

UCAN News Articles – December 2017



Friday, December 1, 2017

How can you advocate for children in foster care? (RSVP)

By Rebecca De Greyt for the Daily Courier

Sponsored by the United Community Action Network, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program matches the talents of people 55 and older with nonprofit agencies and health care facilities throughout Josephine County.

BE AN ADVOCATE FOR A CHILD. Nobody longs for a safe and loving family more than a child in foster care. As a court-appointed special advocate (CASA) volunteer, you are empowered by the courts to help make this dream a reality.

You do not have to be a lawyer or a social worker to be a volunteer.

We welcome people from all walks of life. We are simply looking for people who care about children.

As a volunteer, you will be thoroughly trained and well supported by professional staff to help you through each case. You must pass a background check, participate in a 30-hour pre-service training course and agree to stay with a case until it is closed (a year and a half on average).

If you have any questions contact Rebecca de Greyt at 541-956-4474.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR MEDICARE? Are you turning 65 between now and February? To help educate and prepare you, our SHIBA volunteers are prepared to present a Medicare 101 introductory class on Friday, Dec. 8 from 10 a.m. to noon at UCAN, 125 N.E. Manzanita Ave. (Corner of Seventh and Manzanita).

They will review plans and compare coverages for Medicare part A, B, and D plans. They will inform you how to prevent Medicare fraud and the next steps to take in the process. Seating is limited and participants need to call to sign up for the training. Please call UCAN-RSVP at 541-956-4472.

HELP FEED AMERICA. Harvest may be over for the season at Raptor Creek Farm, but the Josephine County Food Bank still needs volunteers during the fall and winter seasons.

Right now, the Food Bank particularly needs people to help with the Fresh Alliance program, which involves picking up food donations from local grocery stores. We also need volunteers at our new pantry in Wolf Creek. If you live in Wolf Creek, we can use your help. If you live in Grants Pass and want to help, we can provide transportation.

For more information, call the Food Bank at 541-479-5556.



Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Baby 101 workshop teaches baby basics

The public is invited to learn about baby basics by signing up for Baby 101, a free one-day workshop from 6 to 8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 8, in Conference Room A/B at CHI Mercy Health, 2700 N.W. Stewart Parkway, Roseburg.

Baby 101 will be led by Lisa Austin, a UCAN family support specialist, and will cover topics such as infant vision, why babies cry and how to help them when that happens.

The workshop is available to all parents and caregivers. A nurse will be available to answer questions. Registration is required.

Registration: 541-440-7705.



Friday, December 8, 2017

Volunteer with Asante to 'deliver smiles' and help your community (RSVP)

By Rebecca De Greyt for the Daily Courier

Sponsored by the United Community Action Network, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program matches the talents of people 55 and older with nonprofit agencies and health care facilities throughout Josephine County.

DO YOU LIKE TO CARE FOR OTHERS? At Asante, volunteers say they get back far more than they give.

Their rewards come in knowing they have made a difference in someone's life. When our volunteers deliver flowers, they deliver smiles, too. When they escort a patient to treatment, they offer encouragement to an anxious heart. In every corner of our organization, volunteers add a personal touch to health care.

Do you want to make a difference? Join and become a valued volunteer. We ask that you commit to serving for one year. We are happy to accommodate a variety of schedules; however, evening and weekend volunteer shifts are the most popular, so it may take longer to receive an assignment for those shifts.

When you are offered a volunteer position, our team will work with you to schedule some important steps before you may begin. This includes general orientation, health screenings, fitting for a volunteer uniform and badge. You must complete a health screening before you begin working with patients. It includes written

documentation of vaccinations for measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), Verbal knowledge of having had chicken pox. And skin test screening for tuberculosis (TB).

If you are interested, please visit the UCAN/RSVP office at 125 N.E. Manzanita Ave. in Grant Pass and fill out a volunteer application.

CONCERNED ABOUT LONG TERM CARE? Our community is in need of Ombudsmen volunteers. Volunteers are certified to inform residents and their families of their rights, educate facility staff as well as the community about rights and care concerns. Volunteers objectively investigate all concerns and complaints and seek solutions that best address residents' concerns. To become a Certified Ombudsman Volunteer you must pass a background check, attend 5 day training, be available 16 hours a month, and attend monthly local meetings. Volunteers do get mileage reimbursement. If you are interested, please come into 125 N.E. Manzanita Ave. (UCAN/RSVP) in Grant Pass and fill out a volunteer application.

