

The logo for ACCESS news features a stylized graphic of three overlapping leaf-like shapes in blue, yellow, and orange above the word "ACCESS" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, followed by the word "news" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

# ACCESS news

summer  
2019

**FOOD, WARMTH AND SHELTER**  
WE DO THAT! INSIDE, MORE ON  
WHAT WE'RE DOING TO BUILD  
COMMUNITY ALL YEAR LONG.





# ACCESS

## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR



As we move into summer, we ease into a time of a slower pace, a time to reflect. We honor one of our long-time supporters Sherm Olsrud. His presence and contributions to ACCESS have helped us provide support for thousands of families in our community. We are thankful for Sherm, the Olsrud family, and the long list of amazing volunteers and donors that help support ACCESS' mission of building community by providing Food, Warmth and Shelter. I invite you to show gratitude to others within your community because with each other's support we can create long lasting impact.

*Paula Han*  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

### 2019 Mayors United

The 11th Annual Mayors United Event will be held on Friday, October 4th at Bigham Knoll in Jacksonville. Local restaurants, wineries and breweries will share their specialties. The event also includes live and silent auctions and The Brothers Reed will be the musical entertainment.



### Stamp Out Hunger

On May 11th, ACCESS partnered with the National Association of Letter Carriers to collect donations through the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the largest one-day food drive in the nation. Letter carriers picked up 52,818 pounds of non-perishable food from Jackson County residents. Thank you to all who donated and volunteered!



### Disc Jam for ACCESS

ACCESS is partnering with Bear Creek Golf Course and Rogue Valley Disc Golf Club to present the 1st Annual Disc Jam for ACCESS on Saturday, August 24th. If you're interested in this event, see page 9 for more details.



## Chamber Leadership Edible Garden

In April ACCESS celebrated the ribbon cutting of the new edible garden. The Chamber Leadership class of 2017-2018 chose this edible landscape project at ACCESS as it's class project. The garden provides an opportunity for experimental learning, demonstrating sustainability, promoting health and wellness, and enhancing a personal connection to food. The edible plants will be used to support food pantries and meal sites, as well as in cooking skills education classes. ACCESS is humbled by the Chamber Leadership support of ACCESS' commitment to addressing hunger needs throughout the community.



## ACCESS Nominated For Recycler of the Year



ACCESS has been nominated for Recycler of the Year due to its efforts with the Fresh Alliance Food Recovery Program. Through the program and other partnerships with local businesses, almost 2.3 million pounds of

food were diverted from landfills and instead distributed through 24 food pantries, including our mobile food pantry, throughout Jackson County. This constitutes almost half of all of the food we distributed county-wide in 2018 (4.3 million pounds). ACCESS has been operating the Fresh Alliance Food Recovery Program for more than 13 years. For 2018-19, ACCESS established an annual goal to recover 1.38 million pounds of

food from local grocers and food producers and to increase the number of Fresh Alliance Partners from 14 to 16. ACCESS succeeded in adding four new Fresh Alliance partners (Costco, Win-Co, Grocery Outlet and Cartwright Meats) to the program bringing the total to 18. Additionally, through the Garden Shares Program over 28,264 pounds of fresh organic vegetables were distributed to local families, which reduced food transportation costs.



## Dancing & Dining In The Streets

ACCESS and the Downtown Medford Association (DMA) are partnering to bring Dancing and Dining in the Streets to downtown Medford for the second year in a row. The events take place in the streets and alleys of Downtown Medford, at a different location each time. The entertainment is free and the food prices are determined by participating restaurants. Attendees are encouraged to bring non-perishable canned food to help fill ACCESS' food barrels.

