

JULY
2010



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INSIDE OYA

Shelter service popular with RiverBend youth

Even if it lacked the suspense of the World Cup games, an encounter at youth soccer games in La Grande three years ago produced a winner for RiverBend youth.

RiverBend's Brian Blisard was coaching youth soccer and one of the boys on his team was the son of a staffer at the city's animal shelter. They talked, Blisard visited the shelter, and RiverBend transitional youth were invited to come out to work.

"The boys are great," says Joni Neustel, director of the five-county Blue Mountain Humane Association, which takes in approximately 2,000 animals annually. "They're great for projects because they bring five guys. I guarantee, if they're here it gets done."



Neustel and Blisard, RiverBend interim superintendent, say the youth have mowed the large lawn, cleaned kennels, walked dogs, cleaned out a large storage barn, assembled and stacked cat kennels, and undertaken other projects.

"The young men get such a charge out it," Blisard says of the community service that GLC Doug Lawson supervises. "You can take the hardest young man and introduce him to a puppy or a dog and you see that softer, compassionate side of him." He says youth get to practice communication and social skills with kennel staff and volunteers while learning to give back to the community.

Youth also learn about supervising and being supervised, says Neustel, such as one youth who was responsible for ensuring the crew got kennels clean. "He loved it and he was good at it," she says. That youth, now working for a Lowe's nearly 300 miles away, later came back and told her how much he had enjoyed working at the kennels.



STAFF RECOGNITION

HILLCREST

Jim Stinson

GLC of the Month

Tanya Weleber

Support Staff of the Month

MACLAREN

Chris Metcalf

Employee of the Month

RIVERBEND

Doug Larson

Employee of the Quarter

YOUTH AND FAMILY FEEDBACK

"Although my son is sentenced to Life Without Parole, he, ourselves and staff felt the services provided prepared him to live successfully in any environment — in or out of prison."

"Francis Howells was very good to work with and great for our son."

"Richard Hendricks is amazing! He really cares and goes the extra mile. We kept telling our son Hendricks was his best friend and we meant it."

Director's Column



June was a month full of growth and change. From the largest graduating class in recent memory – 39 – at MaClaren, to the smallest – 1 – at North Coast, we

applauded the many OYA youth who achieved a diploma, GED or other certificate of accomplishment.

Each of these young men and women worked hard to gain this recognition. But they didn't do it alone. They received assistance from our staff, volunteers and others who provided the enrichment so important to success in school and life.

So many of you not only work one-on-one with youth, but also bring in partners from the community to offer opportunities such as writing, art, vocational education, and participation in local events. You and our partners also help youth who are ready to leave OYA successfully make the transition back into their home communities by making connections with local resources.

By holding youth accountable, promoting responsible thinking and behaviors, encouraging restitution, and engaging youth in treatment and education, OYA upholds its public safety mission. By connecting with local support services, youth returning to their communities are less likely to recommit crimes.

Some of those enrichment opportunities are highlighted in this issue. I commend all of you within OYA and our community partners for making these opportunities and resources available. You are making a tremendous difference in the lives of the youth we serve

and in promoting public safety.

I also thank all of you who are working to achieve the approximately \$12 million in savings we must create this biennium in response to the state's dramatic drop in projected revenues. We have identified the specific steps needed to achieve the first \$10 million and are in the process of taking those actions. We continue to work with our many internal and external stakeholders to develop the specific steps we will take to achieve the final \$2 million in savings. As always, our goal is to preserve public safety and promote youth reformation to the best of our ability.

I so appreciate the good work of all of you within OYA and your continued focus on serving our youth, especially in these difficult economic times. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colette S. Peters". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Colette S. Peters
Director

Staff receives letter from Governor Kulongoski

Steve Llanes, Native American services coordinator at MaClaren YCF, received a letter in May from Governor Kulongoski.

The letter reaffirms the value of the cultural services that are offered to youth in many of OYA's facilities and facilitated by staff such as Llanes.

[Click here to read the letter.](#)

Thank you, Steve, for your hard work and dedication to the youth in OYA's custody.

Intranet coming to OYA

Tired of searching through Outlook folders for a document or form? Really tired of trying to figure out where on the agency's Web page or shared servers you can find the information you're seeking?

If you think it would be much easier and faster to find information using a Web-based format, then good news is on the horizon – OYA is nearing completion of the planning phase for a new agency intranet.

A 20-person team led by IS Special Projects Manager Dave Brooks has been working for the past several months to develop a format that will offer OYA employees fast, intuitive access to the most frequently needed information. Examples include forms, policies, procedures and training materials.

