

MARCH 2024 NEWSLETTER

“A Very Moving Exhibit...”



Sonoma Community Center Unveils "Invisible Neighbors" Exhibit, cosponsored by HAS, to address homelessness

“ I hope my artwork will help dispel many of the misunderstandings that people have of the homeless ”

OSIAS ENCARNACION, EXHIBIT ARTIST



There is still time to experience this exhibit, as it closes March 31.

Regular hours of operation 8 am. to 9 pm, most days



“A VERY MOVING EXHIBIT...” cont.

“ The Sonoma Community Center is proud to partner with HAS to bring this important project to Sonoma Valley. The portraits of the residents, taken by Osias Encarnacion, in our Causeway Gallery, are beautiful photographs that bring our *invisible neighbors* into vivid view and are important as a call to action to address the issues surrounding the unhoused. We hope to continue to partner with HAS and provide opportunities for the unhoused to tell their stories and have their voices heard. ”

-VANESSA GLAMORE ROGNLIEN



On March 12th, the Sonoma Community Center held a Community Forum hosted by a Panel of HAS Board Members, staff, volunteers, and clients.

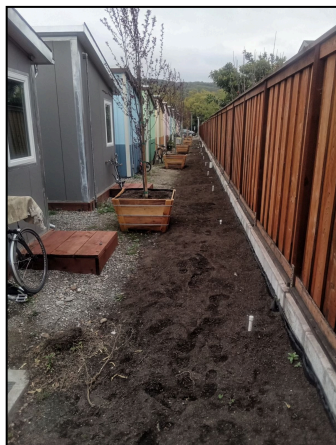
pictured from left to right:
 James Whittaker, Board Chairman;
 Marie Koller, Director of Operations;
 Scott Braun, HAS Volunteer Program Manager;
Dr. Jason Groff *; **Jerry Klenow **** ;
 and **Mark Milton*****

*** Dr. Jason Groff, of Sonoma Valley Dental, 181 Andrieux St., Ste. 104, is a local dentist who has been incredibly generous, and has accepted all HAS clients referred to him. His philosophy is, “if I have time I will do what I can to help”. Before Dr. Groff moved to Sonoma, he served clients at San Francisco’s famous Glide Memorial Church under Cecil Williams. He “charges” lab fees to HAS amounting to perhaps, a few hundred dollars, for work provided in the thousands! In some cases, he has even referred clients to Dr. Tyler Boynton DMD, for oral surgery. Some of these clients have gone since their early childhood without their front teeth, so these visits to Dr Boynton are a huge boost of self-esteem!**

**** Jerry Klenow is both a former Board of Directors member and Treasurer for HAS. Jerry’s spree of volunteer hours with HAS began sometime around January of 2023, when Annie Falandes created the “Warming Station” for the unhoused. Jerry does not just donate finances to HAS, but he has also donated countless amounts of hours of his time. From hand-painting the tiny home village, coming in as early as 6:00 am on a Saturday to help clean up, giving clients rides during the week, or helping wherever he has felt needed. Jerry’s large heart is not just evident through his work with HAS, but many other organizations as well-as he continues to volunteer at Catholic Charities in Santa Rosa! During the Invisible Neighbors Forum on March 12, Jerry inspired us all with his words, “I do not assume that I can change the clients, rather, I volunteer in order to bring about change in myself.” That is something we should all take to heart!**

***** Mark Milton is a Tiny Home resident and has been a HAS client since the 2023 Warming Station. He has helped HAS voluntarily and creates a community atmosphere among our clients. He is a valuable asset to HAS and a client we are proud to acknowledge.**

VILLAGE HAPPENINGS



Spring has arrived and our long rainy winter has passed. At the Home and Safe Village, we are celebrating the blossoms of our newly planted flowering plum trees and the brilliant coral pink flower clusters of the Crepe Myrtle trees. These trees not only have beautiful blooms but will also provide shade to our tiny homes during the upcoming hot summer days.

