



Local Family Finds Path to Home Despite Extraordinary Circumstances

The shrinking affordability in Clark County has squeezed working low-income families out of rentals and into the streets—with limited resources to accommodate the unique challenges that face families. Personal stories, like this one, challenge our assumptions about what homelessness looks like, who can experience it and how a family can stay together under extraordinary circumstances.

Kaylee, her husband and four children arrived at Share Orchards Inn last January. Although her husband was working full-time, their monthly income could not cover their rent and living expenses and they were evicted.

After speaking at length with the family, Shana, a Share Housing Navigator, realized that income and health issues were both major barriers for the family. She also learned that the family had lost someone very close to them, a friend who was like a brother to Kaylee and her husband, and it had taken an emotional toll on them all.



Raising the family's income was a top goal. While a full-time job for Kaylee would help financially, it would come at the expense of taking care of her personal health and the daily needs of raising four children. So, Shana recommended and helped them to apply for Social Security Insurance (SSI) for both Kaylee and her children, to support mental and behavioral health struggles; she also searched for part-time employment. They also outlined a plan to pay down more than \$6,000 in property debt.

But life continued to present challenges. In early May, Kaylee and her husband decided to separate; he moved out of the shelter. And on May 18, Kaylee suffered a stroke. Shana recalled how incredible it was that Kaylee knew what was happening to her body; she was able to immediately get help from fellow residents and staff, greatly reducing the damage to her body. She spent the next few weeks recovering and ultimately welcomed in a family friend, Pat*, to live with them in shelter to help care for the children.

(Continued on page 2)

Lack of Affordable Housing + \$70 Million Deed Recording Fee State Deficit Further Strain Nonprofits Ability to House People & Families

“Cannot afford housing.” This is the reason given for the majority of people* (25% or 1,319 people) who experienced homelessness in Clark County. And in 2022, 9,023 people from 5,352 households were homeless at any given time; 28% of those were children 18 and under.

Data collected from local and state agencies confirms this reality:

- Residents of Clark County must make more than \$33 per hour to afford a two-bedroom apartment, which averages \$1,735 a month. That's the equivalent of two minimum-wage jobs at \$16.28 per hour and 80 hours a week.
- Rent in Vancouver, Washington is 34% more expensive than the rest of the United States.

In 2002, the state of Washington passed legislation to create a source of funding for homelessness programs, including shelters, low-income housing, eviction prevention, rental assistance and much more.

This was done through a surcharge on deed recording fees for real estate purchases. Over the years, the state has voted to increase those fees due to the rising need. But over the past two years, housing sales have slowed, as noted by the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance:

(Continued on page 2)

■ Path to Home Continued

In July, the search for housing paid off when Kaylee received a letter and intake packet from a subsidized three-bedroom apartment, which meant the unit would be affordable based on her income. The apartment complex was not yet open, so they patiently waited through August and September for the leasing office to begin operations.

The path to home was finally in sight. Shortly after Thanksgiving, Kaylee signed the lease and received the keys to her new apartment, with a monthly rent of just \$159. Shana shared information with Kaylee about local resources to help manage their monthly budget. When she circled back to check on them a few weeks later, she was delighted to find the family thriving in their new home.

**Name changed for anonymity.*



Share Board Directors:

President: Matt Lennick

Internal Vice-President:
Dawn Redmond

External Vice-President:
Jasmine Ames

Treasurer: Penny Harris

Secretary: Heidi Schultz

Britton Brown

Paul Harris

Paula Martin

Dawniel Miller

Pat Nuzzo

Ronny Plushnick

Tonya Rulli

Carlos Rodriguez-Vega

Gregory Saunders

Erik Selden

Marci Walsh

Nolan Yaws-Gonzalez

For a list of management staff, visit sharevancouver.org.

■ Strain on Nonprofits Continued

State lawmakers acted in 2023 to address the shortfall, but the document recording fees are still falling behind projections and another backfill of \$70 million is needed to prevent cuts to homelessness services later this year. When Washington is already unable to meet the needs of people facing homelessness, the last thing we can afford is to lose more ground.

