

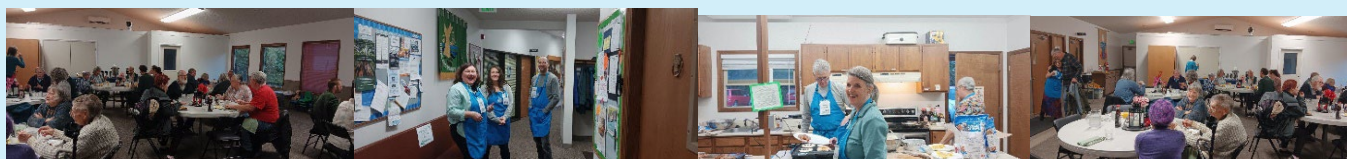


## Solutions for Housing Security

### Spring 2024 Quarterly Newsletter

**The First Step Board of Directors and our residents express our sincere gratitude for your support, continued generosity, and partnership as we assist families in moving towards more stable living situations.**

### First Step Organization News



**The First Step Pancake Dinner on February 2nd** was very well attended and raised some much-needed funding to help provide resident services. Thanks again to the Florence community, to our guests, the First Step Board, staff, community volunteers cooked the food, joined us for dining, served the guests, and decorated the room- it was fun and delicious!

### Welcome! New Board Member Rebecca McMinn



Rebecca and her husband, Rick, have 4 children, 6 grandchildren, a cat and 2 dogs. They lived in Texas on a farm, with their cattle, goats, alpacas, mini-horse, and peacocks. Rebecca retired prior to their recent move to Florence and has loved the Oregon coast weather (including the rainy season), beaches and especially the amazing forests. She is studying now to become a Master Naturalist, learning, and enjoying all Oregon has to offer.

Rebecca is a retired nurse, having practiced first in intensive care and then in hospice. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing and later returned to school to receive her master's in business administration. She is the past president of the Texas New Mexico Hospice Organization and served on numerous committees involved in supporting and providing care to others.

As the majority of Rebecca's life has been in service to others, she began serving with Helping Hands and recently joined the First Step Board, knowing that in helping others, it in turn helps us all.

## From the First Step Board President

The First Step Village and the property on Hwy 101 are progressing this year in preparation for capacity building. Our partnership with the Bridges Program has resulted in several key pieces of infrastructure being added to our property on the north end of Florence. We now have water, sewer, and electrical installed that we can connect to. This will be a great cost savings when we clear land and begin to add our housing units.

Our ambitious plan is to have three additional housing units on that property by the end of the year. Currently, we have contractors working on bids for land clearing, fencing, and running the final lengths of water, electricity, and sewer.

Sandy Craft, our Community Development Liaison, is writing grants and helping the board organize the steps to make this dream a reality. In the coming months, we will have details on the placement of the new village on our property and ways that you can participate in to help more families move into permanent housing.

We have found that trailers are becoming increasingly difficult to maintain and have begun looking at alternatives. City code only allows us to use temporary housing units in our current village, we are considering new possibilities that will better serve our families. We hope to have some pictures at our Gala (your invitation is in this newsletter).

We continue to search for a couple of additional board members. If you have compassion for families experiencing housing insecurity and want to donate some of your time, talent, and/or sweat to help us make a difference, please call me. I would love to take you out for lunch or a cup of coffee to discuss if serving on our board would be beneficial for you and for First Step.

I look forward to seeing you at our Gala.

Greg Wood, First Step Board President  
541-991-8208 [Revgwood@Yahoo.com](mailto:Revgwood@Yahoo.com)

## Resident & Village News

It's been a successful year for our First Step Village residents! Two of the First Step families have moved into permanent, affordable apartment housing- one of our families moved into the beautiful new Shore Pines complex next door to the First Step Village.

The third family moved into a rental house in Florence. They were able to use their savings acquired through the "rent" savings program organized by our First Step Residents Advocate to pay for the rental deposits, and several months rent. The family is absolutely delighted to have so much space to accommodate their teenagers and a feeling of housing security! Both the mother and her partner are working multiple jobs and have expressed immense gratitude for the First Step program and the kind hearted donors who have made their success possible.

There are plans for fundraising to purchase items to improve the outdoor area of the Village. The goal is to provide a covered sandbox/play area (gazebo) for the children, picnic tables, and storage sheds for bicycles, toys and other things that will not fit in the trailers.

## Ways to Give:

**PayPal Donate button on our website:** <http://firststepflorence.org>.

**Mail:** PO Box 1331, Florence, OR 97439

**Donate button on our Facebook page:** [Facebook.com/FirstStepFlorence](https://www.facebook.com/FirstStepFlorence)

**In Kind Donations:** We accept in kind donations such as automobiles and some household items.

**Legacy Gifts:** Real estate, donor advised funds, stocks, personal estates, and IRA gifts. This type of charitable giving can be beneficial at tax time for you and helps us remain viable into the future. Speak to your financial advisor or tax consultant to learn more about planned giving, or call Greg Wood at: 541-991-8208

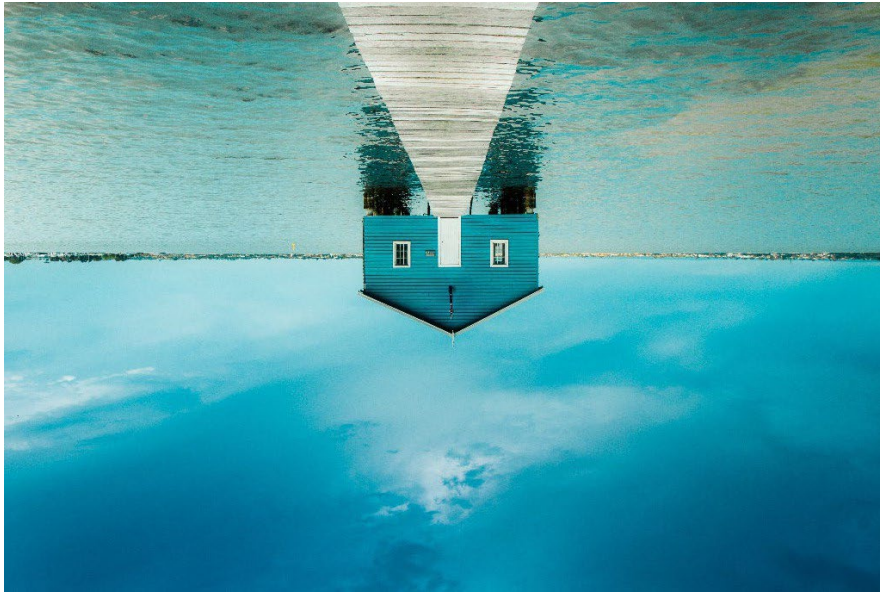
*First Step Florence Board of Directors  
Cordially Invites You  
to attend the inaugural First Step Gala Fundraiser  
hosted at the Organic Noodle  
Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> beginning with wine & cheese at 5:00pm  
Silent Auction and Program Highlights*

# Gala

*Three Course Dinner curated by Chef Anthony  
\$65.00 per person ~ Limited Seating*

*We request your RSVP & choice of entrée by June 1<sup>st</sup>  
Contact Sandy at 541.590.2325 or [info@firststepflorence.org](mailto:info@firststepflorence.org) to reserve  
your seat and choose your entrée (chicken, salmon, vegan option)*





**PO Box 1331**  
**Florence, OR 97439**