**Friday, June 14      The Medford Cruise – Three different bands/DJs**  
5:30 – 10 p.m. LOCATION: Main Street and Riverside area

**Friday, June 21      Broadway Phil & the Shouters**  
5-7:30 p.m. LOCATION: S. Bartlett (where it crosses with Main St) and the alley in front of the parking garage

**Friday, July 19      Danielle Kelly Soul Project**  
5-7:30 p.m. LOCATION: Vogel Plaza, 12 S Central Ave.

**Friday, Sept. 20      Battle of the DJs**  
5-7:30 p.m. LOCATION: RCC/SOU HEC plaza area, by the bookstore (S. Bartlett, between 8th & 9th St.)

# Local Veteran Receives Life-changing Assistance



**“Meeting with the ACCESS folks and receiving this assistance was a miracle.”**

James Wilde, a 70-year-old Vietnam Veteran, was recently assisted by ACCESS in acquiring a rental apartment through the Support Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. With failing health and residing in an uninhabitable trailer, Mr. Wilde was depressed and at a low point in his life; however, once Dominick at UCAN in Grants Pass referred him to ACCESS for SSVF eligibility his life changed for the better almost immediately. With collaborative efforts, ACCESS and the SSVF program were able to help by providing a new, habitable rental. In Mr. Wilde’s words “meeting with the ACCESS folks and receiving this assistance was a miracle.” He feels he’s made friends with the staff here and is humbled by the experience.

Mr. Wilde had joined the Marines in 1965. He has lived a nomadic, single lifestyle upon discharge from the Marines in 1968, traveling to and residing in 11 different states and one foreign country, Japan. He is a musician at heart and has played folk music professionally.

Speaking with positivity and humility is a man who is grateful for what ACCESS has been able to provide. Mr. Wilde says “I went from a low to a high after meeting with Carrie, Mike, and Traci of ACCESS’ SSVF program.”

The SSVF team at ACCESS is honored and proud to be of service to Mr. Wilde and our community.



# After Years of Perseverance, Family Buys Their First Home.

Aaron and Danielle are a prime example of how perseverance, hard work and dedication contribute to accomplishing their dream of purchasing a home. Beginning in December of 2014, Aaron, a pastor, and Danielle, a stay at home mom, began their plan of purchasing a home for themselves and their four children. They came to ACCESS and participated in housing counseling. After about eight months, they realized it just wasn't the right time for them to purchase a home at that moment.

Some time passed and in December of 2016, they came back to ACCESS for housing counseling and work with a housing counselor for the next several years during the challenging real estate market. Rising sales prices, coupled with rising interest rates, made it difficult to find a home that suited the size of their family for a price they could afford. They made several offers in the Medford area, where Aaron was assigned to a church, none of the offers were accepted. Aaron was then transferred to a church in Grants Pass, where they restarted their search for a home. In January 2019, they received an acceptance to an offer. ACCESS was able to help them with down payment assistance to help them get into the home that was a great fit for their family.

## Housing Assistance at ACCESS

ACCESS is dedicated to the creation of affordable housing as well as rental assistance and homeownership assistance programs.

### Programs Include:

#### Individual Development Accounts (DreamSavers)

Matched savings accounts help eligible consumers build financial resources. Funds can be used for higher education, small business start-up or expansion, or purchasing a home. These no-fee savings account (IDA's) help lower-income families save money and improve their lives.

#### Homebuyers Assistance Programs

Help for first-time buyers with education, counseling, down payment programs and special mortgage products as available.

ACCESS offers two options for Homebuyer education to provide information on the process of buying a home and becoming "mortgage ready." Realize the American Dream classes, are live in-person classes, and eHome America classes, are online classes. For a class schedule or more information please call (541) 779-6691

#### Financial Education

ACCESS offers an online money management course through eHome America to help reach financial goals.

#### Mortgage Payment Assistance

ACCESS administers the Oregon Homeowner Stabilization Initiative (OHSI) program for Jackson and Josephine Counties. This program assists households who are struggling to pay their mortgage, behind on property taxes or facing default. To sign up for this program, go to OHSI or call (503) 986-2025.

