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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 Summer 2014

Saving lives and helping put families back together since 1973

Lindsey's Story; Faith Through Healing

I grew up in a household with a very loving mother and an alcoholic father. I felt lost and knew no way to cope with the family dysfunction. I prayed to God almost every day, asking that my Dad be helped or to get me out of the home life I had, but he didn't seem to listen. So I gave up on the idea that God had cared or that he was even listening. I decided that the best way to deal with life early on was to put on a smile and stuff all the emotions of anger, confusion, sadness and disappointment down far away, thinking and hoping it would go away.

By the age of 16 I decided that since I couldn't fix my dad or my home life I would graduate high school and become a nurse so at least I would be able to fix or help others. So I did just that; I went on to become a nurse and finally felt like I had some control or power in my life to make a difference.

By the time I was 25 I wouldn't say I was emotionally healthy but I had a good job and life was okay. This all ended when I went to the doctor for a normal checkup and had found out that I had a rare reproductive cancer. I was told to have a hysterectomy and radiation. Since I hadn't had children I felt very panicked and again felt that life was not fair and if there was a God he surely wasn't looking out for me. I decided against the hysterectomy, but had surgery to remove the cancer and then decided what I needed to do was settle down, get married and have children. I met my husband and within a year we were expecting our first child. I'll never forget the day I was told I was having a daughter. I felt excitement and a bond immediately. I thought that I would be able to give this family what I didn't have as a child; stability, calmness, peace and two healthy parents. I made it to my 5th month of pregnancy and because of my surgery for cancer was not able to carry her to full term.

McKalee was born and only lived a day. She had passed away due to complications of being born prematurely. It was the worst day of my life; I hated God and I hated most everyone who had children or people that had a "fair" life. The only thing I knew how to do at that point was to stuff those emotions and carry on and pretend like everything was going to be okay. Not only did I check out emotionally that day but looking back I know that any idea that God was there for me was banished.

Three months later I unexpectedly became pregnant with my son. I was scared for most of the pregnancy and tried to stay unemotionally attached for fear that I would lose him also. He was born at 7 ½ months but for the most part healthy. He was airlifted to a bigger hospital while I stayed in the hospital, I felt overwhelmed by doom. My son was in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for two weeks and did amazing. The day after I brought him home from the hospital I had my first of several surgeries, around 7 total before he turned one year old, including the dreaded hysterectomy.

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Letter from the Editor



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR & ALUMNI COORDINATOR; SHELY RAHIMI

"The feeling of having shared in a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us." ~ Alcoholics Anonymous - Big Book

Serenity Lane's alumni services are designed to strengthen our community through a sense of togetherness and support. Through our newsletter and various alumni events, we hope to reinforce your connection to your fellow alumni and impart a feeling of hope and unity.

Now that summer is in full swing, that also means more opportunities to reconnect with each other at our alumni events throughout the state. We have included a list of upcoming activities in this issue of our newsletter. We have also been featuring diverse alumni voices by sharing personal testimonials that will resonate with many of us and inspire our continued commitment to sobriety. No matter what stage of recovery you are in, you can take comfort in the fact that you are not alone.

During this season of backyard barbecues and family vacations, trigger situations can cause an increased risk for relapse. Many in recovery will discover new ways to enjoy the fun and leisure of summer, while avoiding unnecessary temptation. One effective strategy to staying sober throughout the year is to find recovery events in your area. By creating a social network around sobriety, you will be able to experience all the joys of summer, while staying safe and reducing stress. Specialized travel companies even offer alcohol-free vacations to many popular destinations.

If you are planning a trip out of town, do your research to find a list of support groups in that location, and make time in your schedule to attend a meeting. There are many healthy ways to spend your vacation, such as visiting cultural sites, festivals or performing arts events. Warm weather also brings possibilities for outdoor adventures like swimming, hiking, camping or just taking long walks around the neighborhood.

And don't forget to join us for Serenity Lane's summer picnics in Eugene, Portland and Bend. We look forward to filling your sunny days with fun, food and fellowship.

Enjoy your summer,

Shely

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



Happenings

Portland Alumni Picnic

Saturday, August 23, 3- 7 p.m., Cook Park, 17005 SW 92nd Street, Tigard, OR, Shelter #2. Join your fellow alumni for some good food and fun. Need support? Information on community services will be available. Raffle prizes and games. Families welcome.

Eugene Alumni Picnic

Sunday, September 7, Noon - 3:00 pm at Alton Baker Park, Structure #2. . Bring your appetite for good food, great company and fun prizes! See you there!

Bend Alumni Picnic

Sunday, September 21, noon to 3 p.m. Aspen Meadow, Aspen Picnic Site, 18920 Shevlin Park Road, Bend. This is a family friendly event for all Bend area alumni, old and new! Food, fun and prizes!

Bend Alumni Meetings

Alumni will now be meeting at Serenity Lane's Bend office the **first Monday of every month**, beginning at 5:30 PM. 601 NW Harmon Blvd., Bend.

