

Contact Numbers

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Important Alert Inside:



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

SPRING
2012

Serenity Lane's Alumni Newsletter

Saving lives and helping put families back together since 1973



A Catastrophic Loss of Talent

*by Jerry Gjesvold, Manager of Employer Services.
35+ years in recovery*

There are times when those of us in the field of drug treatment can feel a little like Cassandra, the woman in Greek myth whose warnings fell on deaf ears. It's not because people don't care about drug abuse – they do – but because we've talked about it for so long.

Then something tragic gets people's attention. Maybe a car full of teenagers crashes. Another tragedy unfolded recently, but you wouldn't have heard about it. In one month last fall, a significant percentage of Serenity Lane's residential patients were between the ages of 18 and 24 – and most of these young people were addicted to opiates.

It's tempting to rationalize this kind of information. We'd like to wish it away as a statistical blip. But Serenity Lane's experience is no anomaly. It's a close-up view of what's happening nationally. A federal study recently found that Oregon was #1 in the country for 13-18 year-olds using prescription drugs – mostly opiates – for other than their prescribed use.

There's no question that this kind of drug abuse among our young people threatens all of us with a catastrophic loss. Death is the most obvious way this happens, to be sure. But a full-blown chemical dependency stays with someone for life. It can be arrested with quality treatment and recovery support, but there really is no permanent "cure." The young person will have to deal with it for the rest of his or her life.



Newsletter Team:

Shely Rahimi: Editor

Angie Delaplain: Graphic Designer

Mary Daniels: Director

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR & ALUMNI COORDINATOR

“Change is inevitable... Growth is intentional.”

Much of the process of recovery is a personal journey. It begins with the acceptance of a problem and the intention to seek out a solution. Those of you who have graduated from our program to achieve lasting sobriety have done the difficult work of challenging your patterns and defense mechanisms and discovering a new way of living.

As you continue to be grateful for the vast strides you have made in your overall physical, emotional and spiritual health, you may encounter individuals who are trapped on a different trajectory. These may be friends, loved ones, children, relatives or colleagues. As a representative of the power and success of chemical dependency treatment, you have the ability to serve as a role model for those still struggling to break free of the influence of their addict.

Although you have walked through the heavy, painful path of addiction and climbed out of the depths of rock bottom, it may still be daunting to guide others through the same corridor. However, by confronting and overcoming the destructive force of this disease, you have gained insight into its complexities and can utilize your experience to inspire others to address the same obstacles.

The many faces of addiction have a common thread that ties us all, and our personal stories are chapters in a collective narrative of crisis and hope. We all have the capacity to become a beacon of hope for others. It is ultimately each individual's choice to begin the process of healing, but we can still light the way.

Shine a light.
Shely Rahimi



Happenings

COMING RIGHT UP....

We've just given our website a beautiful new face lift, check it out! www.serenitylane.org



SAVE THE DATE:

The Annual Alumni Picnic in Eugene

- Sunday, September 9, 2012
- Alton Baker Park, Eugene
- Lunch will be catered by **Boss Haws Express Catering** and will be served from 1-3 pm
- Entertainment, Prizes & Fun for the whole family!



TESTIMONIAL

Hello! My name is Hans and I entered Serenity Lane, Eugene in December 2000 after many years of drinking (I was 50 years old.) I was at my end, having attempted to kill myself because alcohol had finally beaten me. You people literally saved my life and I am forever indebted. You showed me a way out by giving me the information I needed about my disease. After you did what you could, it was strongly advised that I get involved in AA. I did, and I just celebrated 11 years of contented sobriety. Thank you and God bless your work.

~Hans K

Changes in SL Board of Directors



After 17 years as Board Chair, **Larry Olson** resigned from that position and assumed a new role on the Board, heading up a sub-committee which will oversee the construction of our new campus in Coburg. Thank you Larry for your unparalleled service and dedication to our mission.



Stepping into the role of Board Chair is **Larry Bradley** who had served as Vice Chair for the past 6 years and on the board for more than 20 years. Larry's energy and willingness to share the joy of recovery with others makes him a very special advocate for Serenity Lane.