Additional features include an employee directory and a shared agency-wide calendar. The intranet home page also eventually will offer scorecards and dashboards that measure OYA's status in key performance areas. A Google-style search engine will make it easy to find any item posted to the intranet.

The project team is about to begin working with Outlook folder "owners" to migrate the folders' contents to the intranet. That process is expected to be completed in mid-August, with agency-wide rollout scheduled for September.

Once fully implemented, the intranet is expected to increase staff efficiencies and save both time and money. Employees will be able to quickly find job-related information, fill out and submit forms online, and use online collaboration tools to hold virtual project meetings.

The intranet will be accessible only to OYA employees. Members of the public still will be able to find information about OYA on the agency Web site.

RiverBend youth and staff help flooding town



When the Union County Sheriff's Office needed volunteers to fill sandbags against rising local floodwaters, the phone rang at the RiverBend transitional facility.

During two days in early June, 12-15 youth and RiverBend staff filled sandbags, community service that merited a photo mention in the local newspaper. On the second day of work, interim superintendent Brian Blisard says, youth filled approximately 500 sandbags that were used to divert rising water around homes in Cove, a town southeast of La Grande.

ANNIVERSARIES

TWENTY YEARS

Angelina Hinojos
Treatment Manager
Hillcrest YCF

Belinda Teague
Manager
Human Resources

TEN YEARS

Mike Carmona
Group Life Coordinator
MacLaren YCF

Teresa Griffin
Nurse Manager
Health Services

Tom Johnson
Program Director
MacLaren YCF

Levi Miller
Group Life Coordinator
Hillcrest YCF

Stephanie Miller
Unit Coordinator
Hillcrest YCF

FIVE YEARS

Bevin Findley
Office Specialist
Hillcrest YCF

Rebecca Fischer
Group Life Coordinator
Hillcrest YCF

April Johnson
Nurse
North Coast YCF

Gary Lasater
Training Specialist
Training Academy

Steve Llanes
Native American Coordinator
MacLaren YCF

Dailey Ray
Security
Hillcrest YCF

Estel Saner
Maintenance
Hillcrest YCF

NEW HIRES

CENTRAL OFFICE

Karen Daniels

MACLAREN

Gerri Hiersche
Ryan Weimer

TILLAMOOK

Natalie Hancock

STAFF CHANGES

RETIREMENTS

Alan Burke

26 years

Paula Fontanini

31 years

Larry Kremer

32 years

TRANSFERS

Tom Johnson

to MacLaren YCF

DEPARTURES

James Butts

MacLaren YCF

Karen Campbell

Tillamook YCF

Vincent Gutierrez

Rogue Valley YCF

Greg Lay

Central Office

Robin Leon-Guerrero

Hillcrest YCF

Julie Leroy

MacLaren YCF

Christopher Nething

MacLaren YCF

Alta Saner-Martinez

MacLaren YCF

Aaron Tuttle

Rogue Valley YCF

Dozens of youth receive diplomas, GEDs



Moist eyes were a common element of June commencements as OYA youth thanked staff, family and friends for their support, and their supporters congratulated them on their achievements.

In all, 94 youth were recognized this spring: 75 with high school diplomas, two with community college associate's degrees, two with vocational certificates and 15 with GED high school equivalency certificates.

MacLaren YCF graduated its largest class in recent memory, with 39 youth donning caps and gowns. Meanwhile, North Coast YCF hosted what may have been Oregon's smallest commencement, with one youth.

"I never succeeded at anything before today," an Oak Creek YCF youth told assembled family members, staff and other youth. "This is just the beginning of my path to success," said another, "but it's a great start."

The actual number of graduates so far this year is slightly larger because some diplomas and certificates were awarded earlier as youth earned them. And a youth who was paroled from the RiverBend transitional facility this spring received a bachelor's degree from Washington State University.

Although these were close custody commencements, they had the usual trappings such as caps and gowns, guest speakers, and a post-ceremony reception.

RiverBend's interim superintendent, Brian Blisard, urged graduates to set goals, reach for those goals and "live your lives from the inside out," being guided by integrity, morals and values rather than by environmental factors.

Rogue Valley YCF graduates heard Matt Sweeney, the facility's volunteer of the year, urge them to share their guidance and wisdom with others just as they did from the school faculty. "Live life to the fullest," Sweeney told them, "and use your time to make a difference for good in this world."

"This is a big achievement for them," said Scott Harris, principal of MacLaren's William P. Lord High School. "A lot of bad decisions went into getting them into MacLaren ... but a lot of good decisions got them to graduation."

Foster parents of 34 years share their experiences and love for youth

Among OYA's current foster parents, Donna and Arnold Brubaker are two who have served the longest. For evidence of that, look no further than the fact one of their early foster teens is now a grandmother.