**For more information on any of the Homeownership Programs, call (541) 779-6691**

# Link to Feed

**“It has helped us to serve more people in our community and be more efficient.”**

*- Food Pantry Volunteer*

New electronic intake system helps local pantries serve more people in our community

## Food Share Program

Did you know that ACCESS coordinates six gardens that grow fresh produce for food pantries across Jackson County? The 2019 growing season is in full swing! Learn how you can take home fresh produce and give back to your community as a Garden Volunteer! Contact [freshaccess@accesshelps.org](mailto:freshaccess@accesshelps.org) or call 541-841-6487



From January-April ACCESS Nutrition staff assisted food pantries throughout Jackson County in rolling out a new electronic intake system called Link to Feed. The online database makes guest registration at food pantries quicker, more efficient and safer by protecting client information. With training and support from Oregon Food Bank, food pantries were given equipment, signage and other materials to roll out the new system.

ACCESS is the first regional food bank in the state to roll out Link to Feed to all of its emergency food pantries in such a short amount of time. Nutrition Director, Rachael Ward said. “Link to Feed is easy to use and was designed for food pantries. We’re excited to bring this technology to Jackson County to make it easier for pantry guests and clients alike.” Food pantry volunteers are already starting to see a change. “Link to Feed has really made a difference with our pantry,” one pantry volunteer said. “In the past, we were able to serve about 12 clients in an hour. Now we are up to 20 an hour!”

## LOVE TO COOK? VOLUNTEER WITH US!

ACCESS’ Cooking Skills program is looking for passionate volunteers to teach cooking classes in Jackson County. For more information, call (541) 774-4315 or email [ckline@accesshelps.org](mailto:ckline@accesshelps.org).

“Being a recipient of food from an ACCESS food pantry has eased my anxiety about making ends meet.”

~Anonymous

# A New Home With New Beginnings.

## Former ACCESS client gives back in her new role on ACCESS' Development team

In July of 2015, RJ Wright was at the top of her career when everything changed with one phone call. Her older sister was losing a 20-year battle against addiction and her children needed a home immediately. Within 40 hours RJ became the single parent of her sisters' three young children. RJ left her career to support the children through recovery from a lifetime of abuse. This left her penniless, homeless and afraid for her new family's future.

“Everywhere I went people empathized and gave me words of encouragement, but ultimately told me that they couldn't help,” says RJ.

Feeling helpless, RJ began to share her story with anyone who would listen hoping for a miracle. Her dream came true when one of those strangers referred her to ACCESS. RJ was accepted into the Oregon Housing Community Services (OHCS) Program. Two weeks later RJ and her new family were secure in a home with a new beginning.

Fast forward three years later, after being able to focus on growth and recovery, RJ was able to return to work. “ACCESS helped me pick up the pieces and build a future full of promise” says RJ. When she informed her ACCESS case worker, Angie, of this news Angie encouraged her to apply for an opportunity to work for ACCESS. RJ is now a part of the ACCESS development team using her experience to build community.



**“ACCESS helped me pick up the pieces and build a future full of promise”**

*- RJ Wright*





# A Tribute From Philip Yates



Knowing Sherm & Wanda Olsrud has been one of the greatest privileges of my life! So Sherm's passing in May was extremely saddening.

My first meeting with them was as sponsors of the annual, ACCESS Grocery Bag Drive in 1991. When ACCESS needed support to build a new kitchen for the "Loaves and Fishes" senior meal program, Sherm, Wanda and the Olsrud family were the first ones there leading the way. This building at ACCESS is now known as the "Olsrud Family Nutrition Center."

In December of 2000, Sherm turned up with a truckload of food to start another tradition of Olsrud family giving, a tradition that happens everywhere Sherm's Food 4 Less has stores, in Klamath Falls and Roseburg. There are many other gifts that Sherm and Wanda made to ACCESS as well as countless other organizations across Southern Oregon.

I had many opportunities to say thank you to Sherm on behalf of ACCESS, and his answer was always the same. "We give because the community has been good to us and that's what you do, you give back." He was the kindest, most humble and giving person I ever knew. He will be greatly missed by his family and the whole community.

