



HELP of Ojai, Inc. May/June 2022

Neighbors HELPing Neighbors

Community Bulletin

A Word From Jayn Walter, Co Executive Director

Dear Friends,

March and April were quite the whirlwind for me, at HELP of Ojai, and in the broader world. This past December my husband and I welcomed a baby, Belén Antonia, into our family. In early March, after taking maternity leave, I returned to HELP in a new capacity, as Co-Executive Director with Megan Telfer. Since then, life has been full of challenges, both personally and professionally, and all have been positively welcomed. As a team, we are working hard to be dynamic and rise to the challenges that blow our way. We have a substantial mission and there are many moving targets, but our team is amazing. One thing is for sure: it is invigorating to belong to an organization that can evolve to meet the needs of its community. I am personally very grateful to work among such a compassionate and dedicated staff, and more thankful that I am able to raise a child in a community that takes care of each other.

There have been some shining beacons at HELP over the past few months. One program of note is the Community Assistance Program (CAP). There, our valuable Case Managers are always on the ball, working hard to assist Ojai residents at risk of losing their housing or those who are currently unsheltered. Helping to house just one person requires an immense amount of resources and effort. The dedication of our CAP staff is unrivaled and we are so proud of the things they are accomplishing for our community's vulnerable population. Additionally, our Senior Nutrition Program is as busy as ever, with our director Anna Woollis making amazing meals from scratch five days a week!

If you've ventured downtown lately, you know that Ojai has been bustling with locals and tourists alike. We hope you've been able to safely enjoy the many community offerings: farmers markets, new restaurants, and festivals to name a few. It is my belief that these types of community events distinguish Ojai. Recently, the Ojai Performing Arts Theater, after deferring for two years, put on a fantastic production of HARVEY! The organization generously donated a percentage of proceeds to HELP. Big thanks to them! We love partnering with other community organizations and look forward to more new collaborations.

I just want to wrap up by explicitly saying that without community support (YOU!), we would not be able to make such transformational changes for Ojai residents in need. We and your community, thank you for HELPing us to help others.

In the following pages, you will find updates by our program managers. If you find yourself interested in volunteering with any of these programs, please contact us at 805-646-5122. For those of you that follow us on Instagram or Facebook, you can find the volunteer sign up link there as well.

As always, thanks for your support. Have a great Memorial Day holiday.

Best,

Jayn Walter

May/June Activities Update • 108 S. Montgomery Street, Ojai • (805) 646-5122

HELP of Ojai would like to thank all of our volunteer instructors for all they do for our seniors! Not only do they teach their class, but they show deep care and concern for each of their students. We would not be able to run this program without them and be able to offer classes at low cost, no cost, or suggestion based.

HELP of Ojai offers activities to meet the interest and schedules of active seniors. Whether it is an activity for the brain; an activity for the body; or an activity that brings people together, we hope you find something to meet your wants and needs. Included below is a short description of the typical monthly activities. The days and times of the classes/activities are listed on the accompanying calendar. Unless specified, all classes are donation-based. Please notice the Activity Calendar is a two-month format. The next calendar will be published for July and August 2022.

Due to COVID-19, there is a maximum of 15 people per an activity, masks are required inside the building, and proof of vaccination is required. Hand-sanitizer will be provided for use before and after class.

The appointment-necessary or series-based activities beginning at Montgomery Street for May/June are:

Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program (HICAP) will hold appointments on Tuesdays from 9:00am-11:15am. This program provides free and objective information and counseling about Medicare. Please call 805-646-5122 to schedule an appointment.

Skin Cancer Check with Dr. Thacher will be Tuesday, June 7th from 8:30am-9:45am. Call 805-646-5122 for an appointment.

Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance is a 12-week evidence-based class offered by the VCAAA Fall Prevention Program that requires registration. Class will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30am-11:00am starting on Tuesday, May 10th. Suggested \$5.00 donation per a class

Yoga at HELP of Ojai on Thursdays is a 6-week series that requires registration. The Spring Session will be held on Tuesdays from 11:30am-1:00pm with a certified instructor, starting on 4/14 and ending on 5/19. This Spring Session will be held at 108 S. Montgomery Street. As a Covid Precaution, students will be responsible for providing their own yoga mats. The 6-week course costs \$45.00.

Yoga at HELP of Ojai on Wednesdays is a 4-week series that requires registration. The Spring Session will be held on Wednesdays from 9:00am-10:30am with a certified instructor. The series will start on 5/4 and end on 5/25. This Spring Session will be held at 108 S. Montgomery Street. As a Covid Precaution, students will be responsible for providing their own yoga mats. The 4-week course costs \$30.00.

The drop-in classes and activities held at Montgomery Street available in May/June are:

Chair Yoga meets on Wednesdays from 11:00am-12:00pm. Suggested donation of \$5.00 per a class. Classes will not be held in June and July.

Intermediate Guitar meets Fridays from 1:00pm-2:00pm. Learn guitar in a supportive environment. Suggested \$5.00 donation per class. Classes will be held during the month of May. For the months of June and July, please call in advance to see if the class will be held due to instructor vacation.