UCAN-Campus Closet. The Clothing Closet is in need of volunteers to help sort donated clothes and to help the youth they serve. We need volunteers to help students shop for school clothes!

It's the kind of work that makes you feel great, knowing that kids get an opportunity to select clothes that fit, are in style, and give them a boost of confidence at school. Please join us. If you are interested, please visit the UCAN/RSVP office at 125 N.E. Manzanita Ave. and fill out a volunteer application.



Friday, December 15, 2017

Organizing, sorting assistance needed for The Clothing Closet (RSVP)

By Rebecca De Greyt for the Daily Courier

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To become a Certified Ombudsman Volunteer you must pass a background check, attend 5-day training, be available 16 hours a month, and attend monthly local meetings. Volunteers do get mileage reimbursement.

If you are interested, please visit UCAN/RSVP, 125 N.E. Manzanita Ave. in Grant Pass, and fill out a volunteer application.

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Friday, December 15, 2017

Christmas for Kids gives toys, clothes to children across Douglas County



Three helpers dressed as Santa Claus prepare to head out Saturday on their routes as part of the Christmas for Kids of Douglas County toy and clothing drive. From left are Jack Mitchell of Winston, Robert Fields of Springfield and Adam Willis of Roseburg.



Dressed in warm, red and white suits and dresses, volunteers playing Santa and Mrs. Claus delivered colorful bags of toys, clothes and other supplies to children across Douglas County on Saturday for the annual Christmas for Kids of Douglas County toy and clothing drive.



Adam Willis and his Mrs. Claus, Sherri Cartageula-Willis of Roseburg, have been helping with the deliveries for the last three years.

“It’s a humbling experience and it’s our opportunity to give back,” Willis said.

“It’s heartwarming that we can give these kids a Christmas,” Cartageula-Willis added.

In its biggest year so far, Christmas for Kids provided red and green gift bags to 1,740 kids from around the county, from Reedsport to Glide and from Yoncalla to Glendale.

“We try to reach out to the outlying areas,” Robin Pritchett of Winston, a Christmas for Kids board member, said.

Starting in September, Christmas for Kids gets the names for the families from local service groups including the Family Development Center, United Community Action Network and the Family Relief Nursery in Drain, among others. Staff from several local organizations shop for kids they serve in November, while most of the shopping is done by about 400 volunteers who are allotted a certain amount of donated money to spend on each child under 16 in a low-income household.

Half of the funds are spent on clothing for the kids while the other half is for items on their wish list, whether it’s a toy truck, a doll, a LEGO set or something they need.

“You never know what people’s situations are, we had at least eight families become homeless in the last two weeks,” said Dale Pritchett, chairman of Christmas for Kids of Douglas County said. Dale Pritchett said the nonprofit was still able to reach those families.

According to him, a 14-year-old girl just recently got her first bed, but was using a rolled up jacket for a pillow and a sleeping bag, so Christmas for Kids bought her new pillows, bedding and blankets. He added a 12-year-old boy had always worn second-hand shoes, so this year the organization got him his first brand new pair.

Donations for the drive come from individuals and local businesses and organizations, including Roseburg Forest Products employees. Local businesses also donated their vans and buses over the weekend for the deliveries along 12 routes.

The idea for the toy delivery service came about more than 20 years ago when a then-16-year-old from Roseburg named Amy Newport decided to buy Christmas presents for two boys. The boys would come up to the window of Pete’s Drive In, where Newport worked, but they wouldn’t have enough money to pay for their food. At school she noticed the boys would wear the same clothes every day, so she went to their mother and asked if she could buy them gifts for Christmas.

When she turned 18, Newport worked at Roseburg Forest Products, where founder Kenneth Ford agreed to grow the giving campaign through employee payroll reductions.

“As the years went on it grew bigger and bigger,” Dale Pritchett said. Newport moved up to Eugene and eventually the Pritchetts and fellow volunteers took on the project as Christmas for Kids.

“I remember thinking someday we could help 1,000 kids, but now we’re helping over 1,700,” Robin Pritchett said.



Saturday, December 16, 2017

Douglas County looks toward future with tiny homes



As the demand for housing continues to grow, a business in Roseburg is planning to construct and offer tiny homes for those wanting a small, affordable option.

Nathan Kroeker and his father, Mike Kroeker, teamed up to start their business, River Hawk Tiny Home Co. last April to meet the needs of those wanting a simpler, smaller way of living.