For Clark County in 2024, this results in a 22% deficit—more than \$6.9 million including inflation and other costs—in the current budget of Clark County Community Services, who provides critical funding not only for Share, but also several other local non profits..

Just 364 year-round shelter beds+ are available in Clark County. This budget deficit equates to a loss of 94 beds.

The Washington State Legislature's session ends on March 7, 2024. We encourage you to visit our website, sharevancouver.org, where we will share the outcome of the 2024 session.

Community members can still take action to help—to local nonprofits that provide services to those experiencing homelessness; talk to family members, friends and co-workers about this issue to help spread awareness; if you own a business, consider ways to partner with local nonprofits to support or expand current services.

**Source: Clark County Community Services | Additional reasons: Domestic violence: 15% or 808; Household crisis: 11% or 588; Eviction: 8% or 437; Substance/alcohol dependency: 4% or 194*

+ Share House: 54 beds; Share Orchards Inn: 59 beds; Share Homestead: 56 beds; Share WHAT: 18; YWCA Safe Choice: 44 beds; Janus Oak Bridge: 8 beds; Outsiders Inn St. Paul: 25 beds; Bertha's Place: 68 beds; Bertha's Too: 32 beds

Learn more at wliha.org/roadmap

■ Donate Most Needed Items!

Each month this year, we will highlight a most needed item for clients in our shelters, housing programs and through Share Outreach.

March's most needed item is menstrual products, including pads, menstrual cups, tampons and period underwear.

Menstrual products should not be a privilege. More than 50% of the population, including pre-teens, teens and adults, have menstrual periods every month.

Those who are experiencing homelessness or living in low-income households are at increased risk of serious health issues, challenges in cleaning clothes during their menstrual cycles and general dehumanization due to a lack of access to menstrual products. Having a monthly period is a time of high anxiety. Menstrual products cannot be purchased with food stamps and are expensive.

Like to plan ahead? A sneak peak at upcoming months:

APRIL: Outreach Essentials—tents, tarps and sleeping bags

MAY: Food Donations for Backpack program—cereal, shelf-stable milk, fruit cups/canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned soup/chili, 2 lb. packs of pasta or rice, boxed dinners, canned tuna/chicken/ham, peanut butter, microwable meals, individual trail mix/granola bars, bottle juice or water



MOST NEEDED!

MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS

pads, menstrual cups, tampons, period underwear



Share Fromhold Service Center
Open Warehouse Hours:
Tuesdays: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Thursdays: 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.



Watch for these posts on Share's Facebook and Instagram!



Become a donor with a monthly gift:

\$15 could send home 3 bags of weekend food for children in our community

\$25 could feed 25 people a nutritious dinner at our Hot Meals program

\$50 could provide a Welcome Home Kit for a family moving into their new home

Dare to Share
IT TAKES COURAGE TO MAKE CHANGE.

SIGN UP TODAY:
sharevancouver.org



Live from *Van*ancouver it's...

SATURDAY NIGHT



Saturday, April 13
Hilton Hotel Vancouver
Registration opens 4:30 p.m.
Dinner served at 6:00 p.m.
With emcees Jennifer & Donnie Rhoads!

Reserve your seats today: sharevancouver.org

Sponsorship Table of 10: \$2,000—*Includes 2 bottles of wine, cocktails & appetizers, plus event recognition* | Individual Tickets: \$150

Are you a **We Share Member**? Contact Maggie at mbernetich@sharevancouver.org

- Bring a donation of snack foods (cup o' noodles, easy mac, peanut butter or cereal) and be entered in a door prize drawing!
- Bid on unique & fabulous **Silent Auction** items!
- Grab your friends and pose in the **Photobooth**!
- Bid on your **Centerpiece**! Play **Heads & Tails**!
- Buy a **Raffle Ticket** for a chance to win two round-trip tickets on **Alaska Airlines**!
- Our **Dynamic Duo's** will bring their best performance to the stage—and you can help 'vote' with dollars for the winner!

