

# Piloting Change

## Elderly Rent Assistance Can Mean Survival

Here at NWPP we often hear heartbreaking stories from our clients that seem implausible and awful. Imagine going through a crisis like David's with little or no support from family or friends, no financial savings and little or no regular income. David is a NWPP client who came to us in 2018 in the midst of what ended up being a poignant story that we won't soon forget. We know we can't change the things that have happened to our clients in their past but we feel privileged we can stand beside them and support them as they move forward.

David was a hard worker, who did everything he could to be self-reliant in life until a number of things including bad luck and deteriorating health conditions caught up with him. David's health story is difficult, sad and not uncommon for NWPP clients.

A Navy veteran who served from 1975 until 1986, David married and raised a family soon after leaving the service. In 2015, David's wife of 27 years was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer and passed away just a few weeks later. While still mourning her loss, David packed up their possessions and moved into a smaller rental home that he could afford at \$700 per month. David's health began to deteriorate and he was having trouble completing the duties of his job, so he applied for disability through the Social Security Administration.

David was not neglectful of his health; in fact he was receiving his care from the Veterans Administration and following treatment protocols for his Type 1 diabetes. Unfortunately, long-term diabetes causes additional health problems, including damage to the heart and kidneys.

In January of 2018, David learned that his job was going away, so he visited the Veterans coordinator at his local unemployment office who then referred David to NWPP for short-term rental assistance. The Veterans coordina-



*David, age 61 finishing up dialysis treatment for the day and making plans to enjoy a rare sunny winter day with his dogs at the park.*

tor also worked with David to find part-time employment while he continued to wait on disability benefits.

**“I would not have physically survived being homeless.”**

David met with Jason Coulthurst, Housing Access Manager at NWPP who was able to assess David for the Elderly Rental Assistance (ERA) Program. David shared, “Jason really listened to me and let me tell my story and then said, ‘Yes, we can help.’ I remember feeling so grateful and relieved. I would not have physically survived being homeless.” David received assistance through ERA for six months until he was hired at a big-box home improvement store where he earned enough money to pay his rent, buy groceries, medications and cover his basic living costs. David really enjoyed his job and felt

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From the  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Laura Golino de Lovato

## Everyone Can Leave a Legacy

### What is Legacy giving?

- 1) A way to convey ones values through the creation of a lasting gift to charity;
- 2) A foresighted action to strengthen a favorite cause.

As you know, a nonprofit organization like NWPP can't survive without community and financial support. While grants and contracts provide key revenue, it's the contributions large and small from individuals, companies and small businesses that are our lifeblood. It's **YOUR** generosity and support that allows us to keep seniors housed.

The challenges of poverty, aging and housing are systemic issues that will take a long time to solve. In the meantime, NWPP needs to be financially stable for years to come. We know you support us because you believe in NWPP's mission and you want to make a difference. Like many of our supporters, clients and community partners, you want to know that NWPP will be viable and successful in the future. And that's what legacy giving is about. Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to be Andrew Carnegie or Bill Gates to leave a legacy. **YOU** can make it happen!

Of course, legacy gifts aren't right for everyone. But it's a myth that they

are only impactful when made by wealthy individuals. Legacy gifts can be large or small; it's all about what works for the donor. Some donors don't have the capacity to give large gifts on an annual basis but they can make a significant one-time gift by using assets like a life insurance policy or an annuity. Legacy giving is simply an easy way to maximize the impact of your charitable contribution by making a bigger gift at a later date.

There's also a belief that it's better for nonprofits to receive contributions now, in "real time." Of course this is true, but organizations like NWPP need both ongoing gifts and large lump-sum gifts that will help ensure stability for the future. Every gift counts because each adds to the resources available for NWPP to use to meet our mission.

**Dr. Frank Yett** was born in Portland, served in the Navy during WWII, received degrees from MIT, Johns Hopkins and the University of California, taught math, excelled at ballroom dancing, and loved to tell a good story. He was also passionate about NWPP's work because NWPP arranged for a volunteer to visit Dr. Yett's aging mother after Dr. Yett moved out of the area and could no longer visit his mother on a regular basis. He supported the organization for many years with annual gifts, and left a generous legacy gift to NWPP.