Donations from Sonoma Wholesale Nursery and Devil Mountain Nursery included hummingbird-loving sage, salvias, roses, butterfly-attracting bushes. Perennial shrubs and flowers have been planted in-between the homes and will give our tenants enjoyment and can also be used for small floral arrangements in their home.

Additionally, a few talented clients repurposed river stones from the property and built a lovely, walled herb garden. The next phase of the landscaping will begin in April with the planting of materials from the Native Plant Society of Sonoma and vegetable starts from local Rotary clubs.



H.A.S has partnered with the Ecology Center, Gustav Gustavsson, and the Rotary Club to honor Earth Day on April 20th at Larson Park and Sonoma Creek from 9am -12 noon.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

HAS collaborates with Sonoma Overnight Support (SOS) and others to assist individuals in the community. Over 500 meals at breakfast and lunch have been provided by SOS to HAS residents this year already. The kitchen is open 9am - 1:00pm Monday-Friday

SOS also has available: some bus tickets, Bomba socks, Coats (from FISH), hygiene kits, Emergency funding for clients, as well as some emergency beds. Other services are also available.
For more info contact SOS at: (707) 739-6777

FINANCES

We want to give special thanks and a show of gratitude for the anonymous donor who just contributed \$40,000 to HAS! Our invisible neighbors just became a little more visible. We also want to thank the City of Sonoma for their continued support, as well as the County of Sonoma.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The Home and Safe Village at 18820 Hwy 12 started accepting homeless clients in July of 2023. This was an act of compassion on the part of Annie Falandes, the Founder of Homeless Action Sonoma, Inc., the 501 C (3) non-profit organization that simply claims that “homelessness is not acceptable”.

Although clients now had a roof, there were no bathrooms/showers or laundry facilities due to discovery that the first delivered ADA (Americans with Disability Act) bathroom/shower facilities, were not compliant in California. This started a complex and expensive effort to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy necessary to function properly as a Homeless Shelter. Steve Latimer, the former HAS Treasurer and Board member, provided the necessary funds for capital improvements.

Steve Jaca of Mountain Movers LLC, agreed to build the bathrooms/showers and laundry room. These facilities were completed for the Grand Opening on December 17, 2023. Visitors to the HAS Village will see many improvements recently completed. A temporary tent 30’ X 40’ was erected to serve as a meeting place, food, clothing, furniture donations, and for the HAS free Community Sunday Dinners held every Sunday from 5-6:30 PM. The County still requires that HAS replace the tent with a solid structure that meets all County Fire Prevention Codes. Funding for this structure is needed to cover the \$25,000 cost.

Petra Longley, Landscape Architect and HAS Board Member, completed the county required landscaping. HAS clients and staff helped tidy up the surrounding area and Doug Fryday, a HAS Board Member, took responsibility for upgrading our facilities towards completing the final Certificate of Occupancy. With this Certificate, HAS will have completed more than two years of planning and permitting with Sonoma County.

HAS serves at least 20 campus clients and over 150 local outreach clients who rely on all services HAS offers including various types of mental health support services, essential services such as laundry, shower, meals, respite, companionship, fostering friendship and good will between HAS clients and the housed community. In addition, local non-profits such as SOS/Unity Kitchen, FISH (Friends In Sonoma Helping), the Hanna Mental Health HUB and SVCHC. Recently, Alfred GMcGugin of SVCHC started looking into the possibility of a coalition between various nonprofits in order to bring about a network of CalAIMS Community Supports Providers (CSP). Additionally, a special mention to Susan Drake. Susan specializes in grief counseling and life coach work and dedicates hours per week to helping HAS clients realize their potential and find their path. HAS and all those who support us remain focused on helping HAS clients and the Sonoma Valley community with expanding social and mental health services, all of which are necessary and wouldn't be possible without the support of our local nonprofit community in helping those less fortunate attain safe, secure and sustainable housing opportunities. Our mission remains strong. * Educate * Integrate * Innovate * Create * We thank you for your support.

Ted A. Nordquist, PhD

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