



# NEWSLETTER

## Options Welcomes New Board Members

The annual Board Retreat was held on June 2nd. All board members were presented with information on the new insurance benefits package, which they approved. Also on the agenda was approving the new budget for 2007-2008.

Board members reviewed the past year since the transition. They also got an in-depth perspective of the new programs and facilities. The purpose of the retreat was to get a more clear picture of who Options is an organization since Josephine County Mental Health transferred services to Options last July. They reviewed what worked and what didn't work to make sure that the clients we serve remain secure in our community.

At a recent employee meeting Board President Ralph Trigg stated the Board's pride that the merger of County services with Options' nonprofit services has been a positive success. Trigg says, "I love to see everyone truly coming together for the common good of our community."

Options is also pleased to announce the addition of three new members to its Board of Directors. The Board of Directors now consists of nine individuals who support Options' mission.

New board member **Mike Kohn** is the owner of two fireplace shops and a service company. He was an elected member of the Three Rivers School District Board of Directors for thirteen years.

New board member **Jerry Bryan** is the Department Head for Social Science and Human Service at Rogue Community College. He is also a participant in the Josephine County Meth Task Force.

**Diana Wolford**, also a new board member, is a real estate broker. She also has a background in special events planning and consulting.

If you would like to contact any of our board members with your comments or concerns, please call us for their phone numbers.

Summer 2007, Number 21

## Options Board of Directors

- Ralph Trigg  
President
- John Sawyer  
Vice President
- Felicity Elworthy  
Secretary/Treasurer
- Lana Faszer
- Denise Olson
- Kelly Wessels
- Jerry Bryan
- Mike Kohn
- Diana Wolford

**A  
HUGE  
THANK YOU  
TO  
MARJORIE  
UNDERWOOD**

for your valued service on the  
Options Board of Directors.

**We will miss you!**

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## Upcoming Special Events to Benefit Options

### KATHRYN KEATS CONCERT

We are pleased to announce that Kathryn Keats will be performing in an upcoming benefit concert for Options. Kathryn's music has been likened to a cross between Annie Lennox and Josh Groban. However, even more impressive than her singing talent, is her tremendous courage. She is a true survivor ~ a woman who is determined to educate and help build a world where mental illness is recognized and domestic abuse is greatly minimized. Her message is clear: *qualify love*.

Pete Sears of Jefferson Starship and Hot Tuna fame says, "Kathryn Keats' haunting songs and heartfelt vocals reflect her unique experiences and showcase her considerable talent."

For more information on Kathryn Keats, please visit her website at [www.kathrynkeats.com](http://www.kathrynkeats.com). We are seeking sponsors for this very special event.

### EMPTY BOWLS

Options will be sponsoring Empty Bowls on World Hunger Day, October 16th. Guests choose a handmade ceramic bowl and are served a simple meal of soup, salad and bread as a reminder that there are always empty bowls in the world. In exchange for a meal and the bowl, the guest gives a suggested donation of \$25. Please attend and learn more about how you can become a part of hunger and homeless outreach programs in our community.

*Proceeds from the Keats concert will be directed to the Creekside facility. Proceeds from Empty Bowls will be directed to Bridges for Success, our homeless outreach program. For more information on these events contact Ellen Johnson at 476-2373 or email her at [ejohnson@optionsonline.org](mailto:ejohnson@optionsonline.org). You can also view our website at [www.optionsonline.org](http://www.optionsonline.org).*

## Employment Works: The Joy of Working



Buck Hall

Michael "Buck" Hall has been working at the Hugo Hitching Post store since April 2007. He works once a week for two hours cleaning and organizing shelves for owners Kathy and Tim. He likes his job and enjoys the income. When it comes to discussing his job, Buck gets a big smile on his face and says, "I like working for Tim and Kathy."

Buck had several jobs handling heavy equipment in the 1980s. "When I worked for several companies in Nevada I used a loader, a haul truck, and ran back hoes."

Buck moved to Oregon in the 1990s to start his life over. He wanted to live closer to his father. He moved to Hugo Hills, has been participating in the Employment Works program, and has been busy with various activities.

Employment Coordinator Chris Sherwood says, "Buck looked for work at several other places before the Hugo Hitching Post position became available. He has been there three months now and again feels productive in the community." Thanks to Chris and the Hugo Hills staff for their support in helping Buck obtain his new job! For more information on Employment Works, please call ZoeAnn Northcutt at 476-2373.

## A Case in Point



*Case Management Program Manager, Merna Peterson*

Merna Peterson, Case Management Program Manager, supervises seven case managers. Her job responsibilities include consumer services, consumer care program development, networking in the community, case conferencing, and lots of meetings.