**Georgia Marsh** grew up in the greater Portland area, attending high school in Beaverton and college at PSU. After her graduation from PSU, Georgia went to work at the Registrar's office at PSU and worked there until her retirement. Georgia was also a volunteer throughout the community, including at Legacy Heath Foundation for many years. Georgia was moved to support NWPP on an ongoing basis during her life because of her compassion for seniors. Because of a legacy giving plan, her commitment to NWPP's work lives on through a large gift she designated in her will.

Dr. Yett and Ms. Marsh shared a passion for NWPP and its work. Both cared deeply about how low-income seniors with rising rents would be able to stay stably housed in their community. Both supported NWPP for many years. And both made plans for how their assets could help others in the future. Thanks to the generosity and foresight of several donors, like Dr. Frank Yett and Georgia Marsh, NWPP is building flexible assets to ensure continued operation in case of an economic downturn, maintain the level of operational and emergency fund balances advised by our auditor, and respond to the needs of seniors today. Dr. Yett, Ms. Marsh, and other donors who have left NWPP a legacy gift had a commitment to our mission and a plan for making that commitment last a long time. Everyone really can leave a legacy.

If you'd like to talk with me about legacy giving or any topic, please contact me at [laurag@nwpilotproject.org](mailto:laurag@nwpilotproject.org) or call me on my direct line: 503-478-6868.

Laura Golino de Lovato

## Elderly Rent Assistance

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immense pride in being self-sufficient again even though his physical health was declining. “I am so appreciative that we have access to funds like these to help seniors like David through situations like his.” said Jason.

However, life again changed dramatically for David on February 28, 2019 when, in the same day he was approved for Social Security disability after three years of waiting, he suffered a massive heart attack while driving that nearly ended his life. After over a month of recovery in the hospital, David learned that his life would never be the same: he was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and told his kidneys were only functioning at 30%. He would need dialysis three days per week, five hours each day for the rest of his life. Even with this terrible new reality, David is thankful to have survived and maintains a positive and hopeful outlook for his future.

David still lives in his rental house, now paying \$760 a month in rent out of his Social Security disability of \$1,400 per month. He is actively involved in his treatment plan and works with his palliative care team, nutritionist, counselor and medical team to create the best life he can. He finds much joy caring for his dogs who he rescued from the humane society. “I took the ones that no else wanted and we take care of each other.” We are so pleased we were able to be a support to David during his housing crisis and happy he is now stably housed and able to focus all of his energy on his health.

## May 19th Vote: 2020 Homeless and Housing Services Measure

# A transformational opportunity

**O**n February 25, the Metro regional government unanimously voted to refer a significant measure to the May 19th ballot. After negotiations with the Here Together Coalition, local governments and the Portland Business Alliance, Metro agreed that the time was now to “go big” to address the growing homelessness and housing crises in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties. The crisis is, as summarized by ECONorthwest in its report *Potential Sources and Uses of Revenue to Address the Region’s Homeless Crisis*, “...among the worst in the U.S. The result of an underproduction of housing during the 2010s...” The report also notes that the metro region “has also witnessed a steady rise in the number of people experiencing long-term, chronic homelessness, many of whom struggle to maintain stable housing in a market with rising rents.”



St Francis Apartments

The 2020 Homeless and Housing Services Measure will raise approximately \$250 million annually through a marginal income tax of 1% on households with income over \$200,000 (over \$125,000 for individual filers) and a business profits tax of 1% (small businesses with gross receipts of \$5 million per year or less are exempt.) The revenue will be utilized for a wide range of services for those who are homeless or a risk of homelessness, and will complement the housing construction bond measures passed by the City of Portland in 2017 and by Metro last year by funding key supporting services for the residents of these new buildings. Because of the significant scope of this measure, the expected impact will also be significant.

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### Why will this be so transformational and so important to NWPP?

Funds generated from the measure can be used for key services that often make the difference between success in housing for those with high barriers, and for those with the lowest incomes. Service agencies like NWPP are successful because of case managers and housing specialists who guide clients through a complex and stressful process of finding housing that is affordable. Many of the clients NWPP assists are homeless or highly at risk of homelessness – they are severely rent burdened, paying more than 50% of their monthly income on housing, and have one or more disabilities requiring some level of support to be able to stay in their housing.

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41ST ANNUAL WALK-A-THON

# Let's Walk to Keep Seniors Housed!

**Sunday May 3, 2020**

**Amazing prizes!**

**Free pizza for all walkers!**

**Terrific tunes from our DJ!**

**Fun for all ages & abilities**

The goal of this year's WALK-A-THON is **\$185,000**. All money raised by walkers goes directly to support our quality services to keep low-income seniors in affordable housing!