We would like to welcome **Father John Kerns** to Serenity Lane's board of directors. Father Kerns is the son of our founder Dr. Thomas Kerns, and is the parish priest of St. Juan Diego Catholic Church in northwest Portland. The entire Kerns family have been actively involved in service work and it is our pleasure to have Father Kerns join our board.

Address Changes/Deletions

Help us keep our mailing list current.
Send changes or deletions to:

Shely Rahimi
Serenity Lane Alumni Office
10920 SW Barbur Blvd
Portland, OR 97219

or email to: alumni@serenitylane.org
or call Shely at **503-244-4500 ext 8103**



World Renown Chef: Making a difference with his own recovery

it most. The Partnership at Drugfree.org believes that also and I am honored to join them to help anyone touched by this devastating illness."

Visitors to The Partnership at Drugfree.org's Facebook wall will have the unique opportunity to chat live with Andrew and hear from others touched by substance abuse.

"We are honored that Andrew has chosen to help us reach parents and families directly with his inspirational, personal story of recovery and triumph," said Steve Pasierb, President and CEO of The Partnership at Drugfree.org. "Andrew is not only an incredible chef with a huge following among 'foodies' all over the world, but he is also a loving father whose encouraging story lets others know that help is available and recovery is possible."

Zimmern also created a poignant video about his recovery as a part of The Partnership at Drugfree.org's *You Are Not Alone* campaign. For more information on Zimmern, please visit AndrewZimmern.com. To learn more about The Partnership at Drugfree.org, please visit drugfree.org.

Ninety percent of addictions get their start in the teenage years. The Partnership at Drugfree.org is dedicated to helping families solve the problem of teen substance abuse. Bringing together renowned scientists, parent experts and communications professionals, this public health nonprofit translates research on teen behavior, parenting, addiction and treatment into useful and effective resources at drugfree.org. Its *You Are Not Alone* campaign is dedicated to supporting families of the 11 million teens and young adults who need addiction treatment, while the organization's community education programs reach families at the grassroots level.

SOURCE: *The Partnership at Drugfree.org*

The Partnership at Drugfree.org, a national nonprofit helping parents solve the problem of teen substance abuse, is partnering with award-winning TV personality, chef, father and food writer Andrew Zimmern.

Zimmern is a chef, teacher and renowned personality in the food world. As the co-creator, host and consulting producer of Travel Channel's hit series "Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern" and "Andrew Zimmern's Bizarre World," he travels the world, exploring food and international cuisine. In May 2010, Zimmern won the James Beard Award for Outstanding TV Food Personality.

Early in his life, Zimmern struggled with alcoholism and addiction and this year celebrates 20 years in recovery. He shares his personal story and path to recovery, while offering encouragement to others who may be struggling with a loved one's addiction.

"Addiction/alcoholism is a devastating family disease that is responsible for corroding communities as easily as it takes the lives of those individuals suffering from the direct effects of drinking and drugging," said Zimmern. "But there is also the grace of recovery. The power of that transformation is available to any and all seeking the hand of help offered by those who have solved the problem in their own lives. As a recovering addict and alcoholic, and also as a father, a husband and a son, nothing is more important to me than carrying the message of hope to those that need





“Green” Smoothie

Created by Licensed
Nutritionist Linda Wagner
lindawagner.net (Blog)



One of Linda Wagner’s favorite things is a Green Smoothie. It’s a fast, easy, and delicious way to get a big dose of vitamins and minerals, plus it tastes FANTASTIC!!

Don’t let the colors fool you!! It is sweet and filling – even the kids love it!! And it’s a great way to sneak in some powerful green nutrition into their diet.

This green smoothie is fast to make and a great breakfast or snack option, especially for people on the go and those looking to lose weight. It takes about 2 minutes to make, literally!!

This recipe is super simple. All you need is a blender and the following ingredients:

1 or 2 bananas
1/2 cup frozen peaches
1/2 cup frozen mango
a couple handfuls of spinach
ice & water

Add just enough water and ice to blend and enjoy. That’s it! Forget the dehydrating morning latte and get the glow with a Green Smoothie instead.

Linda is a licensed nutritionist and has clients who have literally changed their lives just by adding Green Smoothies into their routine. Great for weight loss, digestive health, supporting the immune system, and as a healthy and filling snack. After a couple of weeks you’ll have that ‘Glow’ – glowing skin, hair, nails, even eyes get brighter! Who doesn’t want that?!