Photobooth Sponsor:



Centerpiece Sponsor:



Duo Competition Sponsor:



APPLAUSE!

We hope that everyone has a great ab workout with all the laughs! Rest assured, it will be PG-13 rated humor.



WELL, LA DI FRICKIN' DA!

BECOME A SPONSOR! DONATE ITEMS FOR OUR SILENT AUCTION!



Gift Cards | Food & Wine | Technology | Family Getaways
Baskets of Local Goodness | And more—be creative!

Contact Maggie Bernetich, Special Events Manager,
at mbernetich@sharevancouver.org or (360) 605-7677.

Local Partnerships Helping Local Nonprofits

Partnership is a wonderful way to serve the community—here are two recent examples:



During the holiday season, Share was honored to receive from Korey's Joy Drive two pallets of new toys children in our shelter and housing programs. Korey's Joy Drive is an initiative from the City of Vancouver to help honor the memory of Korey Cochran, a city employee who passed away in 2017 at the age of 28 from brain cancer.

What began as a one-year toy drive has continued for the past nine years, collecting new toys for all ages, as well as new winter coats, gloves, socks, shoes and hats for youth, teens and adults.

In addition to Share, donations are distributed to these local nonprofits: Children's Center, Children's Justice Center, Fosterful, Open House Ministries, Randall Children's Hospital, Sea Mar Parent-Child Assistance Program and YWCA Clark County.

Sunshine Division, Kaiser Permanente and dozens of volunteers packed and distributed 3,000 food boxes in honor of Martin Luther King Jr Day—and despite the January ice storm, too!

Share received 200 of the boxes, which included a diversity of food items from fresh apples, jicama, bananas, potatoes and onions to canned and packaged yams, corn, corn masa flour, corn meal mix, beans, rice, macaroni & cheese and more.

For almost 100 years, Sunshine Division has remained committed to providing emergency food and clothing relief to families and individuals in need through their unique partnership with the Portland Police Bureau.



Want to host a Stock Our Shelves drive?

We can provide you with a list of high-need items—from clothing and shoes to non-perishable food and personal care items—plus blue donation barrels to collect the donated items.

To get started, contact Brittany Hardaway at (564) 888 -0821 or bhardaway@sharevancouver.org.

■ Volunteer Spotlight: Church of the Good Shepherd

As shared by Janet Goforth, Church of the Good Shepherd member

Individuals from Church of the Good Shepherd have supported Share by serving at Hot Meals and by donating to monthly collection drives like the fall sock drive, called "Socktober." Prior to the Covid closure in March of 2020, volunteers had prepared and served lunch once a month for more than 20 years. Currently, our group of volunteers are helping to prepare and serve dinner twice a month.

Recently, a group of these volunteers gathered to reflect on our experiences; individuals became involved with Share for several reasons:

"For fun! It is fun to prepare the evening's meal and to complete tasks like bagging cookies, making breakfast sandwiches and processing community and business' food donations."

"This is a tangible way to help feed others."

"It is intentional service, a way of acting in love to serve Christ and others here in Vancouver."

"An unexpected gift has been developing friendships with other volunteers."

Takeaways from our volunteer experiences include:

"The staff prepare delicious food! Memorable meals include fried chicken, pork loin, lamb kabobs, beef stroganoff, plus salads and main dishes that include the vegetables we have just chopped! The kitchen smells wonderful!"

"Most recently Wade has been the 'Chef on Duty.' He serves as a role model for how to be friendly and compassionate while preparing delicious meals and interacting with clients."

"When the guests arrive for a meal, it is joy to hand them plates of hot nourishing food."

The clients express their appreciation and gratitude with words and expressions of excitement when they see the evening's meal! Many of the guests say "Thank you" or "Bless you" when handed a plate and we are indeed blessed by them.

Once all the guests are eating, there is a silence, a peace, like the presence of God in the dining room. Volunteering at Share's Hot Meals is fun, active and worthwhile!



Volunteer to Feed Our Community!

