



PLOWSHARES ADVOCATE

"That no one in our community go hungry ..."

April 2009 / Vol. 26, No. 4

LUNCH IS SERVED

Dining Room output doubles.

Since the temporary closure of the Ford Street Project's Residential Treatment Program and the subsequent discontinuation of meals at the Buddy Eller Center homeless shelter (which shared meal resources with the RTP), we have expanded our dinner production and also began serving lunches in mid-February.

Our lunchtime meal—usually soup plus sandwich and/or salad, bread, dessert and drinks—is nearly as big as dinner, since some people are only able to come once each day.

Special thanks are due to the Ukiah Community Center and Ford Street's Buddy Eller Center, which served lunches while we stabilized in our new home for the first year.

By adding lunch at Plowshares, plus additional shelter guests who now eat dinner here, we doubled our Dining Room meal count—with less than a week's notice! We now serve a hot lunch to about 55 people per day (including an average of 4.3 children), plus dinners to about 80-90 people a night (12-13 of them children). This is in addition to the Meals-on-Wheels (about 90 a day lately), for a total of about 230 meals a day—and rising.

Plowshares is our community's response to the hunger needs of its own less fortunate members. Your help is needed more than ever now, to help us rise to our new challenges in these tough economic times.

Besides food and cash, volunteer cooks (9-11 a.m.), servers (11:15-noon) and clean-up workers (noon-1:00 p.m.) are still needed for the lunch shifts, and also on some days for afternoon or evening shifts. Small groups who enjoy cooking or serving together are welcome to try to find an available time that works.

If you are interested in volunteering, please give Rhonda a call at 462-8582.

GARDEN TIME!

It's a historical first here.

With lots of generous support, we are creating our first-ever vegetable garden to provide fresh produce for our ever-expanding meals services. Please thank the people on the list below when you see them!

The garden is taking shape between our parking lots. We plan to create worm bins for kitchen scraps, and hire a Garden Coordinator to organize garden tasks and supervise homeless and other volunteers who want to learn and be productive.

SPECIAL GARDEN THANKS TO:

(Not a complete list—it's still growing!)

- **The Community Foundation of Mendocino County**, and an anonymous donor, for funding the coordinator for three years.
- **Friedman's Home Improvement**, for pledging a large wooden garden shed.
- Master Gardeners **Jim Hatfield**, who pledged 50 hours of Master-Gardener volunteer time; also **Lydia Feltman**, **Laura Levin** and **TerriLynn McCartney**.
- **Miles Gordon of NCO's Gardens Project**; **Julie Fetherston** of the **UC Cooperative Extension**; and **VISTA** volunteer **Briana McGonagle**.
- **Mary Buckley and Jim Mastin**, for donating a truckload of organic compost.
- **Cold Creek Compost** for helping with the compost, and offering more later.

*P.S. You can still grow an extra row for us!
More fresh veggies are always welcome.*

Quote of the Month:

"My favorite food is anything that someone puts a lot of care into."

—*Paul Acker-Taxis*
courtesy of UVAH

Served by Plowshares in February 2009:

	Total:	Daily Average:
Dining Room - Adults:	1,800	90
Dining Room - Children:	<u>241</u>	<u>12</u>
Dining Room - Total:	2,041	102
Meals-on-Wheels:	<u>1,760</u>	<u>88</u>
TOTAL MEALS:	3,801	190
Laundry Vouchers: (Mondays only)	160	40

Special Thanks this Month:

- **Wal-Mart**, for a \$1000 programs grant.
- **Ukiah Construction**, for continuing to repair and resolve various facilities issues.
- **John Chan Plumbing** for more free repairs!
- **Sharon Kiichli**, for not only discounting the cost of her professional consultant hours spent on our feasibility study, but also donating quite a few uncounted hours.
- The **Ukiah Emblem Club** and **Linda**, its recent outgoing president, for choosing us as the traditional outgoing president's choice of nonprofit to receive a \$100 donation.
- **AccelaDry Carpet Cleaning**, for a 40% discount and nice clean carpets too.
- **Holy Trinity Episcopal Church**, for faithful, generous support of Meals-on-Wheels.
- **Nadine Paulin**, for a new-to-us computer, and **Sally Kieckhefer of Computer Scene**, for setting it up and general trouble-shooting.
- **Virginia Simpson**, for a new paper-cutter.
- **Catalyst**, a community action program of **North Coast Opportunities**, for lots of help.

Use this to donate with a credit card: VISA, Discover or MasterCard accepted

Name: _____

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City/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

- This authorizes a one-time charge of:
- Automatically charge to my card monthly:
- Please keep this donation anonymous.
- \$10
- \$25
- \$100
- other: \$_____

THE PLOWSHARES ADVOCATE is published 12 times a year and mailed to supporters of Plowshares, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Contributions are welcome & fully tax-deductible as allowed by law.