Try any combo you like, all you need is a base of bananas, fruit of your choice and a couple handfuls of your favorite green (spinach has a really mild flavor that blends well).

Go ahead, try it, We know you want to!! It may just change your life!!



A Catastrophic Loss of Talent

continued.....from page 1.

It’s important to ask ourselves, as adults, what’s causing young people so much discomfort that they turn to these powerful drugs for relief? I can tell you from my experience at Serenity Lane that it’s not physical pain that they’re medicating. It’s something deeper.

For some, it’s feelings of hopelessness about the future. For others, it’s painful feelings of “being less than” that come when they compare themselves with celebrities and sports stars. Or when they look ahead and see little hope of meaningful or good-paying work, even with a good education.

These feelings don’t happen in a vacuum; they happen in an environment where we “take a pill for every ill.” Combine that with the fact that young people have no experience getting through difficult times and turning to painkillers makes a terrible kind of sense.

So what can adults do? Well, the first step is to accept that the problem exists at all. We can pay closer attention to the warning signs that the young people in our lives might be using these drugs (www.drugabuse.gov, the National Institutes on Drug Abuse website, is very helpful for this). We can know how many Oxycontin or Vicodin pills we have in the medicine cabinet, lock them up securely, and dispose of them properly.

But in a time when things aren’t looking all that hopeful for many families, we adults can also do our own work to be honest about how tough times are. To emphasize how important each and every person is regardless of their income or possessions. We can make a sustained effort to stay optimistic. And we can attend to the spiritual needs that are really under all of this – the big-picture needs for meaning, hope and strength.

Young people are looking to us to show how to deal with difficult emotions in constructive ways. Being aware of the problem, taking practical steps and setting an example of how a person can learn to deal with difficult times are all things we can do. ■



Healthy kids thrive without Rx drug abuse

SEEING A CONCERT GOING FOR A SWIM
HOPE CHECKING OUT FOOTBALL GAMES
STUDYING HARD
BEING HEALTHY
CRAZY FAMILY VACATIONS
SPORTS PRACTICE LISTENING TO MUSIC
HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS

Prescription Drug Abuse Among Teens

reprinted from The Prevention Researcher
by Bethany Winkel - February 2012

Prescription drug abuse continues to be a huge problem among the youth of our country. Teens are using the drugs for a variety of reasons, but they fail to see the seriousness of the problem.

Adolescents abuse prescription drugs more than just about any other substance. "For adolescents, prescription drugs are second only to marijuana as the most popular form of illegal drug use," says Steven Ungerleider, PhD., founding editor of The Prevention Researcher. "With 22% of high school seniors reporting that they have used nonmedical prescription drugs sometime in their lives, abuse of these drugs is a growing concern for parents and many professionals who work with youth." (1)

Entertainment

There are different reasons why teens abuse different prescription drugs. Some are taken purely for entertainment or to help them enjoy a party more. These prescription pills float around from student to student, sometimes without the user even knowing what they are taking. Pill parties are get-togethers where adolescents bring whatever drugs they could get from home or a relative's house, and take turns popping the pills and exploring the effects.

Performance Enhancement

Other teens have begun taking prescription drugs to enhance their performance at school. Medications that help people focus or increase energy so a student can stay up all night to study are the most commonly abused. Often with these kinds of drugs, students don't even see that it is wrong, because they see it helping out for a good purpose.

Meeting a Need

Still other teens take antidepressants, sleep aids, or anti-anxiety medication without a prescription to help with these kinds of mental health issues. While these teens may be in need of a real prescription because they do have a condition that warrants it, taking the drugs without a prescription is illegal and it can be harmful.

Dangerous and Illegal

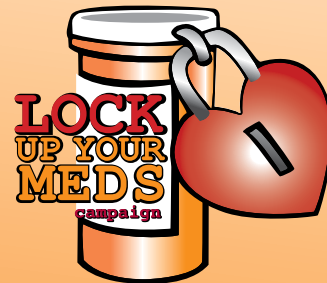
Prescription drug abuse is a serious problem. Drugs can have fatal side effects, especially if taken in combination with other drugs or alcohol. Other drugs are so addicting that by abusing them when they are young, adolescents are setting themselves up for a life of addiction.