Bring your family and friends (even your dog) and join us May 3<sup>rd</sup> for a walk in the park to support Northwest Pilot Project.

Support a walker or a team online: [walk.nwpilotproject.org](http://walk.nwpilotproject.org) or send us your pledge in the enclosed remit envelope.



## Can't Make It? Pledge Freya!

Freya has been walking for NWPP since 2010! She walks because it's fun and it feels good to help support NWPP and the people they help. Freya's favorite things about the Walk-A-Thon are seeing friends, running and the music! Over the years, Freya has raised \$6,231 for NWPP!

**If you can't make it to the Walk-A-Thon this year please consider using the enclosed envelope to Pledge Freya!**

# Prizes! Pizza! Music! and Lots of FUN!

All ages participate in the Walk-A-Thon, so we have made this event as simple and fun as possible for everyone!

## Prizes for FUNdraising:

- Raise \$250 and get a NWPP reusable water bottle

## Fabulous PRIZE DRAWING

- Raise \$500 and you're entered in our raffle to win valuable prizes
- **\$500 Gift Certificate for Airbnb**

## PLUS

- **EXCITING First Place and Second Place prizes for top fundraisers** in the following age groups (0-10 yrs, 11-25 yrs, 26-54 yrs, 55-64 yrs, 65+ yrs )
- **Grand Prize for top fundraiser!**

## AND

**FUN! Team Prizes for First and Second Place for age groups:** Children (pre-high school) and **General teams** (mixed ages).

Tunes provided by fantastic DJ Meghan Callahan

## What to bring to the Walk-A-Thon

1. Your pledge sheet
2. Water bottle
3. Walking shoes
4. BIG SMILES
5. Well behaved dogs on leash
6. Kids welcome!



## Sign up to walk/fundraise as an INDIVIDUAL or as part of a TEAM!

1. Sign Up online: [walk.nwpilotproject.org](http://walk.nwpilotproject.org) or call for a pledge sheet at 503-227-5605
2. Make a fundraising goal! (*Raise \$250 and get a NWPP water bottle*)
3. Ask friends, co-workers, and family members to support you!
4. Track your progress online or on your pledge sheet! (Note: List on your sheet if you're on a team)
5. Check-in and submit your fundraising success on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and then let's walk!



# Advocacy Update: Long-Term Rent Assistance Program

It's been just over two years since NWPP launched the pilot of the Long-Term Rent Assistance (LRA) Program. With funding from the Joint Office of Homeless Services and Meyer Memorial Trust, and a key partnership with Home Forward, NWPP created the first locally funded and operated rental voucher program in Oregon, which includes 55 vouchers.

The program set out to test a few hypotheses:

- 1) that a locally funded rent subsidy program can be **cost-effectively operated** by the local housing authority;
- 2) the application process for a local rental voucher program can be significantly simplified and can **reduce barriers** for applicants when compared to a federal voucher program; and
- 3) rent subsidies are **more cost effective** in catalyzing long-term housing stability than shelters, hospitals, jails, and other institutional living arrangements.

NWPP engaged CORE (The Center for Outcomes, Research and Education) to do a qualitative analysis of the pilot. CORE cited **improvements among participants in housing stability, financial stability, health stability, and social stability**. CORE also found that:

- **LRA enables participants to remain in homes** despite rent increases or events that change ability to pay rent.
- Almost all LRA participants reported that not worrying about making rent has given them peace of mind and **drastically improved mental health and stress**.



Anne received an LRA voucher and recently testified in Salem in support of House Bill 4002.

- LRA participants with physical health problems – chronic or acute – **shared an improved ability to care for themselves and heal**.
- Most participants expressed that if they had not received the LRA support, they would have had to find someone to move in with or would have become homeless.

We know from other research that rental subsidies in the form of a voucher are a resource our community needs urgently. Only one in four households that need a HUD “Housing Choice Voucher” (Section 8) gets one. This is especially true for seniors in the extremely low income category who are disabled and whose social security is about \$1,110 per month, and among communities of color. We also know that extensive data demonstrates the time and cost effectiveness of rent subsidies. A rent subsidy strategy does not require waiting for the construction of housing but rather leverages existing housing, typically in the private market.

