

Voices From the Crowd: My MANNA Experience

By Nathanael McCroskey--Izzett

On Sunday, November 27, in the afternoon, my parents drove me into downtown Portland to New Song Church. Since I do not go to that church, then why did I go there?

The answer is simple: to participate, along with my parents and some people from my church, in MANNA Ministries. MANNA is a ministry designed to reach out to the homeless people in Portland. It does this by providing a meal to these people. I volunteered because I knew that we would be doing a great service to the people in Portland; to help people in my beloved Rip City.

When my parents and I arrived at New Song, we almost immediately set to work helping fellow churchgoers and people from the other church, whom I had never met before, prepare food to be served. Someone from New Song and I were making and bagging sandwiches. We switched between tuna and mayo sandwiches to the good ol' American PB&J. At times I was sent to get more tuna cans or large mayo tubs from a pantry designed for MANNA. Although the sandwiches were my main job, after I was done with those, I finished a job that someone else had started: slicing pickles.

Then the group said a quick prayer and we were off like a herd of turtles.

In the family car, I changed from my red and black wool winter cap

to a classic holiday Santa hat. I planned to wear that and say, "Happy Holidays" to everyone. Sure enough, I was able to put my plan into action as I wrapped utensils and passed them out.

The people I saw were all different colors, shapes, and sizes. Some were tall Africans with little mustaches, even taller white people with stubbly beards, redheads with "English sideburns" who looked well-fed to begin with, and other people. The reactions to my "happy holidays" were also different. Some thanked me, some wished the same "happy holidays" to me in response, and some ignored me. But my favorite reaction among them was simply when they smiled at me and nodded.

Most seemed pleased to get a meal, a few were indifferent. Some ate their dinner there, some took two dinners out to share with others. Some were content with one helping, others were keen on getting seconds and thirds. I never knew what the next person to step up would be like.

After helping up one man who had slipped and fallen on his head, we packed up.

I understand that bagging sandwiches and slicing pickles is a very small task in comparison to what people worldwide are doing to fight hunger and homelessness. But hey, it's all I can do until this summer's trip to Africa.

Nathan McCloskey--Izzett is a 9th grade student at Vernonia High School.

Why We Are Thankful – Columbia County Women's Resource Center

Columbia County Woman's Resource Center has heartfelt thanks for all of our supporters and partners!

We are thankful for the amazing and generous community that, even in the tightest times gives what they can to help families in need. At a time when everyone is hurting, families fleeing violence are receiving warm jackets, baby food and the Santa wish list item they never expected.

"I'm thankful that my 2 year old son and I have a safe, warm place right now. I am working with a counselor and now understand that the violence was not my fault." – Laura, shelter client

"Your class has helped me recognize some red flags in my relationship, I have decided to end it and, with the help of an advocate, seek a protective order." – Grace, community client.

"Thank you for making a difference and helping people be aware of something that is a serious problem. I've learned that there is help out there, but it takes courage to speak up." - St

Helen's High School student, feedback from CCWRC prevention curriculum in Human Development class.

"The CCWRC team is thankful for all of the support we receive and our partners in every corner of Columbia County talking about healthy relationships, letting folks know about the work we do and that domestic violence is never OK." - Melissa Liston, Board Chair.

You too can play a part in family safety and ending violence. Make a year-end tax deductible donation of items, cash, unwanted vehicles or volunteer time. For information on how you can help change lives with the Resource Center call 503.397.7110.

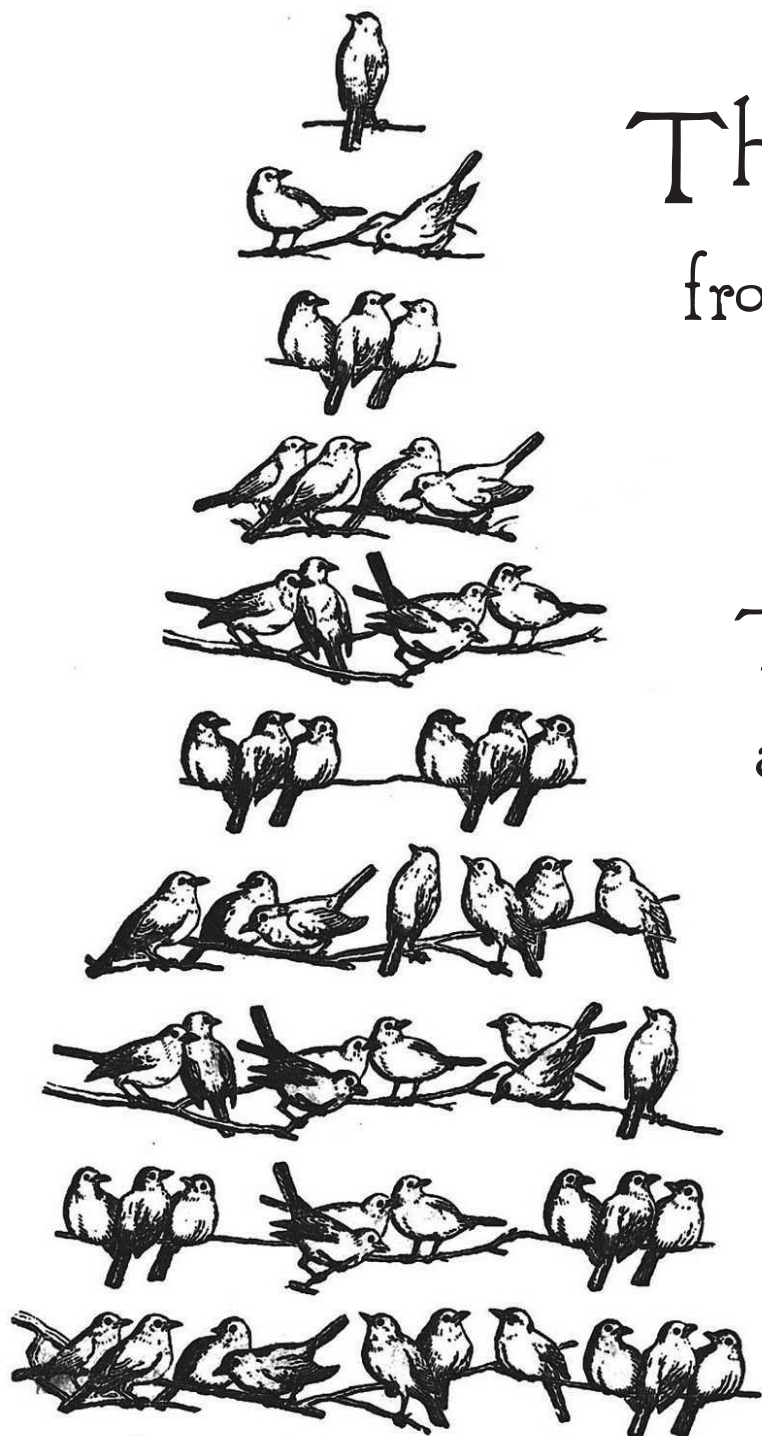
CCWRC is grateful to have such generous supporters. Donations over the holidays and all year long help CCWRC meet the need and serve our neighbors. We empower our community to live safe healthy lives, free from abuse. CCWRC is the only agency of its kind dedicated to serving survivors of domestic and sexual violence in our community.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255) suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Are you feeling desperate, alone or hopeless? Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline a free, 24-hour hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Your call will be routed to the nearest crisis center to you.

Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press 1



Thank You
from the Vernonia Prevention Coalition

To All Our Sponsors, Supporters, Partners
and the Vernonia Community

We are looking forward to all
our upcoming activities, events and
collaborations in the new year.