Merna has a BS in Psychology and Sociology from Ft. Hayes State in Kansas, as well as a Masters Degree in Counseling Psychology.

Merna was raised with three siblings on a Kansas farm in a rural community of only 1,000 people. Her younger brother and sister live in Texas; her older sister died of cancer.

Merna began her career in mental health in Hays, Kansas following her graduate work in 1988. She worked in Partial Hospitalization in Hays before moving to Wyoming in 1993, where she worked at a small rural mental health center as a therapist.

In Kansas Merna worked with strengths-based case management as a grassroots movement, which became the best practice for case management in Kansas. After working in therapy for seven years, she decided she wanted to return to what she loved most: case management. After taking a few months off work she found an ad for work with Options to help implement strength-based case management.

Merna says she always avoided management positions, but liked that Options has a team philosophy. Having the opportunity to work with everyone allows her to help the case managers teach, thus helping the consumers become strong people. "I feel that my position allows me to make a bigger impact with the consumers, seeing what we need, budgeting, developing a wellness program. Did you know that a person with mental illness has a 25 year less life span

than the general population? Teaching our consumers about exercise, medications, nutrition and how to cook helps make a real positive impact on their lives."

Merna shares a home with her partner, Bonnie, one large dog, Malcolm, and four cats: Tasha, Gulliver, Guy and Ramsey. She has a passion for abandoned animals, animal adoption, animal shelters, and humane society organizations. She enjoys doing anything to do with the outdoors: camping, hiking, backpacking, and exploring roads. She felt she was missing something in Wyoming because there were no trees there. In Oregon she has been able to reconnect with nature. Weight training, reading, and meditation are also a large part of her life.

### Options Receives Funding

*Options would like to thank the following organizations for their generosity:*

- Leightman Maxey Foundation – \$12,000 for Employment Works**
- Four Way Community Foundation – \$8,000 for ART upstairs remodel**
- U.S. Bank – \$4,500 for CRT laptops**
- Fred Meyer Foundation – \$1,636 for CRT**
- ODOT – \$57,000 plus 7 new vehicles**
- B.P.E. Elks #1584 – \$1,167**

*To see how you can help over 11,000 children, adults and families eligible for mental health services in our community, please visit our website at [www.optionsonline.org](http://www.optionsonline.org)*

**Thanks to our major partners for 2006 Festival of Trees: Hagerman Construction, Eye Care Group, Mid-Rogue IPA, and ERA Prestige Homes.**



Amara Thelen, second from right, receives SOAR award

## Amara Thelen SOARS!

Amara Thelen, Bridges to Success Lead Case Manager, received an SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) award at the Oregon Coalition on Housing and Homelessness conference on April 12, 2007. The special award was made to only four recipients for their efforts to provide training.

SOAR training helps staff increase effectiveness in assisting homeless people with disabilities (especially mental illness) to access SSI/SSDI. Vicki Ckryha, AMH Homeless and Housing Services Manager, presented the awards on behalf of OCHH and described how trainers presented 10 regional two-day workshops attended by 237 participants.

Follow-up data demonstrates the effectiveness of this training. After SOAR training, the rate of application approvals increased from 11% to 51% and the length of time from application to decision decreased from 11 months to 3 months.



## *Festival of Trees Becomes Rogue WinterFest!*

The name of the 2007 Festival of Trees has been officially changed to Rogue WinterFest. There are hundreds of Festival of Tree events in Oregon and thousands nationally. We wanted to distinguish ourselves from the others because we are not just auctioning trees any more. The event is becoming so large this year that the name was changed to reflect the impact it will have on our community and

beyond.

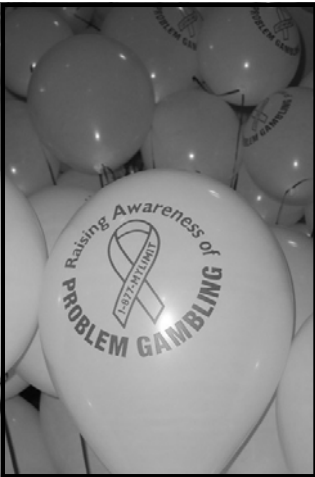
Three Rivers Community Hospital (TRCH) was a major sponsor for last year's Festival. This year, Evergreen Federal Bank has joined TRCH to present an even bigger and better event for the 5th annual fundraiser. The entire event will be held at Evergreen Federal Bank's Bear Hotel located on Spalding Avenue in Grants Pass. With Evergreen Federal Bank's help, the Rogue WinterFest promises to be THE production of the season. Evergreen Federal Bank's Bear Hotel will become a fantasy wonderland like no other in Southern Oregon. The visual effects and the planned activities for families will be truly spectacular. Forget going to Disneyland or Las Vegas for the holidays!

