



SONOMA APPLIED VILLAGE SERVICES
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Quarterly Report

SAVS Contract with the City of Sebastopol for Horizon Shine Village

July 19, 2022

In accordance with our contracts with the City of Sebastopol and the Community Development Commission of Sonoma County, SAVS set up Horizon Shine Village and operates it on a lot owned by St. Vincent de Paul. Horizon Shine is a safe parking village with a mix of cars, vans, trailers and RVs which are used as primary residences for the homeless people of Sebastopol. SAVS provides site management including sanitary and water facilities, a waste management system, security, access to food and individual whole-person-care support for the residents.

About the Village

Horizon Shine Village currently holds 19 mini-homes and 26 villagers. These individuals and their vehicles formerly lived on Morris St. in Sebastopol. Horizon Shine is full and has a waiting list of Sebastopol homeless people. We receive 2-3 calls a week from homeless individuals living in their

vehicles and seeking safety, many from other areas of Sonoma County. We expect to remain full through the end of the year without exhausting our current waiting list of homeless people from Sebastopol.



Horizon Shine opened February 15, 2021. Our first six months have been focused on setting up the basic village infrastructure, both material and human.

In late April, P.G. & E. brought electricity to the village which allowed us to hook up the vehicle/homes for lights and cooking. That also meant we could turn off the generators which had been a source of annoyance for our neighbors.

The villagers range in age from 30 to the mid-60s with the majority in their 50s. Sixteen are men; ten are women. Three are Black, Indigenous and People of color; the rest are white. The majority of our residents became homeless 2-3 years ago; of the rest, six have been homeless for 3-5 years; five for 5-8 years; one became homeless less than a year ago. The majority have been in and out of homelessness

four or more times. Sixty-one percent have no source of income and another 19% have incomes below \$500. a month.

The lawsuit against the City of Sebastopol which attempted to shut down Horizon Shine was heard in court on June 22. The judge ruled in favor of the City of Sebastopol. As far as we know, that is the end of that legal effort. We are grateful to the City of Sebastopol and the law office of Edward Grutzmacher for their legal work which had the effect of keeping the village open.

Infrastructure

Our initial physical infrastructure included Fencing, Sanitation, Potable Water Tanks, Common Area Tent, Resident Manager Micro-Home, Office, Electrical System, Gate Monitoring System, Showers, Village Sign, Storage, Potable Water Tanks, Plumbing to Showers and Common Area Sink. We recently added a landline phone in the common area tent for the use of those who don't have a cell phone.



We've become more aware of the health impacts due to a lack of cooking facilities in some of the vehicle homes. SAVS provides one daily meal, but it is not enough, so we purchased a refrigerator and set up a primitive communal kitchen

With the reopening of the Harvest Cafe at the Senior Center, we've gratefully resumed meals from these good folks. Others who provide the evening meals are China Chef in Cotati and Sebastopol's Viva Mexicano, Hole in the Wall, the

Sebastopol Deli and volunteer extraordinaire Mary Maki Rich who provides food twice a week.

Due to a generous donation from a friend of the village, we just completed a sturdy, attractive dog run near the back fence of the village. (See photo below)

Services and Programs

Basic services include Trash Pick Up, Resident Manager, Security, Intake Paperwork, Village Meetings, Case Management, and a Daily Meal.

Health Care Services

Medi-Cal is the most common public program people are enrolled in. Three get food stamps and two have Veterans benefits. Six people have no income and no public assistance. Seven people report a chronic physical health condition and five live with a chronic mental health condition. Six people are disabled.

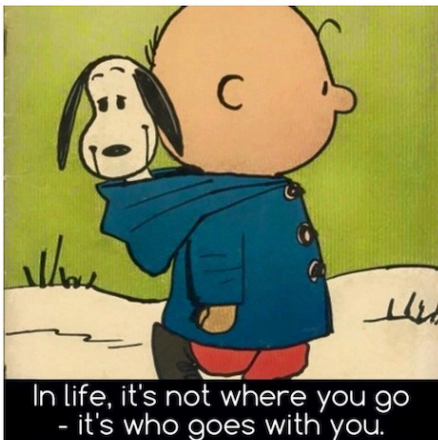
The Healthcare for the Homeless Team of West County Community Health Centers is providing bi-monthly care at the village. Led by Rosie Traversi with Suzanne Lande's help in scheduling, these visits provide an opportunity for villagers to make appointments to see health care providers at Horizon Shine. The team includes nurses, a doctor and a mental health professional.

Women's Circle

Wednesday, July 6th 2 pm

Bring your ideas, your gratitude and curiosity. Build the community spirit at Horizon Shine!!!

The Women's Circle hosted by Anne Scott continues to meet weekly. Still in the works is a Men's Group to be hosted by the 707 Foundation.



Additional Services

The Village receives regularly scheduled visits from Job Link, the Sonoma County Library and the veterinary service group, Ruthless Kindness. Our volunteer team has been crucial in bringing these resources to the Village as well as working one-on-one with various residents. We are looking to add a few more regular volunteers this summer. Contact Barbara Lee, Volunteer Coordinator, if you are interested at barbaraless6745@gmail.com.

Security

As we reported last quarter, SAVS has now hired our own security guards. Although we continue to rely on White Star Security for overnight coverage, our four security staff members cover the daytime hours. We are very pleased that we've been able to hire two of the residents for this team. The hiring of Villagers has brought a stronger sense of Villager investment in the Program's success, self-esteem and self-determination.