Because prescription medications come from a doctor, many adolescents still do not believe that taking them is wrong. Prescription drugs seem like a harmless way to have fun or to solve a little problem, and because of the great number of teens abusing these drugs and the ease with which the pills can be acquired, many don't see it as wrong or dangerous. We need to get the message out to our young people that prescription drug abuse is dangerous. The researchers at The Prevention Researcher conclude that "it is imperative that service professionals who work with adolescent populations be aware of this emerging and serious issue. Clearly, any substance use prevention programs that target adolescents must include information on nonmedical prescription drug use." (1)

Sources: (1) *New Resources for Prevention of Adolescent Prescription Drug Abuse*

What can you do to make sure your medications don't get in the wrong hands?

- Lock up your meds!
- Keep track of your supply
- Dispose of leftover medications appropriately



April 28th Take back your prescription drugs day
Check online for local receiving centers

From Tragedy to Healing.... One Woman's Story

by Mary Daniels



Sally Pelkey

Those of us who work in the field of chemical dependency know only too well – this is a deadly disease. For all those courageous alcoholics and addicts who come to treatment, we know that some will not be able to maintain their sobriety. The statistics are a reality we cannot deny. We know that some will die.

On Dec 8th, 2010 Jim Pelkey became one of those sad statistics. The headline in the newspaper simply read “Marcola man crashes into police car at Rice Hill, dies.”

His wife Sally was devastated. They had married only 3 months before his death, having been school friends 30 years earlier in Roseburg. They’d reconnected in 2009 and Sally became his main “support person” all the way through his treatment experience at Serenity Lane. “He really plugged into that program,” Sally recalls. From a family fraught with alcoholism and addiction, he was determined to overcome his demons and be a good father to his three children and a loving husband and partner to Sally.

But an incident in Eugene triggered a devastating relapse.

His father was homeless, and Jim hadn’t seen him in four years. “Then one day, there he was, standing on a street corner holding up a sign. Jim’s heart started breaking,” says Sally. “He felt so guilty having a warm bed to sleep in and a fire to cozy up to, while his own father was living on the streets.”

After Jim’s death, Sally began her grieving process. She decided to make quilts out of Jim’s clothes (the tee shirts he wore often) for ten of his family members. Though they were estranged from Sally and not a healthy group for her to spend time with, she wanted to honor all that Jim had meant to them. She knew they were hurting too.

Over the next 12 months, Sally made ten unique quilts. Stitch by stitch, she was mending a broken heart. The results of her handiwork were not only a big achievement for her but also a loving memorial to her husband.

Sally contacted Serenity Lane by email and asked if she could show her quilts to staff before she sent them on their way as Christmas gifts for Jim’s close family members. Herb Leaming had been Jim’s residential counselor, and Lisa Deacon his IOP counselor, and she specifically asked to have them in attendance.

The day she brought all ten quilts to the morning staffing, it was exactly a year since Jim’s death. With great emotion, and through tears and laughter, Sally shared her story with 20 staff members. She had found photos of Jim with each family member and rendered them on cloth, personalizing the back of each quilt for its recipient. As she spoke, she talked about how this had been a healing experience. At the core of her grief were many questions that will go unanswered. But Sally was very clear that Jim’s experience at Serenity Lane had been an extremely positive time for both of them, and that’s why it was so important to make the connection with Serenity Lane before the quilts left her hands. Before she left, Peter Asmuth addressed Sally with heart-warming appreciation and Herb and Lisa gathered around to wish her well.

Some of you may have seen the story Bob Welch wrote about her in the Register-Guard. She was able to display her quilts in Eugene the following weekend and most of Jim’s family had an opportunity to see all of her beautiful work. We have to think that from tragedy came the beginnings of healing, and as time goes by, hopefully both hearts and family connections will mend.



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Sally Pelkey



A Bandon

To be in my power, I must now yield,
relinquish my claim to the all knowing,
my fight for self-reliance; I must spin
with abandon in a windflower field,
spin like a mad child until dizzy and glowing
with emptiness and trust. I must forfeit
my ego, concede to sunflowers revealed,
to swallowtail on my shoulder, fleeting.
I must lay down sovereignty and submit
to the moral order of pinecones.

Wendy T.