The schedule of events is as follows: November 30th (private hosted event for corporate sponsors); December 4 (Culinary Christmas Classic with food/wine tasting, silent auction, tree/holiday art viewing); December 6 (Gala Event, tree auction, silent auction); December 8-9 (Open to the Public).

Proceeds from the Rogue WinterFest will support three mental health agencies in Josephine County: Options, Family Friends, and SOASTC. Please contact Event Coordinator, Sue Price, for more info at 541-890-5472. For volunteer opportunities please contact Monica Wickham at 541-476-2373. The new web site, [www.roguewinterfest.com](http://www.roguewinterfest.com), is now available to the public.

Rogue WinterFest will be at the 8th annual **Take a Walk on the Rogue**, sponsored by the City of Grants Pass on Saturday, September 15th at the All Sports Park from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Check out this FREE fun day for families. For info on Take a Walk on the Rogue please call Ellen at 476-2373 or Donna at 474-6360.

## Problem Gambling, Outreach and Prevention Treatment



The Problem Gambling Treatment program does a number of events, activities and outreach programs to teach our community about problem gambling and ways to gamble responsibly. This year, as in past years, we participated in getting our message out to the community during the annual Boatnik parade.

Thanks to Options staff, the CRC A&D inpatient clients, and the Boys and Girls Club we successfully blew up and handed out over two thousand balloons. For all those who took time out to help, THANK YOU! We could not have done this without you, the support of clients, and the Grants Pass Boys and Girls Club.

A special thanks and recognition is extended to Lorna H. and Lyn C. Both therapist's have either gone out of their way to ask the extra questions needed to identify if someone has a gambling problem and/or is doing collaborative treatment with an identified problem gambler and an identified adolescent family member effected by problem gambling.

As staff, we do not always understand the severity of problem gambling and it can be missed. If someone's problem gambling is missed so is their ability for safety, suicidality, child abuse/neglect, spousal abuse and financial devastation. This disease flows into all areas and is easily missed if not inquired about.

Problem gambling is a more shaming disease than any other addiction. More times than not, people do not disclose that they have a gambling problem unless inquiries are made. Please ask questions because those few extra questions could be life saving!

For additional information, training inquiries, or for education on problem gambling and/or gambling responsibly, please contact Jean Linck at 476-2373 x2116 or [jlinck@optionsonline.org](mailto:jlinck@optionsonline.org).



BGCRV Boatnik Float

### Creekside Capital Campaign Update

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!** The campaign to purchase Creekside Center is going well. To date, we have received funding and commitments for 70% of the \$2.51 million to purchase the Creekside facility located at 1181 SW Ramsey Avenue in Grants Pass. However, some of the funding is contingent upon our getting support/matching funds from individual and corporate sponsors in our community.

Purchasing the Creekside facility outright means that more funds can be directed to the mental health programs we offer our clients. More than 11,000 individuals in Josephine County are eligible to receive our mental health services.

If you would like to contribute to this needed community facility, please send your checks to Options for Southern Oregon, Attention: Development Department, 1215 SW 'G' Street, Grants Pass, OR. You can also call Joe Serres or Ellen Johnson at 476-2373. All contributions are tax deductible.



## What's Goin' On: The Union Drop-In Center and The Willows

Carnahan's awesome Stephenie Rigel organized a Hellgate Jet Boat excursion down the Rogue River on June 16th. Richard and Sharon are looking forward to the next jet boat trip!

**The Union** events for July promise to be good fun with a barbecue on the 3rd from 1 to 4 p.m., First Friday on the 6th and The Gathering on the 20th. All consumers and friends with a heart for mental health are invited to The Gathering and are encouraged to join us for some good food, socialization, and a chance to get acquainted. Call Jessica to confirm the barbecue date and time, and please let her know if you're attending The Gathering by July 12th if you plan to be there so we don't run out of food. You can contact Jessica at 474-3319 or email [theunion@uci.com](mailto:theunion@uci.com) about these activities, or if you would like more information and a monthly calendar. If interested in information on the upcoming Family-to-Family and Peer-to-Peer group sessions, please call Deb or Patricia Garoutte at 479-7830 or email them at [DebnPat@charter.net](mailto:DebnPat@charter.net).

