

January 2009

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### And we are so grateful!

What a year it was! In January '08, James sat me down and helped me realize that the site we had been negotiating for with the Forest Service was never going to happen. That was followed by soul searching and a lot of real estate searching -- we looked at every property for sale on both sides of the river. A celestial head slap made me give a funky little farm a second look, and on my birthday in June we closed on Rockford. Five crazy months later and after WHOLE lot of construction repairs -- we opened, and the dream was a reality.

### Before Christmas



**Daren** was followed by **Brett** -- and the first two were moved in. The house was still a wreck, but they jumped in and helped with repairs, and thanks to **Hood River Construction, Hood River Plumbing** and **Bonney Electric**, the house was warm, dry and safe. The guys had

their turns wanting to leave the program -- it is intense and a lot of hard work -- but after a couple of false starts, the guys have really taken flight!

### Bell Ringing

We think it is vital for the guys to understand that this community built WINGS and we must give back. One of first activities as a team was bell ringing with **Rotary** for the Salvation Army. On a really cold Saturday evening in front of Wal-Mart, the guys learned there is nothing cuter than little kids putting their dollars in the bucket, and it really feels great to do your part!



### Christmas Tree



Intrepid **Adam**, our Americorp Member and Volunteer Coordinator, got the \$5 Forest Pass and took the guys out in the woods to find the perfect tree -- good thing our ceiling



was 11 feet tall -- ok, they still had to cut off a

foot. We drove the guys crazy with Christmas carols, and had fun decorating the tree and becoming a family.



### Cookies, cookies, cookies

I think we are still finding remnants of cookie-making day -- but fun was had by all! We made cookies for three events, friends and family, and our wonderful WINGS team. We are still arguing over which we liked best - either the spice or monster.

### WINGS Team Pot Luck



We are so grateful for our amazing Board and all of the Team Members who helped us get to where we are today. Every single person has made a difference and we would not have made it without them. Most of the team was able to brave the snow and join us at the WINGS house for an

amazing pot luck dinner -- followed, of course, by cookies! James topped off the evening -- he had WINGS sweatshirts and hats for all!

### Snow, snow and more snow

Did you think it was ever going to stop? Days on end of snow, but the guys got really good at shoveling -- even the roof -- and Brett got to drive **Marty Knowles'** tractor around. We



are still reeling from the damage to our flimsy outbuildings, but the snow was beautiful.

### Christmas

Our first Christmas together was so fun. New shirts from **Neal** and **Diana Price** and the Secret Santa gifts the guys, Adam and Shawn bought each other were the hit of





the party. But, as always, my wonderful hubby made the day with his funny collection of crazy stocking stuffers!



### Work, work, work

Besides the many projects around the farm, we got our first paid work contract. Look for us on Mondays cleaning up the **Cascade Commons Shopping Center** -- it is not glamorous, but we think it is important that the guys learn the habit of getting up every day, working hard and getting up and doing it again the next day -



- something they had never learned to do on their own. We have also had three days of painting with **Columbia Riverkeepers**, and we are hoping to finalize a contract with the **Port of Hood River** early next month.

Need help with a project? We are available at \$50 per day, per person -- for seven hours of hard work! **Shawn** doubles as our Crew Leader and she transports, supervises and works along side -- I told you she was amazing -- for work you can call her at 436-2922!

We also really need tools - everything from shovels to rakes to hand tools!!

### More Good Deeds



The guys spent the day after Christmas shoveling snow off the roof for a woman who had recently lost her husband. A few days later, they spent the day helping **Marty Knowles** of **Trinity Productions** set up lights and sound for the "Heroes" Party at the Armory -- what a great

night! The guys also helped **David Skakel** and the **Gorge Rebuild-it Center** move cabinets donated by **Harsch Investments**. Want to get rid of building materials? Call the **ReBuild It Center** at 387-4387 and we will help pick-up!

### Classy New Ride

You may remember last month, we were thrilled to have been awarded \$6000 by the **Hood River Lions** for a vehicle. Well, the more we thought about it, the more we realized what we really needed was a BIG truck with lots of seats. Lucky for us, **Glenn Taylor** had just the ticket. So, we



gave Glenn a very small payment and became proud owners of The Beast! **DelCarpine Automotive** kindly got her all fixed up and we mortgaged the house to fill the 42-gallon tank! Ain't she a beauty?! Help! Now we need a trailer to haul our gear -- got one for sale . . . cheap?

### More Companies to Thank

A big hug to **Hood River Sand and Gravel** for dumping the load of gravel in our driveway - such a relief. We also want to thank **Lester Moving & Storage** for moving and storing a piano donated by **Rich and Robin Cushman**. And, in the construction confusion, I forgot to thank **Swell City** for the linoleum and **Your Rental Center** for equipment rentals - you guys ROCK!! As always, a very special hug to **Hood River News** for their on-going support!

### Having Fun as Well

It is not all work and no play -- the guys learned to fish at the beach, enjoyed the view at Timberline, and ate way too much sushi in Portland.



They have also had other trips, which included bowling and nights at the movies!



### New Year, New Look



The changes in the guys that we thought would take months are taking weeks, and we are proud to celebrate the new look Daren is sporting. He decided (with a little Shawn magic) to let go, and literally and figuratively shed some of his past and some of the darkness he was hanging on to. Way to go Daren!

### We Are On Our Way

We had a board meeting and approved the plan to open our program, not only to young men who were formerly in foster care, but also to those who are homeless and in need of help. We let the neighbors know of our plan, and we are running ads to find our last two guys. We are hiring our teacher/Life Puzzle Trainer, writing grants like mad and looking everywhere for more work!

We will be doing repairs from the snow damage as we go (okay Daren, stop clowning around) and looking for volunteers and educational community service projects!



Hard to believe all of this has finally come together. If you are



getting this newsletter, you have helped us get this program off the ground. Over 150 individual donors helped raise enough money to open - and stay open for five months. We need to raise another \$100,000, cement relationships with federal and state agencies, and complete an endless number of projects, but looking back over all that has been accomplished in a year, we know, that with your help, WINGS will continue to soar.

### How You Can Help:

WINGS needs your help to continue running and to grow this year. Please check out the Donation/Volunteer page on our website: [getwings.net/donation.html](http://getwings.net/donation.html). If you can help with a one-time donation or better yet, a monthly pledge, your money will be directly spent to provide services to kids.

We understand that not everyone can make a monetary donation - but WINGS could use your help in so many other ways! If you have a skill or a passion or a favorite sport, and could spare an afternoon, please let us know. If you have excess furniture or equipment, please check out our Needs List and make a donation. If you have work for the Crew for a day or longer, please let us know. When the young men are ready, together we will give them "WINGS."

Thanks to all of you who have helped WINGS get this far; your help has made all the difference!

Give Them Wings, Inc is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation doing business as WINGS. WINGS is a two-phase program which provides housing, work, trade and life skill training, education and wrap-around services for 18- to 23-year-old young men in Hood River and Wasco Counties who were formerly in foster care or are currently homeless and in need of support.

Sincerely,  
*Allyson Pate*  
WINGS

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