“Our goal is to build custom high quality tiny homes on wheels for the regional marketplace and ultimately anywhere, but we’re starting here in Douglas County,” Nathan Kroeker said. “We also have hopes to build a tiny house community here in Douglas County that would help with more classy comfortable lodging where someone could rent a tiny home.” He said the goal is to provide affordable housing as well as lodging for tourism.

A tiny house is usually about 400 square feet or less, and the Kroekers plan to create transportable tiny homes with wheels. So far, they’ve completed the foundation of their first tiny house using a reclaimed trailer they had salvaged from a junk yard. They’re using a variety of recycled materials to build the 325-square-foot house, including timber from a barn and a cedar fence on Nathan Kroeker’s property.

The tiny house movement stems from people looking to downsize from the cost of a traditional home into something much smaller.

The Kroekers are currently looking for a buyer for the future tiny home so they can customize it to fit the buyer’s needs. Nathan Kroeker estimated the house will cost between \$40,000 and \$50,000, depending on the buyer’s specifications.

“I like the possibility of helping people reduce and get out of debt,” Mike Kroeker said. “There seems like there’s always been a need for something temporary, like professional people who are in town for months instead of years, or students who don’t want to live on campus.” He said tiny homes could be a solution.

A tiny home could be the first space a young couple shares while trying to save money, it could be used as temporary housing for traveling medical professionals working at CHI Mercy Medical Center, or it could become a simple cabin in the woods.

Douglas County Commissioner Gary Leif said a tiny home could also be a suitable alternative for any local veterans.

“Housing right now is really needed, not just in Douglas County but throughout the state of Oregon,” Leif said, who also serves as a board member for both United Community Action Network and Housing Authority of Douglas County Oregon.

He said tiny homes could provide significantly cheaper transitional housing options for a larger number of veterans.

“I’m trying to think out of the box, and ask, ‘is this something that could work for a veteran housing project?’” Leif said. He said the county has some properties that could possible work as an area for tiny homes.



Friday, December 22, 2017

Join a team designed to help with Medicare (RSVP)

REBECCA DE GREYT

By Rebecca De Greyt for the Daily Courier

Sponsored by the United Community Action Network, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program matches the talents of people 55 and older with nonprofit agencies and health care facilities throughout Josephine County.

SHIBA's? WHAT DO THEY DO? (Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance.) This program's success is built on a statewide network of trained volunteer counselors. Counselors help people in their community understand their Medicare insurance choices and their rights through individual counseling, education, and referrals. Volunteers report to a volunteer coordinator in their sponsoring organization (UCAN). If you are dependable, understanding, patient, and compassionate, communicate well, have computer skills or are willing to learn we would love to have you on our team. This year during Open Enrolment, we had a team of 5 SHIBA volunteers that helped 301 Clients in the community. Come and be a part of a team that makes a difference in the life's of those who have to make tough choices. . If you are interested, please call RSVP reception line 541-956-4472.

ARE YOU A PARTY PLANNER AT HEART? Women's Crisis Support Team (WCST) has some unique volunteer opportunities. WCST has a program called, "My Special Wedding", this program provides a win-win situation for bridal parties and for the WCST. The program matches wedding parties with exclusive venues and the cost of the venue goes directly to WCST. Volunteers are needed to show venues, staff booths at wedding shows from Oct-February, help develop new venues, coordinate activities, manage social media, and more. Check out the program at: www.myspecialwedding.org if you are interested in being a part of this wonderful program, contact Cindy: 541-476-3877 or cindy@myspecialwedding.org.

IS YOUR SCHEDULE FLEXIBLE?The AARP Tax Aide Program is looking for greeters that have flexible hours from February-April 2018. AARP Foundation Tax-Aide offers free tax-filing help to those who need it most. We are looking for compassionate and friendly individuals to join our team of local volunteers for the upcoming tax season. You will receive training and continued support in a welcoming environment. Come and join the team that offers free tax preparation help to anyone, with special attention to older, low-income taxpayers. We understand that many individuals may miss credits and deductions they have earned because they cannot afford to pay for professional tax preparation. Your service would be welcomed here. If you are interested, please call RSVP reception line 541-956-4472.



Friday, December 29, 2017

Use your party planning skills to help the Women's Crisis Support Team (RSVP)

By Rebecca De Greyt for the Daily Courier

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