"We still have a special place in our heart for her," Donna Brubaker says. "She lives locally, and we see her on occasion."

The Brubakers became foster parents in 1976 after his parents built a large duplex with the idea of providing foster

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care. "There's a Scripture that says to whom much is given much will be required, and that has been my mantra," she says.

Over the years the Brubakers have fostered a variety of kids – first for the DHS child welfare division, then for OYA since 1996 – and now work with sex offenders. She says hundreds of youth have been in their care from a few hours to several years.

There's the young man who would "shut down" whenever his sex offenses were brought up, but who now will look you in the eye and be accountable for his offenses. There's a former foster teen who later told her, "Donna, I can still hear your voice in my head."

Donna says they wouldn't still be foster parents were it not for the great support from OYA and the county – good communication, phone calls and e-mails that are returned, even having the personal phone number of an OYA contact (she's used it only once over the years).

Donna Brubaker says she would tell prospective OYA foster parents that the hard work is offset by the reward of seeing youth "become the person that you know is really in there." She remembers a girl who came into their care in 1980 and now works with high-risk kids and families for county mental health. "That's a huge reward, that we had someone in our home who turned her life around and is now helping other people."

Parole officer reaches youth through basketball



His own experience playing basketball on a city league team gave him the idea: Why not give paroled youth the benefit of the lessons learned from playing sports?

"It gives them something positive to do," says Multnomah County JPPO Harry Bradshaw. "We always tell them what they can't do. This gives them something to do."

With approvals gained by Bradshaw's office colleague, Steve Huffman, who volunteers as a league referee, the team was approved. By late June the number of participants playing Monday evenings had grown to eight. Some family members show up to cheer them on.

The team is new – the first game was played June 7. But Bradshaw says more paroled youth are asking to play. Playing is offered as an incentive; youth with parole-related issues don't play. It's also an activity youth can continue after they're off parole.

"They know there's a time commitment and that they are expected to be on time, follow the rules and play as a team," Bradshaw says. "We want them to translate that into real life."

GLC TO THE RESCUE



Friday, June 4, Earl McGee, GLC2 at Eastern Oregon YCF, found himself as the first responder to a medical emergency.

Earl was working at the health club he and his wife Vickie own and operate when a client collapsed.

Vickie ran to check on the man and called for Earl to assist after finding him on the floor.

Earl dashed to the scene and checked for breathing and a pulse. Finding none, he immediately began CPR while Vickie called 911. Earl continued CPR until emergency services personnel arrived. He helped the EMTs successfully resuscitate the man.

The man was reported to have suffered a heart attack. If not for Earl and Vickie's quick and effective response, the man would not have survived.

2-1-1 LINKS CALLERS TO SOCIAL SERVICES

Need help paying the rent or utilities? Looking for affordable housing?

Dial 2-1-1 in seven Oregon counties and you will be connected to someone who can help you find social or human services in your area.

Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, Crook, Jefferson, Yamhill and Deschutes counties are all live on the 211info system.

This line also can be distributed to youth in those counties who need help finding services that will help them reintegrate into the community.

With more 100,000 calls answered in 2009, and at least 4,200 community programs available, this is a great resource for anyone who needs a little extra help.

Learn more about this program by reading the [Oregon Employees Charitable Fund Drive June 2010 newsletter](#).

Bradshaw and contracted skill builder Andre White, both of whom work with the youth, coach the team. Huffman often referees. Jerseys are provided, and Multnomah County pays the participation fee. Bradshaw also uses times before or after games to offer youth other opportunities, such as having a job or military recruiter drop by.

He says gang rivals are allowed to play if they can get along. So far it's worked out, and Multnomah County field office supervisor Debbie Hansen says youth have even apologized to their teammates for missing a shot. "And they're seeing JPPOs in a different light and as supportive," she says.

North Coast youth art to be part of art walk



As many as a dozen North Coast YCF youth may have their art displayed this fall in Astoria's monthly art walk.

North Coast youth are creating art in quarterly workshops led by Julia and Matthew Carter of downtown Astoria's Arts & Cultural Exchange, a studio and gallery that participates in the art walk.

In their first project, Julia Carter read a story about a father who sent his four sons out individually to look at – and describe – a tree in four different seasons. The youth then drew trees in the four seasons and made art books

involving elements such as printmaking, painting and special papers. "The lesson is understanding that life is about change," Julia Carter says, "that we do go through different seasons in our lives and cannot judge ourselves by one season."

To prepare work for the art walk, the youth will follow the example of the American Plains Indians who painted important life events on buffalo hides. Carter says the youth will "create artistic buffalo hides, drawing and painting their memories of special events important to them."