Albany Alumni Meetings

Held the **1st and 3rd Thursdays** at 6 PM in the Albany office. Call 541-928-9681 for more info.

Roseburg Alumni Meetings

Potlucks, egg hunts, Pictionary..... There's a lot going on with the Roseburg Alumni group! For more information on how to get involved call **541-733-6698** or e-mail Mykejohanson@yahoo.com

Need details?

Contact Jennifer Slater 541-284-8606.
or email: jslater@serenitylane.org

Upcoming Events

Third Annual

Serenity Lane Health Services Foundation



Community Service Awards Breakfast

When: Wednesday, October 22, 2014

Time: 7:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.

**Where: Hilton Hotel & Conference Center
66 East 6th Street, Eugene**

We Hope To See You There!

Do you know someone who deserves to be recognized for their work in the field of drug and alcohol treatment, education or prevention? **Then nominate them for an award!**

Go to: www.serenitylane.org/csa
for more details.



Alec Apparcel, winner of the 2013 Community Youth Leadership Award, and his mom Michelle.

Physician's Corner



Mike Schwartz M.D.

The physicians at Serenity Lane are board-certified in Addiction Medicine, a relatively new medical specialty. We endeavor to support an abstinence/twelve step program of recovery by providing a safer, more humane detoxification from substances of abuse. Advances have also resulted in the development of powerful anti-craving medications to support a strong recovery program. By themselves, medications have little effect on relapse rates. But when combined with treatment, long-term results are improved. Anti-craving medications are not a crutch, but rather a safety net to support sobriety in early recovery, a time when most alcoholics & other addicts are most vulnerable.

Naltrexone is the most effective of these medications. Available in both pill form and extended release injection, Naltrexone blocks the reward pathway in the brain responsible for cravings. The medication is a pure antagonist, and does not stimulate the pleasure sensation or "high" associated with alcohol or opiates. Some recent studies suggest that cravings for amphetamines and cannabis may also be diminished. Naltrexone has few side effects or drug interactions, and is considered quite safe. The primary side effect in 30-50 % of patients is transient nausea, which ordinarily resolves in 12-24 hours. Anti-nausea medications, such as Zofran, are often used during initiation of treatment.

In our experience, our patients on Vivitrol, (currently the only extended release Naltrexone formulation) have a dramatically reduced rate of relapse, and no overdose deaths. We have begun to encourage our residential treatment patients to consider taking this medication to support recovery for at least 3 to 6 months, or longer depending on the individual. Anyone struggling with cravings in recovery may benefit from adding this medication to his or her

recovery program. We encourage outpatients to discuss this with their primary care physicians (PCPs). A good PCP who understands addiction is a valuable partner for one in recovery.

We hope to add addiction medical services to our outpatient offices in the near future. Meanwhile, our physicians are available to consult with any primary care provider as needed to support recovery.



Did you know...

There's a simple, automatic way to support your favorite charity: **Amazonsmile**.

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to the charity of your choice.

You can make **Serenity Lane** one of your choices. Your contribution can save lives and help put families back together.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

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During that time I was prescribed a lot of pain medication and what I found was that they made me feel numb. Not only did I not experience any physical pain but I also finally didn't have to experience any emotional pain. This worked for only a short time and before I knew it I was a slave to the drugs. I had no life in my eyes, any ability to feel joy, happiness or bond with my son. My health and relationships were being destroyed and my soul was slowly ripped away from me.

At that point I was a nurse practitioner and my addiction was so far out of control that I did illegal things in my career to get the drugs, always needing more and more. The drugs took away my honesty, my values and my morals. My life spun out of control and finally when I reached my bottom my family put two and two together as to what was going on and what I was doing.

My mom confronted me and even though it was one of the scariest moments of my life it was like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. My good friend picked out Serenity Lane and my family and friends decided it was time to help me save my life.

I walked into Serenity Lane on January 8th, 2010. The night I was admitted a doctor told me his own story and it was there and then that I had my first spiritual experience. At that moment I knew I was going to be okay. I saw someone else who had been where I was and he lived through it and ended up with a life of meaning and purpose. After realizing I wasn't going to die from guilt, shame, and living a horrific lie I decided I would do whatever I needed to do to get my life back. After inpatient treatment, I completed intensive outpatient and went on to start recovery support. Serenity Lane taught me how to work through the anger, pain and all of the emotions that I stuffed and medicated with pain pills. I did exactly what was suggested to me. I returned home after 6 months and continued my recovery support at a town closer by. I finished the steps with my sponsor and went to meetings. I went through my mug shot being

front page in the newspaper, sentencing including jail time and eventually the surrendering of my nursing licenses. Through it all I continued to do the next right thing. I knew that if I worked through the pain and my consequences there would be blessings after each of them and I couldn't have been more right. My relationships started to heal; I could feel emotions including joy, happiness and a feeling of freedom that can't be put into words. I learned that my higher power whom I call God, never abandoned me...I had abandoned him.

