

Board President Insights ...

We are pleased to announce that Sandy Craft, First Step Community Development Liaison has accepted a newly created full-time position with First Step as Program Director. The Program Director position has been funded through a three year grant from the Murdock Foundation. As program Director, Sandy will help guide the development of the new village on our North 101 Florence property. She will continue to write grants, pursue fundraising options and promote First Step in our community.

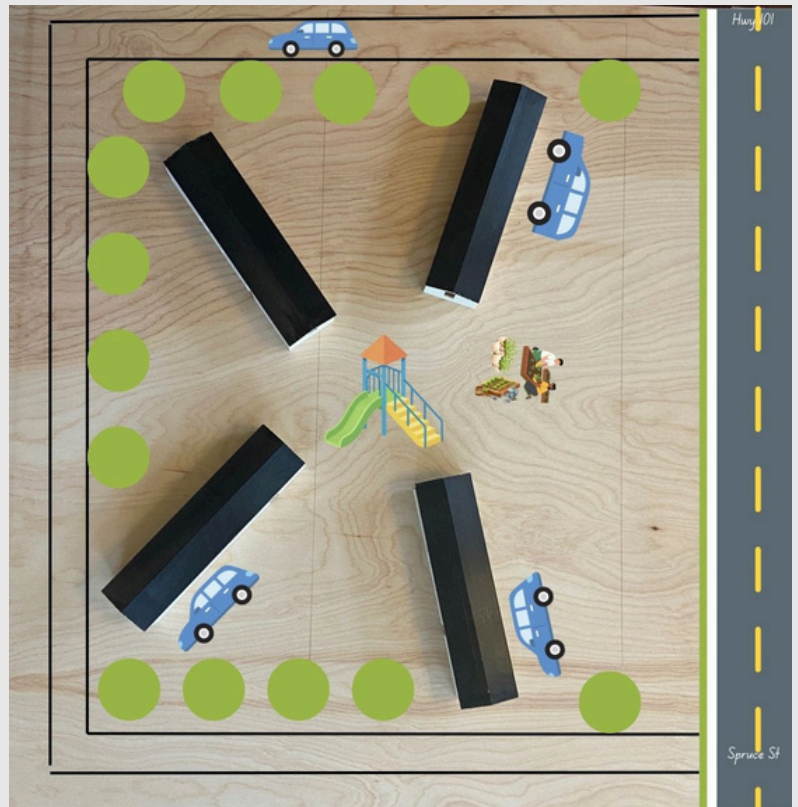
The Board is excited to be closer to realizing our goal to serve more housing insecure families and make a greater impact on Florence.

We congratulate Sandy on her promotion and invite you to join us. As a Board, we are grateful for her experience, leadership, and dedication to the important work of First Step Florence.

Greg. 804.908.9663



**Building with
Compassion**



Rough portrayal of First Step Florence site development for illustrative purposes only.

The Board and Staff are pleased to welcome **Todd Ruby** to the Board. Todd and his family moved to Florence three years ago and Todd jumped right in to serve the Florence Community. Todd brings administrative, organizational, and team experience along with his skills in plumbing and carpentry to serve the families of Florence through First Step. We look forward to getting to know Todd better and putting him to work!

From the desk of Sandy Craft, Program Director . . .

Platinum Transparency 2024
Candid.

Platinum Transparency 2026
Candid.



Platinum Transparency 2025
Candid.

With the promotion of Sandy to First Step Program Director - this will be the last header graphic showing only "Grants" used by this newsletter editor. As Sandy's job description has broadened, her time will be invested in shoring up First Step in a variety of ways through oversight and a broader scope of record keeping - though many of these tasks are activities Sandy has tackled since joining First Step.

A current high priority has been to apply for a large USDA Rural Development grant specifically for adding housing units and growing the program. There have been many requirements and Sandy has guided the board in crossing the T's and dotting the I's; as you might imagine the government requires. FSF has been assured the funds are available for the program - still hoops must be threaded. Sandy will be reaching out to potential large capacity donors and applying for bigger grants in order to build First Step into a sustainable long-term program.

FSF continues to need every one of you interested, supportive and faithful donors making contributions. We are grateful for each of you!

As Sandy devotes more time to grant writing/fundraising, you will still see her at groups, events and activities around the community - continually promoting the First Step mission to house and support otherwise unhoused families - helping them become self-sufficient and successfully reach their goals.

FSF Housing Happenings Newsletter Editor, Norma Wood



FSF is grateful to Joe & Michelle at Shipping Solutions for their continued support of First Step! January 2026



Thank you, Goodwill for hosting FSF in a March Round-Up project!

Remember to sign up! Tell your friends & family



Fred Meyer's Community Rewards program directs a FM contribution to First Step Florence. This is done through the Fred Meyer app linked to your Rewards Card. Sandy is happy to help you with this, as is the staff at the FM Service Counter.

Life Changes in the First Step Temporary Housing Program

One of the FS families is discovering that extra living space can benefit their family after moving from a smaller into a larger trailer. "It is working much better as a home." This particular participant has been on maternity leave - just returning to work and has successfully lined up child care. They are also working on getting their driver's license, have established a bank account, filed their taxes and are at the top of the waitlist for an apartment.

Another participant, new to the program, is also on an apartment waiting list, figuring out how to utilize community resources, collecting appropriate supplies for their 2-year-old and exploring options for child care to be able to get a job.

Our third FSF participants with several children are successfully juggling their children's school, keeping up with household demands and holding down jobs.

We continue to feel privileged to serve Florence families by offering housing and program supports.

- Melanie, FSF Participant Advocate





HARD HATS & HEELS CONSTRUCTION GALA

JUNE 13, 2026 6 - 9 PM FLORENCE EVENT CENTER

Fundraiser

CASH.CHECK.CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

Tickets

<https://givebutter.com/LmWz50>

\$75 Each

or call Sandy @ 541-590-2325

\$500 Table of 8



Dinner & Drinks w/ silent, dessert, & Live Auctions

*THANK YOU to our Generous
EVENT SPONSORS:*

THREE RIVERS
CASINO RESORT



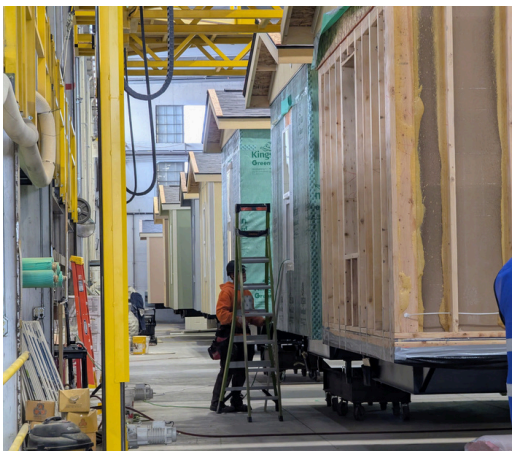
**Florence Elks
Lodge#1858**

HYAK



**BANNER
BANK**

**Sponsors, Donors, and Grantors
will help us purchase sturdy and safe
homes for FSF participants!**



Thirteen First Step board members, staff, volunteers and AWB project manager toured the Hope Community Homes construction site and classroom in Eugene on February 13th.



Watch for FSF "Gathering to Build" float in the May 17th Rhody Parade!



Board Members

- Greg Wood, President
- Paul Pearson, Vice Pres.
- Norma Wood, Sec.
- Brooke Golen
- Donna Gregg
- Todd Ruby

Follow us on fb @ firststepflorenc
 and on instagram @ fsfhousing
 www.florencefirststep.org

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