Mah-Jongg Mavens meet on Wednesdays from 1:00pm-3:00pm.

Parkinson's Support Group meets the first Monday of every month. The next meetings will be held on May 2nd & June 6th from 2:00pm-3:30pm. Occasional guest speakers.

Activities held at other places for May/June are:

The Caregiver's Haven Support Group meets at The Gables on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Masking is required and evidence of vaccination or current PCR test is required to be on The Gables Campus. Call Deirdre at 805-640-5717 for more information.

Grey Law is currently doing over the phone meetings. Please call 658-2266 to speak with a Grey Law representative.

Future Classes to look for in July/August are:

Chair Yoga will be back in August, look for more information in our next Community Bulletin for the start date and time.

Creative Writing will continue to meet on Zoom.

Intermediate Guitar will meet sporadically in July and August, with a consistent schedule starting back in September.

Parkinson's Support Group will meet in July and August.

Skin Cancer Check with Dr. Thacher will be Tuesday, August 2nd from 8:30am-9:45am. Call 805-646-5122 for an appointment.

Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance will hold a registration for the Fall Session. Stay tuned for more information!

Yoga at HELP of Ojai will hold a registration in August for Fall Session 1. Stay tuned for more information.

◆ PROGRAM UPDATES ◆

Senior Nutrition Program • Anna Woollis, Program Director

370 W. Baldwin Rd., Ojai • (805) 649-8018 • annaw@helpofojai.org

Congregate meals are now served Monday through Thursday, from 12pm-1pm. There is no lunch service on Fridays.

Home Delivered Meals are available to recipients who are 60 years of age or older and homebound by reason of function and/or disability and/or isolation. Please contact Anna at 649-8018 for more information.

Transportation • Tina Rosas, Transportation Director • (805) 646-7787 • tinar@helpofojai.org



Transportation hours of operation: Monday – Thursday: 8:30-3:30, Friday: 8:30-12:30

This month we recognize Bill Loehr as our volunteer driver of the month. Bill has been driving for HELP of Ojai for eight years! Bill drove during the pandemic delivering Great Plates and is always willing to drive multiple shifts whenever needed. Our riders appreciate Bill's positive and cheerful personality. Bill is an author, awesome bread maker, fly fisherman and a retired economics professor. One of Bill's many talents is playing the harmonica. Many times, while waiting for our riders, he is playing in our parking lot, which always brings a smile to those that are nearby. Next time you see, or hear, Bill please thank him for his many hours driving for HELP of Ojai.

Please call Tina 805-646-5122 x105 if you would like to know more about this great opportunity serving our community. Reminder: Ride reservations must be called in by 2:00 the day prior. Doctor's appointments and grocery shopping are priority over any other appointments.

West Campus & 2nd HELPPings Donation Center • 370 W. Baldwin Road, Ojai

Our 2nd HELPPings Donation Center at our West Campus facility is open Wednesday through Saturday from 9:00am-2:00pm. No appointment necessary! *We reserve the right to refuse items that are unsellable or in poor condition. Please do not dump items.*

Our **First Saturday Sales** are held on the first Saturday of each month, with the exception of January and July, from 8:00am-12:00pm. Remaining sale dates in 2022: May 7, June 4, August 6, September 3, October 1, November 5 & December 3. Our May 7th sale will feature the unique paintings and other art by Irene Koch. Irene passed away in 2020 and left her estate to HELP of Ojai. We want to offer the community the chance to purchase her one of a kind art and hope you'll stop by.

2nd HELPPings Thrift Store • Naomi Collins Babcock • 841 E. Ojai Ave., Ojai • (805) 646-5812

Store hours: Tuesday—Saturday, from 10:00am-5:00pm. Temp Sunday hours: 11:00am-3:00pm

Masks requested but not required

We're excited to share we will now be open on Sundays! Beginning May 8th, the thrift store will be open from 11am-3pm. Hope to see you!

2nd HELPPings is on Instagram @2ndhelpings_thrift! Give us a follow and get first looks at unique and collectible items for sale.

Due to space and other limitations, we cannot accept donations at the store. Please visit the donation store during their hours of operation. As always, thank you to the volunteers who help the store run! We couldn't do it without you.

◇ PROGRAM UPDATES ◇

Community Assistance Program (CAP)

(805) 640-3320 • 108 S. Montgomery St., Ojai 93023

The following was written by Whitney Nunes, Homeless Services Specialist and Case Manager:

As a case manager at the HELP of Ojai Community Assistance Program, I work with a lot of people who are housing insecure. It is one of the more difficult parts of my job: talking with people who are unable to find affordable housing in the Ojai Valley (or Ventura County, for that matter). I have met people who grew up in the Valley and are moving out of state because they cannot afford to live here any longer. It is always a difficult conversation to have with someone where you let them know the reality of finding something in the Valley is slim to none.

