(541) 284-8609**

**or Jennifer at jslater@serenitylane.org,
(541) 284-8606.**



**Aerial view of our new SL Campus,
taken Oct 30, 2014**



Holiday Tips

7 Tips for a Clean & Sober Holiday Season

by: *Mary Helen Dyer*

The period of time between Thanksgiving and New Year's can seem extremely long when you're struggling with sobriety, especially if your substance-free lifestyle is still new and fresh. Although the holidays can be tough, it's a great time to celebrate all you have accomplished.

Read on for a few tips to smooth the way:

- Volunteer your time at a local homeless shelter or spend time with underprivileged youth or seniors. Nothing brightens the holidays and takes your mind off your own problems like helping other people.
- Make a list of people you can call when times get tough and reach out for help if you're struggling. This may be a good time to attend a few extra Twelve-Step meetings.
- Find at least one person who will remain sober with you during each party. You can celebrate without feeling so alone.
- Be polite, but don't feel obligated to explain why you decline drinks. You can always sip a glass of soda or sparkling cider. People won't be as inclined to offer if you already have a beverage in hand.
- If people don't accept your choice not to drink, you may be at the wrong party. Thank your host and leave if you aren't comfortable. No excuses are required.
- Stay away from places that trigger cravings for drugs or alcohol. Avoid old hangouts and former drinking partners that don't support your sober lifestyle. Steer clear of social events created just for the purpose of getting drunk or high.
- Enjoy the season with supportive friends and family members. Relax by the fire, watch your favorite holiday movies or go for a walk in the fresh air.

Apple-Pie Spiced Cider

Here's a delicious way to ward off cold weather: Serve hot cider spiced like an apple pie. Season your cider with the same spices you would use in a pie—cinnamon, allspice, ginger, cloves, and nutmeg—then heat it up. Add a cinnamon stick to each mug for stirring.

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 quarts apple cider
- 3 tablespoons firmly packed light-brown sugar
- 7 whole cinnamon sticks, (6 sticks for garnish)
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- Ground cloves
- Freshly grated nutmeg
- Salt

Directions:

In a medium saucepan, whisk together cider, sugar, spices, and salt. Bring to a simmer over medium-low heat. Remove from heat. Strain into a pitcher; discard solids. Serve in mugs, garnished with cinnamon sticks.



Alcohol-Free Eggnog

- 6 eggs
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 quart milk
- 1/3 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 pinch ground nutmeg
- 1 pinch salt

Beat the eggs, mix in the condensed milk, vanilla, milk, and salt. Beat the whipping cream until soft peaks form. Fold the cream into the egg and milk mixture and sprinkle with nutmeg. Serve chilled. Serves: 8-12

Read more at <http://www.theholidayspot.com/christmas/recipes/>

How Do You Express Your *Gratitude?*

by: Larry Bradley

People express their gratitude in many ways. Some simply say, “Thank you!” For others, it is a quick e-mail message, a Facebook post, or a text sent on the fly. Less often today, people will express their appreciation the old fashioned way, by writing a personal note or letter of appreciation. The letter below from alum Haley W. is an example of letters we regularly receive at Serenity Lane.

Gratitude is a well-established principle within Alcoholics Anonymous. For many years, AA has considered the month of November to be a time for people in recovery to express their gratitude for the gift of sobriety.

Many Serenity Lane alumni take the opportunity this time of year to express their gratitude to Serenity Lane with a financial contribution. Some have directed their donation to help complete construction of our new treatment center (we are still raising the funds to build the fitness center and the meditation center). Others have contributed to our scholarship fund, which helps patients like Haley get the treatment they so desperately need. We have recently established the Tops Fellowship, a planned giving program named in the honor of Tops Kerns, the wife of Serenity Lane’s founder, Dr. Tom Kerns. It’s designed for people who wish to include Serenity Lane in their estate planning and thereby support Serenity Lane’s mission for future generations.

If you are a grateful alum of Serenity Lane, or a family member of someone who is living a life of sobriety, we hope you will take a moment and use the enclosed envelope to express your gratitude and help assure that treatment is available in the future for those in search of their own miracle.



From a grateful scholarship recipient

To Whom it May Concern,

Words cannot express just how deeply grateful I am to have gotten the opportunity to have been awarded this scholarship. I literally couldn't have done it without your help. I have struggled with addiction my whole life in one form or another and in the past I've felt no hope for the future. This scholarship gives me hope and determination to do whatever it takes in ExSL to put your money to good use. Thank you for believing in me enough to want to help me save my life.