Robbie Porter, lead teacher at North Coast's South Jetty High School, says the project yielded more than art. Staff observed positive behavior changes, youth made up the school work they missed and youth proudly shared their art when families visited, she says.

Porter learned about the Carters after Warrenton-Hammond schools superintendent Craig Brewington heard their Rotary presentation and suggested she contact them.

The Carters, who delivered education and job-training programs in St. Louis before moving to Astoria, offer art workshops to the public, work with Astoria nursing home seniors and offered an art-based substance abuse-recovery program at a southwest Washington youth camp.

The art showcase is tentatively scheduled for October 9.

OYA applies for \$750k tech grant for youth



OYA has applied for a \$750,000 federal grant to support technology-related vocational training for youth at MaLaren and Oak Creek YCFs.

If approved, the grant would give OYA the resources to upgrade computer systems, purchase software and buy other training materials to provide state-of-the-art technology training to help ensure youth are ready to enter a competitive job market.

The ability to obtain and keep gainful employment is strongly correlated with reduced recidivism after offenders return to the community. This project proposes to serve up to 100 youth annually in the technology training program and up to 100 indirectly through fabrication and development vocational programs.

“This would be a great opportunity to enhance vocational programs already in place at MaLaren, and putting these resources into the Oak Creek facility would give the young women equal access to training for careers that pay decent wages and show promise for future growth,” says Frank Martin, OYA’s education/vocation coordinator. “If we receive it, the grant would ‘fast track’ the vocational program development currently

under way by providing the necessary financial resources to make the dream a reality. Even better, OYA’s Vocational and Educational Services for Older Youth funding would sustain the program after the grant ends. It’s a win-win for everyone.”

The application was submitted in mid-June to the U.S. Department of Justice to support a demonstration project under the federal Second Chance Act supporting technology career training for adult and juvenile offenders. It typically takes about three months to receive decisions on grant applications.

OYA shines through youth accomplishments

By Marc Barnum

While working with Camp Florence youth in the community, I am often complimented on the great job we are doing with these young men. In reality the credit belongs to all the OYA facilities and staff members who got these youth on the right path.

These young men came to us after successful treatment and education with staff in our other facilities. Staff members’ previous work with the youth has enabled Camp Florence to put these young men to work in and with the Florence community. Our current work experience includes audiovisual class projects, KCST radio, Osborn Veterinary Clinic and the mechanic shop at Sand Pines Golf Links.

Often, coming to OYA was the first time these youth had a mentor, and they have developed a relationship of trust with many OYA staff members.

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AIR GUARD RECOGNIZES GLC

Kenny Walker, a GLC2 at Rogue Valley YCF, is one of only six enlisted airmen nationally to be named Outstanding Airman of the Year by the Air National Guard. He received the award in June in the nation’s capital.

While in Washington D.C., Walker, an OYA employee for more than five years, met with military leaders and with U.S. Senators Ron Wyden of Oregon and Patty Murray of Washington. His scheduled visit with the President was canceled owing to conflicts related to the Gulf of Mexico oil crisis.

To be eligible to be considered for the national award, Walker first was selected as Noncommissioned Officer of the Year for his squadron and then for the state of Washington, where he is attached to a unit.

Walker now is among those who will be considered for the 12 individuals who will be named outstanding airmen by the U.S. Air Force. Those recognitions are expected in September.

INSIDE OYA

Colette S. Peters
Director

Fariborz Pakseresht
Deputy Director

For more information,
to submit ideas or
to write an article,
please contact:

Amanda Lowe-Davies
Editor
503-378-6555
amanda.lowedavies@
oya.state.or.us

or

Ann Snyder
Communications
Manager
503-378-6023
ann.snyder@
oya.state.or.us

The deadline for
each issue is the
last weekday of the
previous month.
Send your stories for
the August issue to
Amanda Lowe-Davies
by July 30. Articles
received after that date
will be held for the
September newsletter.



You believed in them and wanted them to succeed. The support they received from OYA staff is often like the support of a family, giving them both a lifeline and a strong base from which to go into the community and succeed.

Each time we do a project one or two youth will ask if I'll send pictures to Alan Walker, Rob Meeks, Gordon Kruse, Diane Hass, Sharon Pasco, Ron Weaver, Grandpa Steve or any number of other staff members with whom they want to share their pride in their accomplishments.

Our camp director Clint McClellan and I were discussing the great support and feedback we are receiving from the community regarding our youth, and we wanted to share that with you. We are a transitional facility and we get these young men after much hard work is done by staff at the other facilities to turn them around.

It's working! Many thanks and congratulations from the crew at Camp Florence.

Marc Barnum is vocational contractor at Camp Florence.