I have faith again. Life is hard sometimes and life isn't fair but I know now that I do not need drugs or any mind-altering substances to escape from it. I have a program for all occasions that gets me through. After 4 and a half years I have my nursing license back. I have amazing relationships and I have my soul, thanks to God, the program and Serenity Lane. And in all honesty I can say my life is better than it was even before the drugs. I wouldn't change my experience for anything because it gave me a life with meaning, purpose and true happiness. ■

Be in the Know!



Stay connected with Serenity Lane in between newsletters. Learn about upcoming events and activities before everyone else!

Give us your e-mail and receive a chance to **WIN a \$100 VISA gift card**. Just send your name and e-mail address to jslater@serenitylane.org by **August 20th** and you will be entered into our contest.

We will announce the winner on August 21st on the Serenity Lane's FaceBook page. (We will only announce the first name and last initial to protect anonymity).

Want to go digital? Let us know in the body of the e-mail that you would like to stop receiving paper copies of our newsletter. From then on you'll just get an email with a link to the newsletter online.

NEWS FLASH.....New Painkiller Zohydro Poses Serious Risk to Public Health

...by Jerry Gjesvold

Sometimes, it's possible to have too much of a good thing. Nowhere is that more apparent than in the new generation of painkillers now coming to market. Last month, Zohydro ER – a drug five to ten times stronger than Oxycontin – will lead the way. With that kind of strength comes significant potential for abuse – which is exactly why the FDA's advisory committee of independent experts voted 11-2 against the approval of the drug. Despite those concerns, the FDA went ahead over the panel's objections.

The experts had no quarrel with Zohydro's effectiveness, or the fact that it will help some patients. They were concerned that the risks to public health through abuse and dependency outweighed the health benefits gained by this new super-painkiller. Prescription drug abuse and dependency is already a huge public health problem in Oregon and in the U.S. as a whole. Even though Zohydro will be classified as a Schedule II narcotic (and thus under stricter control than many painkillers), it's inevitably going to add to the flood of illicit prescription drugs being abused.

Spend any time at all around a treatment center like Serenity Lane, and you'll quickly see that this is not some kind of abstract policy issue. Those fighting addiction to prescription painkillers already make up a sizable percentage of our patients.

These are men and women of all ages, some as young as their 20s, who became dependent on opiate drugs – some in a matter of weeks or even days. It can, and does, happen that fast.

Of course, they didn't mean to become addicted. Some started using the drugs appropriately, under a physician's direction – but they gradually built up a tolerance that required more and more of the drug to eliminate the pain. That's how the body works.

They experienced unpleasant withdrawal symptoms when they tried to stop – and before long, they had passed through the stages of regular use and abuse and ended up in chemical dependency. Try to imagine the intensity of withdrawal – the severe physical pain and psychological discomfort – that could come from stopping a drug ten times stronger than what is currently available. You'll begin to see why we at Serenity Lane are so concerned.

On March 13, Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) introduced legislation to overrule the FDA's approval. "Because of this painkiller's high potential for misuse and abuse, Zohydro poses a severely dangerous threat to our communities in West Virginia and across our country."

"The last thing we need," he added, "is a drug on the market with 10 times the hydrocodone of Vicodin and Lortab, with the capability of killing an individual with just two tablets.... It must be kept off the market for the well-being of our nation, especially our families and our youth."

Manchin is right – as were the FDA panelists who voted overwhelmingly against approval. This is a drug that may help some people. At the same time, it is undoubtedly going to supply patients to treatment centers – and sadly, some won't make it to us. Approving it is incredibly risky.

Volunteer

Are you a Serenity Lane alumnus who wants to do a service project? We are looking for alumni to attend the Serenity Lane parking lot during Duck Games! Games days are as follows:

Saturday, August 30th

Saturday, September 6th

Thursday, October 2nd

Saturday, October 18th

Saturday, November 1

Saturday, November 22nd

All proceeds from game day parking will go to sponsor alumni events such as picnics and holiday parties, etc.



If you are interested in helping out please contact Larry Bradley: 541-284-8609
lbradley@serenitylane.org,
or Jennifer Slater: 541-284-8606.
jslater@serenitylane.org

Development



CEO Mike Dyer oversees water lines being installed at the east side of our Coburg property

Groundbreaking News!

With construction about to begin on our new campus in Coburg, this is a very exciting time for Serenity Lane. Check our FaceBook page often and join our e-mail list to get up-to-date news on our progress.



To join our e-mail list please contact Jennifer Slater at:

jslater@serenitylane.org

You can help us reach our goal of breaking ground this year!

Consider a tax-deductible donation. For more information contact Larry Bradley, VP of Development:

541-284-8609 or email him at lbradley@serenitylane.org.

You can also make an online donation at: www.serenitylane.org.



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Freedom...



Is being you
without anyone's
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