I've been in treatment before and am a chronic relapser. I've never been to Serenity Lane before and the program here is a lot more challenging and life changing than any other place I've been to. In my short stay at ExSL so far I've already begun to learn so many life skills that are crucial to my sobriety.

I've learned accountability, ownership, work ethic, and I've begun to trust my peers. All these skills and more will help me become a sober, productive member of society, and for that I am eternally grateful. With the help of this program, the scholarship you graciously awarded me, and my own hard work I know that I have a chance at (a) life that I never really had before. I prayed for a chance to be able to participate in ExSL and because of you, this dream is now a reality, Thank you so much for all that you have done for a hopeless junkie such as myself. I know my grandpa's weak heart (and wallet) appreciate it too.

Haley W.

Sky-High in Recovery

EUGENE SKYDIVERS

Nine Roseburg Serenity Lane alumni found a new way to get high in September, literally. They met at Creswell Airport at 8 AM on a sunny Sunday morning and went skydiving.

“I don’t think you can make a better statement about what sobriety is,” said Layne F., the event coordinator. “If you have any question about a higher power, you can experience gravity and you will no longer have any question about it. I’ve survived wars and 28 years in law enforcement. I’ve survived two bombings and stabbings. This is the most exciting thing I have ever done.”

When the instructor was asked by one of the alumni how fast they would be falling (from 12,000 feet), he replied, “You won’t have to worry about how fast you are going because most of you guys are going to have your eyes closed.”



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I "graduated" from Serenity Lane in August of 2009 and have been able to maintain my sobriety continuously now for over 5 years. Greatest experience of my life and I couldn't thank the staff in Eugene enough for the things they helped me discover about myself and my addictions. It warms my heart to see yet another facility coming to life and to think of all the lives that it will improve. God bless each and every one of you involved in dragging us back from hell.

Seth B wrote this on our Facebook page.

Last Issue - Thankful Gift Card Recipient

I received my gift card, today. I can't believe I actually won something. That is a rare thing for me. This is a nice gift for me from Serenity Lane but what is even more precious to me is the gift of sobriety I received through the wonderful efforts of the Portland outpatient program back in October of 1985. My life would have been terrible without the help I received through the excellent work of our group facilitator, Doug. He was

such a skilled group leader who always kept us honest and on task. Through the Serenity Lane program my career and personal life was saved from the destruction it was heading for. I will be forever thankful for the excellent outpatient program that Serenity Lane provided.

Greg A

Classified Alumni Connections:

SL alum looking for a Sober Ski Partner.

Reply to: lbradley@serenitylane.org

Looking for a sponsor for your sober soccer, softball, or volleyball team?

Contact: lbradley@serenitylane.org

Looking to connect with SL alumni in your area?

Contact: lbradley@serenitylane.org

Community Service Awards Breakfast



Dr. Ron Schwerzler
Health Care Professional Award
and his wife, Linda Schwerzler



Lisa Deacon
Unsung Hero Award
Nominated by; Debbie Craft



Nita Vannice
Unsung Hero Award
Nominated by; Mike Schwatrz M.D.



Forrest Beesley
Unsung Hero Award
Nominated by; Debbie Craft

This year's Community Service Awards Breakfast was a great success! Over 325 friends and family from the treatment community, local businesses, board members, alumnus and donors attended to help honor this year's winners. Here is a list of the winners:

Addiction Professional Award

Sal Cantu, Looking Glass

Community Leadership Award

Ray Brown, The Relief Nursery

Community Youth Leadership Award

Alec Cook, Springfield High School

Human Resources Award

Dawn Strong, Springfield School District

Legal Professional/Uniformed Public Service Award

Sasha Paulsen, Springfield Police Department

Health Care Professional Award

Dr. Ron Schwerzler, Serenity Lane

Mayor's Award

Michael Wright, Sponsors, Inc.

Unsung Heroes-

La Monte Morgan, Sponsors, Inc.

John Brandon, P.A., Buckley House

Lisa Deacon, Serenity Lane

Forrest Beesley, Serenity Lane

Tricia Dellinger, The F.A.I.R. Project

Kendall Hickson, Willamette Family, Inc.

Janet Perez, PeaceHealth Medical Group

Kurt Gehring, Emergence

Kat Dolan, Emergence

Nita Vannice, Serenity Lane

Saira Linton, Willamette Family, Inc.

Hope to see you next year!

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It is not joy
that makes us
GRATEFUL

it is gratitude
that makes us
JOYFUL

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