With the success of the LRA Program in Multnomah County, we approached the Oregon Housing Alliance to advocate together for the creation of a statewide program that would help extremely low income households of all ages to achieve housing stability with a rental voucher. The Housing Alliance, Home Forward and many other partners have joined efforts to support this idea, resulting in **House Bill 4002** which would allocate funds for a study of the costs and implementation impacts of a statewide rental voucher program. The completed report will propel our advocacy efforts during the 2021 Oregon legislative session to create a statewide voucher program.

## NWPP Goes Electric



Thanks to a grant from PGE's Drive Change Fund, NWPP will be getting an electric vehicle for our transportation services. We'll have a reliable vehicle for our housing clients and we'll be doing our part to reduce greenhouse gases. Transportation is a critical component to housing stability, and supports NWPP's strategy to keep seniors from losing their housing by providing supports – like regular transportation service – to allow them the dignity of living independently. The Drive Change Fund is funded by the DEQ's Oregon Clean Fuels program. **THANK YOU, PGE!!**



# Responding to Increase in Demand with Respect

It takes courage to ask for help. Many of our clients have spent years independently solving the challenges in their own lives, and are reaching out for the first time. Others have had experiences of being shamed or blamed for needing help. We recognize the courage it takes to reach out to us, and we work hard to welcome new clients with respect. The single most important part of our intake process is our staff, and the skill they bring to the work.

Our Access Team includes four full-time staff members and three part-time student interns. These seven individuals are the first point of contact for every person who calls or comes in to our office for the first time.

The Access Team responds to an average of 160 requests for housing help every week. Every day looks a little different, but includes:

- Completing comprehensive housing assessments
- Providing information and referrals to other community resources
- Sharing affordable housing search resources
- Developing housing plans that address short-term and long-term housing needs
- Advocating with current or potential landlords
- Placing people in permanent housing and providing move-in deposits, basic furniture and moving assistance
- Providing eviction prevention ser-



Access Team Members (from left): Dee Dee, Access Specialist; Lila Pearman, Assessment Specialist; Jason Coulthurst, Housing Access Manager; Verónica Cabrera, Bilingual Assessment Specialist



Access Team Interns (from left): Austin Erdman, PSU; Monica Rios, PSU; Irene Villa, PSU

vices, including rent assistance

If you would like to help NWPP respond to the ever growing demand for our services, please use the enclosed envelope to make a gift to our Emergency Fund or give online at [nwpilotproject.org/donate](http://nwpilotproject.org/donate)

## Ballot Measure continued

Also exceedingly critical is rent assistance, both short and long term. For NWPP clients at the lowest income levels – annual income of \$20K or less – a rent subsidy is the only way that housing can be affordable for them.

The ECONorthwest report also stated that this measure would “represent a robust response to the region’s homelessness crisis. Strong implementation of an initiative of this size should result in a marked decline in chronic homelessness and homelessness generally, which in turn would free up emergency shelter capacity and reduce the number of people living on the streets, in parks, or in vehicles.”

This new measure will make a significant impact on NWPP’s ability to help more seniors.

## New Partnership with Kaiser Permanente and Health Share

Northwest Pilot Project is thrilled to announce that we’ll be a partner in the “**Metro 300**” project funded by Kaiser Permanente. This innovative and important project will provide housing stability support for 300 vulnerable seniors facing homelessness and housing instability in Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas Counties. While the project is aimed at people 50 and older, NWPP will be responsible for housing 100 seniors aged 55 and over during calendar year 2020, or one-third of the total project.

Kaiser will provide funds for housing search, housing placement, move-in costs, rent assistance, security deposits, etc. NWPP extends its thanks to Kaiser Permanente.





**NORTHWEST  
PILOT PROJECT**

1430 SW Broadway • #200 • Portland, OR 97201  
(503) 227-5605 • www.nwpilotproject.org

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41ST ANNUAL WALK-A-THON

# Let's Walk to Keep Seniors Housed!



Show your support and have fun doing it!

FUNraise to provide very low-income seniors in our community with housing support, free transportation and more.

Register your pledges on Sunday, **May 3, 2020**, and then get walking around the South Park Blocks with friends and family.

Great prizes for FUNraisers!  
Pizza and groovy tunes for all walkers!

[More details on pages 4 and 5.](#)

**Sunday May 3, 2020**

**SW Park Ave and SW Harrison St.** (Registration tables on the South Park Blocks of the PSU Campus)

**Look for the BALLOONS!**

Registration: 12:15-12:45 pm

WALK-A-THON: 1-2 pm

Pizza/Prizes/Music: 2-3 pm