PLOWSHARES STAFF:

Mary Buckley	Executive Director
Rhonda De Los Santos	Operations Manager
Roy Framke	Food Share Manager
Crystal Hollander	Homeless Services Coord.
Pilar Moreno	Program Assistant
Daniel Oresco	Program Assistant
Jim Williams	Office Manager
Peggy White, Rental Coordinator:	462-6192

PLOWSHARES BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Larry MacLeitch	President
Ann Kilkenny	Vice-President
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Will Barker, Mary Buckley, Kathleen Cervantes, Jolinda Clark, Jack Daniels, Robert Klayman, Henrietta Muñoz, Elizabeth Stephens.	

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“Homeless People are Garbage” from an interview with John Records, Executive Director of Committee on the Shelterless (COTS), Petaluma

We had a telephone call that upset the staff a lot. Some guy called and said, “Homeless people are garbage.” Apparently, he was a police officer whose work, I imagine, brought him in touch with human beings at their worst.

Garbage is something that humans have used up and thrown away. That’s what has happened to people who are homeless. Sometimes they hurt themselves; more often other people hurt them. They got damaged, and then were discarded. We take the trouble to recycle newspapers and tin cans. Shouldn’t we try to salvage human beings?

Part of my work is to help people see who these human beings are—how they were hurt and why they are homeless. Not to excuse their shortcomings, but to say, “Okay that’s what happened to them. Now how do we help them?” And also to provide expectations for all concerned, especially the homeless people.

This is what I mean by setting expectations: You say, “Okay, it’s awful that you were beaten as a child, that your father gave you vodka when you were eight, that you’ve got a learning disability, that you had a baby before you were twenty, that you’re in a violent relationship. That’s *really awful*. But *what now*? You have something worthwhile to give this community, and we want it. You have a good life ahead of you, if you make the right choices and have support. Do you want to work together on that?”

Some people don’t. Maybe they’re not ready, or their pride gets in the way. But when they say yes, they enter and are supported by a powerful current of healing, of grace, that expresses through us and our community.

Homeless people have often received blows that dropped them to their knees. Many of them feel unable to face their challenges because they’ve been hurt and broken so badly. If we can help them accept the challenge of, say, not using drugs or alcohol, or working for a living, their acceptance of these challenges can lead to profound healing and transformation. Our expectations help them to see that they have the capacity to do these things.

One of our donors heard a formerly

homeless program participant tell his story, and began crying. He asked himself, *Why me? Why am I blessed with wealth when such terrible things have happened in the life of this other guy?* He understood that our own fragile bubble of privilege and comfort can be ruptured at any time, that we too can be broken and brought to our knees—and that if we haven’t been brought to our knees yet, it’s only because we haven’t been hit hard enough.

There are many definitions of success. Some people define success strictly as getting a job and a house and living happily ever after. That’s a high standard, and often unrealistic. Homelessness is like being down a deep hole, and there’s a ladder in the hole with you. If you’ve fallen down that hole once, maybe broken a leg or something, it’s hard to get up the ladder without help. But if you’ve been thrown down the hole repeatedly, in the form of having been abused, you might not even dare approach the ladder.

There was a contractor whose life fell apart after his wife died of cancer. It was a big deal for him just to come in and eat in our soup kitchen, after eating out of dumpsters for years; it was humiliating to accept food from a person across the counter. For him *that* was a step up the ladder, his first step. Now he has his own home and pulls in other chronically homeless people from the streets.

From a God’s-eye-view, there is probably not a lot of difference between the most highly accomplished human being and the most broken. Anytime we see a homeless adult on the street, pushing a shopping cart and talking to themselves or asleep, drunk, on the sidewalk, we can think about the beautiful child that they once were, and what happened to them.

You know they didn’t start out that way. They were every bit as adorable, there was every bit as much hope in their eyes, as much beauty in them, as in our own children. Something happened—probably something awful, probably more than once—that broke them and brought them to their sorry state. So let’s honor who they were. They were children once who didn’t get a fair break. Let’s at least give them a fair break now.



April Wish List

- ***ground meat***
- ***cheese—any kind***
- ***pasta—any kind***
- ***canned broth***
- ***cream soups***
- ***onions & garlic***
- ***kitchen scrubbers***
- ***laundry detergent***
- ***vegetable scrub brush***
- ***ziploc bags, lg & small***
- ***disinfectant spray***
- ***foot +/or baby powder***
- ***small toothpaste***
- ***disposable razors***
- ***shaving cream***
- ***band-aids***
- ***sturdy garden tools***

IT'S A COMMUNITY EFFORT

See photo below: Tiger Cub Scouts from Pack 62 pose with (and on) seven boxes of coats they collected for our homeless kids and adults.

In related news, Shoefly & Sox shoe store on Standley Street is collecting a significant quantity of gently used shoes in a shoe drive. Employees of the Ukiah Valley Medical Center are also holding a food drive to support Plowshares' meals programs.

All of these thoughtful donors first asked what we could use, which we appreciate.

Caring support from the community makes it easy for us to help those in need.

Thanks to all—
and keep it coming!



Plowshares

Community Dining Room
Meals-on-Wheels
Homeless Services