- 1,000+ weekly food bags for kids & families
- 8,000+ monthly free meals to the community

SIGN UP TODAY:
sharevancouver.org/volunteer

■ After 20 Years of Fun & Soup, Soup's On! is Ending

After 20 years of fun and delicious soup, it is with heavy hearts that Share's Soup's On! event will be discontinued.

This decision was not made lightly, but rather as stewards of our mission to better serve our clients by spending less resources devoted to two major events a year and more devoted to our mission-focused programs.

We are grateful to all the guests, chefs, potters and sponsors for the memories we made together, thank you!

One final shout-out to our 2023 soup winners, showcasing their trophies in their restaurants.



People's Choice Award and Golden Ladle: Joe Reid of Hudson's Bar & Grill

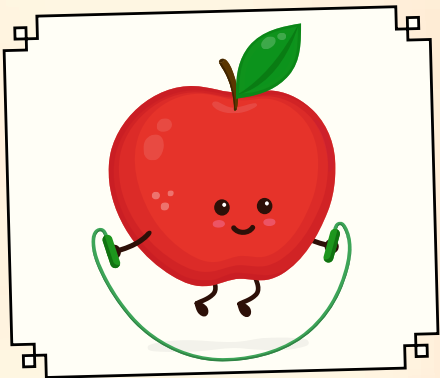


Presenting Sponsor Award: Michael Garofolo of Heathen Brewing Feral Public House



Chefs Choice Award—a four-way tie (L to R): Tanner Genck of AC Hotel Marriott; Fernando Martinez of Kuya's Casa Kitchen; Ryan Ziegler of Line & Lure Seafood Kitchen & Tap; and Bobby Rasaphangthong of Nom Nom Restaurant & Grill

Compassionate People
WANTED
to Host a Meal Site in Clark County!



REWARD
Free & nutritious meals for kids!
JUNE 24—AUGUST 9



■ Host a Summer Meals Site!

We are looking for people/organizations to host meal sites for our 2024 Summer Meals program. By increasing the number of available sites in Clark County, we will be able to provide more free meals to kids and teens in our community!

Meals will be prepared at a local commercial kitchen by our volunteers and then delivered to the sites for lunch on weekdays from June 24 to August 9. Lunch service is typically one hour, sometime between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

If you would like to learn more, please reach out to Miriam Moreno, Volunteer and Nutrition Programs Coordinator, at mmoreno@sharevancouver.org or 360-553-8064.

We hope you will join us this summer as we work together to make our community home!



2306 NE Andresen Road
 Vancouver WA 98661
 (360) 448-2121
sharevancouver.org | facebook.com/ShareVancouver

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage

PAID
 Vancouver, WA
 Permit No. 557

Donations small & large
make a difference!



JOIN SHARE one last time **AT THE BEACH** on **THURSDAY, MARCH 14** for a **CASHBACK DAY!** Just mention you are there to support Share and **50% of your bill** will be donated to us.

Don't miss this chance to enjoy one or more of your favorites—the delicious and original Beach House salad, a wood-fired pizza, the Beaches burger, the fish & chips, the key lime pie, just to name a few—all while supporting Share!

For those who haven't heard, the much beloved Beaches Restaurant and Bar will close its doors at the end of 2024, as owners Mark Matthias and Ali Novinger retire.

We wish them all the best in the next chapter of their lives and thank them for their generosity to Share and our community over the past 29 years!

you help!

Our annual Appeal for Meals raises vital funds to support our Fresh Food Pantries, Backpack, Summer Meals, Outreach and Hot Meals programs—and *need for food assistance remains at an all-time high!*



HOST A FOOD DRIVE IN MAY OR JUNE

We can provide a list of high-need items, plus blue collection barrels. For details, contact Brittany at (564) 888-0821 (call/text) or bhardaway@sharevancouver.org.

Share Appeal for Meals

Make a **financial donation**
 June 3-9

Become a **Match Donor**;
 contact Kim Hash at
khash@sharevancouver.org

Donate **non-perishable food**
 during our Food Drive on
 June 6

sharevancouver.org/mealappeal