Residents at **The Willows** are busy planting and caring for their gardens. About half of the residents are growing and maintaining their own garden plots with the tech support from Master Gardener Brenda and her grand kids. Thanks to everyone at Options for your support, and a word of appreciation to Brenda, Don, Heather, Carol, David, and anyone we forgot or who wishes to remain anonymous! You can contact Sharon or Richard at 476-5951 or email them at [willows@optionsonline.org](mailto:willows@optionsonline.org)

### VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED!

The Options Development Department still need volunteers!

#### *Rogue WinterFest*

Individuals to help prepare for the December 2007 event..

#### *Graphic Designer*

Individual with computer graphic design skills to help produce our quarterly newsletter and new agency brochures.

#### *Empty Bowls*

Individuals to help serve soup on October 16th, World Food Day.

Call Joe or Ellen at 476-2373.

### Chronicles of Carnahan



Brian Johnson, President  
Wednesday Strikers

Carnahan resident Brian Johnson was elected as President of the new Wednesday Strikers bowling league. The league is open to individuals with a mental illness and/or disabilities.

Brian has been a devoted bowler his entire life. Both of his parents have won numerous bowling trophies over the years. He also volunteers at Caveman Bowl and helps with clean-up.

Brian is always working to improve his bowling score. When he achieve a score of

225, one of Carnahan's retired staff has promised to take him out for a steak dinner. Brian's message to anyone interested in joining Wednesday Strikers is, "When it comes to bowling or life, hope for the best!"

The league runs until August 1st at 2 p.m. every Wednesday at Caveman Bowl, 1230 Rogue River Highway in Grants Pass. It's \$3.00 for two games and the shoe rental. For more info call 479-2311.



## News From The Hill

Memorial Day weekend was great! We went to a barbeque at Carnahan Court and then took a trip up the river to watch the boat races. Everyone enjoyed the Wildlife Safari trip and the Donkey Basketball game. The fire alarms had to be tested, so everyone went on a picnic to save the 'ole ear drums!

We attended the Spring parade in Merlin. Everyone went on the first camping trip of the season to Diamond Lake. It was a little cold and damp, but it didn't dampen our exuberant spirits. The ton of laundry created was okay, too!

The Fourth of July has been in the planning stages in Resident Government. We are going to have a barbecue and then go see the fireworks in town. We also have a second camping trip planned for Lake Selmac. Lake Selmac has been one of our favorite campgrounds for many years and we hope to try our luck at bass fishing.

Class graduation is upon us and our new series of classes will be coming up soon. We are looking forward to barbecuing outside in the yard on Saturday nights and making ice cream on Sunday afternoons. Other activities we're looking forward to are a jet boat trip down the Rogue River, playing disc golf, and generally staying busy. All in all we here on "TheHill" are faring well.

## Summer Jet Boat Excursion

On Saturday June 16th, seventy-five eager Options clients and employees were greeted at the Hellgate Jet Boat office with flower leis and boarded the "Mrs. Grants Pass."

The two-hour quick and scenic jet boat ride was filled with lots of splashes, laughter and plenty of perfect Southern Oregon weather. The boat driver was a jovial fellow with lots of knowledge. He pointed out turtles, osprey, deer, and eagle nests.

This is the third annual Hellgate jet boat trip for us. Hellgate generously offers our clients and staff half price tickets for this once a year event. Thank you Hellgate!

## GP Elks Hosts Benefit for Options

Options for Southern Oregon received a donation of over \$1,100 from the B.P.O. Elks #1584 in Grants Pass. A fundraising dinner was hosted by Elks member Dave Smalley on April 17, 2007 at the Elks Lodge on K Street. The event sold out quickly and he hopes to do another one in the future.

The Elks is a charitable, civic-minded organization. Their contribution will help support the programs and resources that Options offers.

If you would like more information on the Elks or would like to inquire about the next Elks fundraising event, please call 479-0001.

## Community Garden News

A huge thank you to Greenleaf Industries and the Master Gardeners for contributing to our garden kick-off in May. If you are visiting Options' G Street facility, please take the time to take a walk through the garden...Options neighbors Shelly and Ellen have done an amazing job beautifying the garden paths!

### SAVE THE DATE!

**September 14th at 1 p.m.** –Harvest Party and Fundraising Dinner. We will have a small vegetable and flower arrangement contest with prizes. Begin fall/winder crop planting.

**October 26th All Day** –Garden Clean Up

For more information contact Crystal McMahon with Options at 472-9923 or [cmcmahon@optionsonline.org](mailto:cmcmahon@optionsonline.org).

**OUR MISSION:** OPTIONS FOR SOUTHERN OREGON offers consultation, training and innovative programs to serve low income individuals and people with psychiatric disabilities to inspire hope while supporting their participation as respected members of the community.

**Options for Southern Oregon, 1215 SW G Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526**

**Thank You for your generous donation!**  
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