

Non Profit Happenings

Seekhaven Family Crisis and Resource Center: A Tale of Grit, Grace, and Galas

by Nancy Kurtz

Let's start with the Gala, because it's coming right up. After two years of hiatus as per the Covid pandemic, Puttin' on the Ritz is back.

Mark your calendars for February 11, 2023. As is the tradition there will be dinner, dancing, a silent auction and lots of locals having a really good time. And did I say dancing? Well, it is the Ritz, after all.

What began as a way to raise funds for Moab's burgeoning crisis center to help, support, and house victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as to plant warmth and cheer into the winter chill, has become a beloved city tradition.

I'm speaking with Abigail Taylor, five-year veteran of Seekhaven and the center's executive director. As we talk, I realize there is so much more here than meets the eye. The humble building in downtown Moab carries a lot, a lot, of freight. Locals, but not only locals find themselves seeking the advice, advocacy, counseling, and sheltering that Seekhaven has been offering for 32 years now, ever since the center was founded in 1990, at that time as a homeless shelter.

"Yes, it is unique for a small city like Moab [to encompass this extensive of a program] in the sense that we have a lot of transient folks and we've encountered individuals traveling. People land in Moab..." and wind up in an abusive situation. There are economic stresses, it's hard to find a place to live...

The stats well illustrate how Seekhaven has grown and continues to grow. The number of those seeking help, currently hovering upon a staggering 350-plus annually, is, according to Taylor, increasing every year.

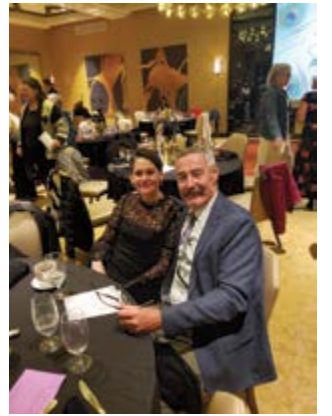
The numbers transitionally housed in the emergency shelter portion are even more dramatic. Last year there were 120 women and children sheltered at Seekhaven (up from 64 in 2019).

Clearly, there is a need that's not going away. But what might seem to be a simple matter of creating more space - "we often have to turn people away or ask them to leave before they find a longer term solution"-- is in actuality a lot more complex.

There are 18 staff positions -- including shelter overnight staff, prevention coordinators, advocates, and operations -- and currently the center is looking for compassionate, resilient people to join the team. Seekhaven also forms partnerships with others in the community, including law enforcement; they serve two adjoining counties in addition to Grand, and are partnered with another shelter in Blanding, Utah, in San Juan County. "We're so blessed to have another shelter in the region," Taylor says.

There are success stories, people coming out on top, and the Moab community has rallied to provide support, often serving up the all-important sense of humor and camaraderie. "I feel proud of how the relationships with community partners and responders are blossoming. We're so lucky to be part of this larger team that's outside of Seekhaven."

As to weathering the many challenges - including lack of long-term housing and child care - "There's certainly heartbreak involved. It takes a lot of grace and a lot of grit."



Seekhaven offers comprehensive 24-hour crisis support, including counseling referrals, legal advocacy, support groups, medical advocacy, financial assistance, and more --

Here's the nitty gritty, put on your dancing shoes and head for the Hoodoo Moab on February 11. For other ways to offer help and/or sponsorship, please contact Taylor, abi@seekhaven.org.

More than a Safe Place to stay...

OUTREACH SERVICES

24 Hour Crisis Support	Support Groups
Counseling Referrals	Medical Advocacy
Legal Advocacy	Financial Assistance

Family Crisis & Resource Center
81 N 300 E, Moab Utah 84532
(435)259-2229 (phone line staffed 24/7)

Grand Area Mentoring Celebrates National Mentoring Month with New Mentor Orientation on January 26TH

by Daniel McNeil

January is National Mentoring Month, an annual campaign aimed at connecting America's young people with caring adults. Grand Area Mentoring will celebrate by thanking its participating mentors and families and by inviting interested citizens to a program orientation.

"We match kind, responsible adults with promising youth. They meet weekly with the goal of forming a supportive relationship that points these children toward a healthy future," said Daniel McNeil, program director.

Research shows mentors play a powerful role in providing young people with the tools to make positive choices, attend and engage in school, and reduce negative behaviors. In Moab:

- 100% of parents report that their mentored children are happier
- 76% of mentored youth get in less trouble at school
- 92% of teachers agree that mentored youth demonstrate better social skills.

However, research shows that one in three young people in our country will grow up without a mentor.

January sees engagement from community members rise as New Year's resolutions take shape. This year, Grand Area Mentoring encourages the public to go beyond just digital engagement and become involved in real life.



"Mentoring relationships are at their best when connections are made between a caring adult and a young person," McNeil said. "The mentor is there to help guide them through tough times, celebrate wins, and face important life choices."

Grand Area Mentoring reports that over sixty youth have participated so far this school year, but many more are on the waiting list. McNeil explained that mentored youth in Moab are asked at the end of each school year to share thoughts about their experience. In May, mentees said things like: "I learned to ride a bike with my mentor," and "[My mentor is] a nice guy and he inspires me. I don't know where I'd be without him," and "I love spending time with her because

I feel loved inside."

Grand Area Mentoring's New Mentor Orientation will take place on January 26th, 5:00-7:00pm, at Margaret L. Hopkin Middle School. Pizza dinner will be provided. To RSVP, text or call (435) 260-9646. This no-obligation training covers what mentoring looks like and how to do it well.

Since National Mentoring Month's launch in 2002, the campaign has enjoyed the strong support of the United States' president and congress. Other well-known

supporters include the late Maya Angelou, Clint Eastwood, Senator John McCain, Quincy Jones, General Colin L. Powell, Cal Ripken Jr., the late Bill Russell (MENTOR founding board member), and Usher. In 2016, President

Barack Obama's office shared a National Mentoring Month press release highlighting the crucial role that mentors play in young people's lives. Last year, United States Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona played a key role in the event.

To learn more about the role mentoring plays in our community, visit www.grandmentoring.org

Grand Area Mentoring
(435) 260-9646
grandareamentoring@gmail.com
www.grandmentoring.org



Moab Church Services Directory

Assembly of God 435-259-7747
1202 South Boulder Avenue

Bahá'í Faith 435-650-5778

Canyonlands Fellowship 435-260-2434
111 East 100 North

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
First & Second Wards 435-259-5566
475 West 400 North

Third, Fourth & Fifth Wards 435-259-5567
701 Locust Lane

Community Church 435-259-7319
544 MiVida Drive

Episcopal Church of St. Francis 435-259-5831
250 South Kane Creek Blvd

First Baptist Church SBC 435-259-7310
420 MiVida Drive

Friends in Christ Free Lutheran Church
1240 South Highway 191 435-259-4378

Grace Lutheran Church 435-259-5017
360 West 400 North

Jewish Interfaith Beit Moabi 435-260-0241

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses
25 Dogwood Ave 435-259-8166

Moab Baptist Church 435-259-8481
356 West Kane Creek Blvd.

Quaker Worship Group 435-210-4374
4581 Spanish Valley Drive call or text

River of Life Christian Fellowship
2651 East Arroyo Rd. 435-259-8308

St. Pius X Catholic Church 435-259-5211
122 West 400 North

Seventh Day Adventist 435-259-5545
4581 Spanish Valley Drive

The Church of Christ 435-259-6690
456 Emma Boulevard