Sincerely,

*Philip Yates, Former ACCESS Nutrition Director For 27 Years*

## Wells Fargo Leads the Community in Volunteer Impact

Wells Fargo and its employees are committed to making a positive difference in our community. As one of ACCESS' most dedicated corporate partners, Wells Fargo employees have given more than 1,700 in volunteer hours to help ACCESS fulfill its mission over the years. In fact, Wells Fargo is the #1 corporate partner in terms of dedicating volunteer hours to ACCESS. Their employees volunteer every month in our warehouse to help repack bulk food so it can be distributed to one of our 24 food pantries throughout Jackson County. Wells Fargo also supports our Mayors United fundraising event through corporate sponsorship and volunteering for the past 11 years.

A special thank you to Wells Fargo and their employees for their commitment to serving our community!



**Wells Fargo employees have given more than 1,700 volunteer hours**

## MONTHLY VETERANS OUTREACH EVENT • EVERY 3RD TUESDAY

FREE lunch, FREE haircuts and social services | 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. | RVVCO 601 N Grape St | (541) 531-6561 or (541) 821-0532





# 1st Annual Disc Jam for ACCESS

TITLE SPONSOR  
BEAR CREEK GOLF COURSE

Saturday, August 24th 2019,  
8:30am - 6:30pm

Bear Creek Golf Course  
2355 S Pacific Hwy, Medford

### For Tickets

Visit: [accesshelps.org/events-new](http://accesshelps.org/events-new)

Call 541-774-4312

Email: [lbell@accesshelps.org](mailto:lbell@accesshelps.org)



### Winner's Choice

The 2019 Winner's Choice Raffle drawing will be held on Monday, June 24 at the Rogue Valley Country Club following the Annual Golf Tournament. Trip choices valued over \$6,000 include France, Ireland, Hawaii and Bali, Indonesia. Tickets are \$100 each and only 250 will be sold! Call 541-774-4312 or visit [accesshelps.org](http://accesshelps.org).



### Christmas in July

Get your Christmas spirit on and join us at Harry & David Field on Saturday, July 20 at 6:30pm for the 5th Annual Christmas in July! The Rogues are serving up a full night of holiday fun for the entire family. Bring non-perishable food donations for ticket discounts. It will be fun for the whole family, and benefits ACCESS!

ACCESS is partnering with Bear Creek Golf Course and Rogue Valley Disc Golf Club to present the 1st Annual Disc Jam for ACCESS on Saturday, August 24th. This disc golf tournament is a fundraiser to help feed, warm and shelter those most in need in Jackson County. Both professionals and recreational players will be challenged by a unique 18-hole layout with a pro disc golf tournament in the morning and recreational fun round in the afternoon. There will be live music, local food vendors and breweries, awards, and raffle drawings. For more information, call (541) 774-4312 or email [lbell@accesshelps.org](mailto:lbell@accesshelps.org) or visit [www.accesshelps.org/events](http://www.accesshelps.org/events).

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for ACCESS to build community**

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# Calendar



**JUNE 24 ACCESS ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT**  
Monday, June 24 at the Rogue Valley Country Club. For more information, please call (541) 774-4312 or visit [www.accesshelps.org](http://www.accesshelps.org)



**AUG. 24 DISC JAM FOR ACCESS**  
Saturday, Aug. 24 at Bear Creek Golf Course. Disc Golf Tournament fundraiser for ACCESS. For more information, please call 541-774-4312 or visit [accesshelps.org](http://accesshelps.org)



**OCT. 4 MAYORS UNITED**  
The 11th annual "Mayors United" event will be on Friday, Oct. 4 at the Jacksonville Bigham Knoll Event Center

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND UPDATES, PLEASE VISIT [WWW.ACCESSHELPS.ORG](http://WWW.ACCESSHELPS.ORG) OR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

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