

# Link to HELPLINE

Spring 2008

## A ladleful of love

### 2008 SoupPort luncheon aims to serve 600 bowls of soup

by Sarah Cohen

SINCE THE SOUPPORT Helpline Luncheon started in 2006, the Walla Walla Valley has learned that behind a bowl of soup is a new start, a safe place and a warm meal.

It provides bus passes so a man struggling to get back on his feet can get to and from work. It hands a woman a fresh start after leaving an abusive relationship. It makes sure a little boy goes to sleep with a full stomach.

In short, it makes a difference.

This year's SoupPort luncheon will be Wednesday, April 16, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Walla Walla.

Your \$25 donation not only buys you delicious soup made by the culinary students at Walla Walla Community College, but it also lets you take home a ceramic bowl, artistically sculpted, glazed and donated by local artists, businesses and community members.

#### **Making a difference**

The SoupPort luncheon is Helpline's only major fundraising event, and its funds help make possible the services Helpline brings to our community each year. In 2007 alone, 6,700 people—almost half of whom were children—benefitted from the food, shelter, transportation, medical, utility and professional support available through Helpline.

"Homelessness and poverty affect everybody in our community, and the more we can do to support folks who are going through difficult times in their lives, the better off we all

are. It strengthens everybody in our community," says Sandi Blackaby, coordinator for the 2008 luncheon. "Really, these kinds of emergencies can affect people from all education and economic levels. Things can happen in a person's life, and pretty soon, you're on the ropes. You can't just stand from afar and think, "That'll never happen to me."

#### **Help us break our record**

Last year, 450 people "soupported" the event. The goal this year is for 600 patrons to take home works of art, full stomachs and the joy of serving others.

We encourage you to be one of them—to make a difference in the lives of your friends and neighbors. Call Helpline at 529-3377 to purchase your tickets today!

April 16  
St. Patrick  
Catholic Church



# A season of transitions

by Sharon Longmire

ONE DEFINITION of life is the ability to grow, adapt and change. Using that definition, Helpline is definitely alive! As this newsletter is published, the Board of Directors, clients, volunteers, and the community will be welcoming our new Executive Director. At the same time, a little less publicly, there is another change in Helpline's leadership. I have completed 3 years as Board Chair and am very happy to sit back and assume the position as "old chair" (my words, not the Board's). Actually the official title of my ex-officio position is "past chair". I have thoroughly enjoyed the time I have spent helping to lead this organization, and I expect to thoroughly enjoy my new position.

Please join me in welcoming the new slate of officers for 2008. Assuming the Board Chair position is Lynn Foust. Lynn is employed by Baker Boyer Bank as Vice President in Wealth Management. She is a native of Walla Walla, having

## Yes, Helpline is growing and changing, but the future is in good hands.

grown up here and has stayed to raise her family in our great town. Lynn's involvement with Helpline started ten years ago as a volunteer one day a week on her lunch hour. Her dedication and ability was recognized and she was asked to join the Board. Always willing to step in and help out, she was a natural for assuming the leadership as Board Chair.

Lynn is joined by Vice Chair, Andrea Christiansen. Andrea is employed by Coffey Communications as a graphic artist. She has clearly shared her talents in updating our website, creating our logo and acting as editor of our newsletter. We are blessed with her gifts as she assumes leadership on the Board.

The recording secretary for Helpline Board is Jane Coronado. Jane is employed at Banner Bank as a senior credit loan underwriter. She serves on Helpline's Community Relations committee and on the SoupPort Helpline Planning Committee.

Our Treasurer is Grace Reiber. Grace has a private counseling business and also donates her skills at Good Samaritan Ministries. We are blessed that she is both an accountant as well as a

counselor, and her gifts are a welcome addition to the Board.

Yes, Helpline is growing and changing, but the future is in good hands.



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## The Helpline Team

### STAFF

**Dan Willms**  
*Executive Director*

**Wendy Gonzalez**  
*Assistant Director*

**Katherine Hogan**  
*Bookkeeper*

**Elaine Simons**  
*Admin. Assistant*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Lynn Foust  
*Chairperson*

Andrea Christiansen  
*Vice Chairperson*

Jane Coronado  
*Secretary*

Grace Reiber  
*Treasurer*

Lois Blackwelder

Dr. Michael W. Gillespie

Fr. Patrick Kerst

John Lohrmann

Sandi Madsen

Carol Paynter

Phyllis Pulfer

Paul Rasmussen

Jeannette Regalado

Richard Simons

Fr. Steve Woolley

# The people we **serve**

## 2007 Helpline Client Demographics



### Location of Residence

	Households	Total Individuals	% of Total
Homeless*	310	571	8.5%
Walla Walla	1740	4956	74.0%
College Place	271	783	11.7%
Waitsburg	34	107	1.6%
Prescott	28	94	1.4%
Touchet/Lowden	19	76	1.1%
Dixie/Burbank	19	53	0.8%
Wallula	2	6	0.1%
Out of Area	27	54	0.8%
<b>All Clients</b>	<b>2450</b>	<b>6700</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*Homeless includes those facing eviction as well as individuals and families living in shelters, cars, or temporarily staying with family or friends.

### Individuals Served (All Household Members)

	# of persons	% of Total
Men	2746	41.0%
Women	2089	31.2%
Children	1865	27.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6700</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Race

White	57.7%	3863
Hispanic	35.9%	2402
African American	1.5%	93
Native American	1.4%	86
Other	3.5%	256
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6700</b>

### Age

Birth-5	15.1%	1012
6-11	13.5%	903
12-17	12.4%	831
18-24	13.0%	870
25-44	27.5%	1843
45-54	10.4%	701
55-69	6.4%	427
70+	1.7%	113
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6700</b>

### Meet the Director

Daniel Wilms, M. Div. (Western Evangelical Seminary) is the new Executive Director of Helpline beginning March 1. Dan, an ordained minister in the Free Methodist Church, pastors two churches, the new Vineyard Free Methodist Church of Walla Walla and the First Christian Church of Dixie.

Dan's background, in addition to pastoral ministry, includes construction project management and real estate sales. He has two adult daughters and one granddaughter with one on the way! Dan enjoys walking, camping, reading and learning to play the guitar.



### Assistant Director Honored by Red Cross

Wendy Gonzalez, Assistant Director at Helpline, was selected to receive the Compassion in Action Award for her efforts to improve the lives of others around her this past year. Wendy was honored at the Third Annual Hometown Heroes Breakfast held at the Marcus Whitman Hotel on March 19. **Congratulations Wendy!**

### CROP Walk

Helpline received a generous donation from the community as a result of the CROP (Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty) Walk last October. Our thanks to everyone who participated in this community-based inter-faith event. The 2008 CROP Walk is scheduled for Sunday, October 5.



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