With all that being said, I have been very fortunate to work with the Ventura County Continuum of Care and the Homeless Management Information System to help obtain Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) for some of our eligible clients. Another select few have been lucky enough to come to the top of the years long Section 8 waitlist as and have obtained housing vouchers. In total we have helped 10 households through their voucher journey in the past two months. Two of the individuals have been housed through Section 8 and one individual has been housed through Permanent Supportive Housing via HMIS. We have been able to secure 7 EHV vouchers and have been able to assist 17 individuals total: seven seniors, three adults, and seven children. We are continuing to advocate for more individuals who are in need of the EHV.

So who are we helping? One of our senior clients, who had been homeless for 20 years, received a Section 8 voucher. Unable to find housing in the Ojai Valley, they looked for housing for six months before they were able to find housing in a different city. We worked with another unsheltered senior who had been living in their car for years. They obtained a Section 8 voucher, but due to a low credit score they were unable to find a place to live. After almost a year of searching, we were able to advocate for a Permanent Supportive Housing unit, for which they were approved and were able to move in at the end of March. I worked with a single parent who called me in November, letting me know they were being evicted because the landlord was having a family member move into their home. This family has had years of difficult circumstances and trauma. They constantly feel like they are just surviving. They were able to find housing outside the Ojai Valley and are now in a place of comfort and stability which they have not felt in years. This EHV has enabled them to explore opportunities they never thought possible.

These vouchers have given many people a new lease on life. By receiving these housing subsidies individuals and families are now able to enjoy more and worry less. I feel so lucky to work with these families and individuals to help them find sustainable housing and support them in their journey.

If you have any questions for Whitney, you can reach her by email at whitneyn@helpofojai.org.

Important dates for the CAP office

Beginning in June, we will be open on the last Saturday of every month to help those who are unable to receive services during the week. This is a great time to pick up a food box and/or complete a utility assistance application. We will be open from 9am– 12pm.

Donor Recognition

Our deepest appreciation goes out to those who made contributions in the months of February and March 2022. Your donations in support of HELP's programs are valued greatly and we sincerely thank you.

If you have any questions regarding donations, please call Megan Telfer at (805) 646-5122.

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Louanne Fay	Ojai United Methodist Church	Smith-Hobson Foundation
Louis and Pamela Kuhlman	Olga Jones	Soni Wright

Donor Recognition Continued

Our deepest appreciation goes out to those who made contributions in the months of December 2021 and January 2022. Your donations in support of HELP's programs are valued greatly and we sincerely thank you.

If you have any questions regarding donations, please call Megan Telfer at (805) 646-5122.

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In Memory

In memory of Alan Rains
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In memory of Alan Rains
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In memory of Lucy Lucking
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 Janine Hatton

In honor of Punky Soares
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In memory of Richard Paige, Carl Huntsinger, Fred Keeler II, Robert Chesley, Robert Miller
 Fred Keeler

In honor of Rose Boggs
 Barbara Weaver

In memory of Russell Eldeb
 Connie Biggers

In memory of Russell Eldeb
 Judy Eldeb

In memory of Russell Eldeb
 Randall Hamud

In memory of Steve Kraus
 Roz Kraus

In honor of Briar & Terri & Tim Wolfe
 Lanyard and Mary Dial

HELP of Ojai Monthly Activities Calendar for May 2022

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
2	3	4	5	6
2:00—3:30 Parkinson's Support Group	9:00—11:15 HICAP Counseling	9:00—10:30 HELP of Ojai Yoga 11:00—12:00 Chair Yoga 1:00—3:00 Mah Jongg Mavens	11:30—1:00 HELP of Ojai Yoga	1:00—2:00 Intermediate Guitar
9	10	11	12	13
	9:00—11:15 HICAP Counseling 9:30—11:00 Tai Chi	9:00—10:30 HELP of Ojai Yoga 11:00—12:00 Chair Yoga 1:00—3:00 Mah Jongg Mavens	9:30—11:00 Tai Chi 11:30—1:00 HELP of Ojai Yoga	1:00—2:00 Intermediate Guitar
16	17	18	19	20
	9:00—11:15 HICAP Counseling 9:30—11:00 Tai Chi	9:00—10:30 HELP of Ojai Yoga 11:00—12:00 Chair Yoga 1:00—3:00 Mah Jongg Mavens	9:30—11:00 Tai Chi 11:30—1:00 HELP of Ojai Yoga	1:00—2:00 Intermediate Guitar
23	24	25	26	27
	9:00—11:15 HICAP Counseling 9:30—11:00 Tai Chi	9:00—10:30 HELP of Ojai Yoga 11:00—12:00 Chair Yoga 1:00—3:00 Mah Jongg Mavens	9:30—11:00 Tai Chi	1:00—2:00 Intermediate Guitar
30	31			
Memorial Day HELP of Ojai Closed	9:00—11:15 HICAP Counseling 9:30—11:00 Tai Chi			

HELP of Ojai, Inc.

P.O. Box 621

Ojai, CA 93024

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



HELP of Ojai, Inc. — *Neighbors HELPing Neighbors*

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