



Joe: A Changed Life and a Positive Attitude

What is going on in your life right now?

"I just moved into Olive Plaza last week. I've been on the waiting list for four years, and this is like a dream come true. To stay on the waiting list, I had to check in with my caseworker every month. Right now, I'm putting my apartment together. I'm 63 years old, and this is my retirement. I can afford to live here (rent is \$350/month, with assistance from Section 8 housing). It's nice here."



Tell me about your experience at Nightingale.

"I'd been in a small, nasty, horrible place, with rats, alcohol and drug users, and crazy people. It cost \$700 a month for a small room, and the landlord refused to deal with all the problems. I couldn't take it anymore, so I moved out. I work out at the Eugene Family YMCA everyday (Joe has insurance that pays for his membership), and I noticed the camp while riding the bus to the YMCA. So one day I stopped and went into camp and met Nathan. He was welcoming and helpful. I moved into Nightingale in June 2022. It was my first time being homeless. Nightingale was safe and gave me the opportunity to save money and get strong physically. Overall, it was a very positive experience."

What makes Nightingale unique?

"It's a safe, supportive place to be. There are good people there. The camp meetings, gate duty, and work parties help build responsibility. They provide a Eugene YMCA membership so we can shower and get exercise. They also provide bus passes, food, internet, and connections to jobs and local resources."

Do you have any words of wisdom to share with others?

"Well, if you're homeless, go to Nightingale. People there will help you."

Final thoughts?

"I wish the City Council and Governor would do something about the outrageous housing prices. Most homeless people and people like me just can't afford the rent to live."

Many Thanks for a Successful April Showers Campaign

Personal hygiene ranks among the greatest challenges for our unhoused neighbors. Currently, Nightingale residents travel over a mile each way to the Eugene YMCA to take showers, oftentimes after long workdays (and only during the Y's hours of operation). Thanks to the generous support of Nightingale's many friends and sponsors, we have collected over \$23,000 for our shower facility. This vital resource will significantly improve our residents' quality-of-life as they pursue permanent housing and stability.

The April Showers campaign culminated with a festive fundraiser at Roaring Rapids Pizza Company on April 27, where 75 attendees purchased food and beverages. Roaring Rapids generously donated 40% of their proceeds to the campaign; furthermore, an anonymous donor provided \$5,000 in matching funds. According to NHS Fundraising Committee Chairperson Susie Andrist, "We've never done a third-party fundraiser like this, so I wasn't sure what kind of turnout to expect. The number of people who came, though, exceeded my dreams. We're so grateful!"

Thanks to the generosity of our April Showers donors, NHS residents will now be able to step out of their tents and take showers in camp, without the 2+ mile walk or bus ride. In turn, they'll now be better prepared for interviews, work, and other necessities. You have truly made a positive impact on their lives.



Did You Know . . . ?

. . . that our April Showers campaign inspired **55 new donors** to help provide showers for our camp? That's 62% of the total number of donors! Because many of you reached out to your friends and family, our campaign was a tremendous success. Thank you to all who helped spread the word.

Creating a Two-Year Road Map

The Nightingale board has launched a planning process to create a two-year road map that will guide the organization through the next couple of years.

Over the first six months of 2023, Nightingale's board, site managers, and volunteers have started developing the road map. During the January board meeting, we brainstormed to identify key questions to pursue. The one that garnered the most interest: How can Nightingale gain more traction in effectively assisting NHS residents in securing a more stable life? "Traction" might include success with jobs, effective relationships with case managers, education goals, health care, and more. We want to explore the support and services needed, and what talents we must have for Nightingale to function sustainably, including working from a strong commitment to building community.

To become more educated, we have invited a number of speakers to talk with us about their work, the larger ecosystem of services for unhoused people in Eugene-Springfield, and their understanding of both the causes of and solutions for homelessness. We know that if we have a common base of understanding, we can make smart decisions for Nightingale. We are grateful for the insights and the shared knowledge of numerous speakers from local non-profits and government, including the Eugene Mission, Community Supported Shelters, White Bird, the City of Eugene, and the State of Oregon. In September we plan to complete the road map at a board retreat.

Changing minds one at a time



There's this guy, Kevin, who likes to drive from his home down to the DariMart across from Nightingale for something to drink and to read the news. Tracy, one of our camp hosts, often saw him at the DariMart and they slowly struck up a "hello, how are you" friendship. Eventually Kevin told Tracy that he used to have a little fear of the unhoused, but Nightingale changed his thinking. Tracy was very moved by his frank admission and wanted to share this simple story of connection.