Rules

Enforcement of the village rules can be a challenge. Some villagers were repeatedly breaking rules and we asked four of them to participate in a disciplinary process. Three people found a satisfactory resolution and the problems ended. In the fourth case, the villager was unable or unwilling to keep their dog on leash. After repeated unsuccessful warnings and one-on-one discussions, we regretfully informed the villager that they would have to leave. They refused. We then informed the Sebastopol police, per our prior verbal agreement, that the time had come for them to go. The police, to our

surprise, said that they could not help us. We hired a Ka’lani Reposa, a restorative justice consultant, to work through this specific issue with this person and have some hope it can be resolved.

Based on best practices of Safe Parking Site’s across California, we have found that the California Vehicle Code is the governing rule of law that most sites follow with the support of the cities they serve. Both Sonoma County Legal Aid and CA legislation have clarified that Homeless Shelters do not fall under the definition of landlord tenant law.

The SAVS board has decided to thoroughly research this issue, which will likely take several months, rather than forcing the issue with this particular person. Many Sonoma County projects that exist in the gray area between a homeless shelter and a private home have similar issues. We are looking to the Sonoma County Counsel’s office and the Community Development Commission for advice and support to solve it. In the meantime, we are instituting enforceable consequences and developing a new grievance procedure that includes a rotating resident grievance committee.

Self-Governance

Participation in Village Meetings has improved dramatically, with residents enthusiastically voting on operations and policies. Self-governance has taken on new energy with the short-term hiring of Sebstopol resident and SAVS Board member, Cynthia Poten as a consultant to dialog with villagers about how they want to strengthen their direct participation in community decisions, events and procedures. She believes that Horizon Shine is piloting a model for self-governance in safe parking villages elsewhere. Although still in their infancy, these new processes are drawing more participation by the Villagers.

Jasper, Blue, DeeDee, Lucy, Nila, Dada and Red give a big arf of thanks to Lisa Clyde for their new play area!



Community Advisory Committee

Our Community Advisory Committee meets every two months by zoom. We report on Village life and continue to discuss larger neighborhood issues in the open forum that has evolved. For notices of these meetings, contact Taylor Stevenson-Anderson at taylor@sonomavillages.org.

While participation in the bi-monthly CAC meetings is small, the dialog between neighbors and SAVS continues to be productive. At the June 12 meeting, a neighbor observed

that a few businesses in the Lucky's mall area had closed. These closures were unconnected to the opening of Horizon Shine. This neighbor intends to bring the need to attract businesses to that mall to

the attention of the City Council. The issue of more people sleeping in cars, vans and RVs also arose. A neighbor observed it might be due to the City's new parking ordinance, as the Lucky's area parking lot falls outside of the jurisdiction targeted by the ordinance. We were asked if we could add the people found sleeping in the area to the Horizon Shine waiting list and prioritize their admission. We explained that the waiting has prioritized former Morris Street residents, and there is no additional room at this time. In discussing Horizon Shine's Friday trash days and the puzzling generic problem of 'stuff' accumulation by the unsheltered everywhere, a neighbor observed it may reflect a need to have control over something in their life.

Like any residential neighborhood, it's generally calm at Horizon Shine. Villagers go about their daily routines, the staff completes their shift tasks and an occasional visitor knocks on the front gate. We have had no police complaints in the last three months.

We continue to work with any business owner or individual who has a problem that might be related to Horizon Shine. Hector Gutierrez is our Business Liaison and can be reached through SAVS at (707) 861-0646. We also have an on-site 24/7 hotline for urgent issues at (707) 889-8776.

On May 26, there was an incident with gentleman who had been a visitor at Horizon Shine. We received a complaint after he and a friend stole a bottle of liquor from the store next door. This came after three other complaints were made about the same man sleeping behind stores and bringing carts full of trash to the area. Although the earlier complaints were not about illegal activity, the number and similarity of the complaints caused us to ban this gentleman from visiting Horizon Shine. There have been no complaints about him since.

None of the other problems we have been informed about have involved Horizon Shine Villagers or regular guests. As part of the neighborhood, we care about local issues and do what we can to help when a problem arises.

Village Staff

Taylor Anderson-Stevenson has been promoted to Village Manager for the next three months. She has moved swiftly and effectively to write down some of the informal policies and procedures, and to institute those which were missing. Some of the changes and improvements she has brought include:

- Every Friday, Sally and Keary of EverClean North come to haul away our trash and recycling. We've instituted a policy that anything on the ground outside a vehicle home is likely to be hauled away with the trash. This has motivated many people to sort and dispose of clutter.
- A system that insures case managers meet with villagers one-on-one on a weekly basis
- A tightened visitor policy so that there are no visitors after 10 p.m. without a request form completed and submitted by a villager. The on-duty Security Monitor makes a round at 9:30 pm to inform all guests of the 10 pm time.
- No vehicles or large furniture items, including donations, are allowed to enter the Village without staff approval.

- A daily log for to facilitate staff communication and record keeping.

These changes and other ongoing work reflect our growing realization that we are crafting and refining Horizon Shine as we go, building a model for safe parking villages that provide a strong mix of self-governance, case management, operations management and on-site wrap around services.

Kim Johnson has taken on the work of scheduling the security team as well as other administrative support. She also provides case management for several villagers. All the on-site staff members are, in the words of one of the volunteers, “just wonderful.”



A Meeting of the Horizon Shine Villagers

Many people contribute to the well-being of Horizon Shine. Please take a moment to notice what you have done in a short six months. We send our gratitude to The City of Sebastopol City Council members, Una Glass and Diana Rich of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Unhoused, the fire and other department heads and managers; local volunteers and the entire welcoming community of Sebastopol. We bow to you who are our support.