

✦ Valley Restart Christmas Newsletter ✦



YEAR IN REVIEW

This has been a year of change, growth, and new beginnings. I came onboard as Interim in June of this year, and was officially appointed Executive Director on October 1st.

Over the following months, the staff and I navigated through uncharted waters—getting to know one another and building a bridge of trust. During this time, Valley Restart was beginning to feel a new sense of purpose and passion.

Throughout the year, we've gone through countless paper products, staff changes, a government shutdown, and tons of socks! Yet through it all, our team remained grounded in compassion, service, and the belief that every individual deserves dignity and a pathway to stability.

In just a few short months, we will expand our shelter capacity, we've strengthened our case management systems, revitalized our outreach program, and deepened our partnerships with healthcare providers, law enforcement, and community agencies. Most importantly, we witnessed lives being rebuilt—206 individuals moved from crisis to stability because of this remarkable team.

Valley Restart is stepping into a new chapter—one filled with hope, growth, and possibility. And this is just the beginning.



HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- *Chapparel High School Christmas Party
- *Nazarene Church Christmas Party
- *Amazon Christmas Party
- *The Knights of Columbus
- *The Elks Lodge

The joy of giving and sharing

“Kidsgiving 2025”

This year we did something new for Thanksgiving. We asked all our children to write something they were thankful for. Our tutor David worked with each child, helping them craft the perfect letter.

Then Diana K. and her team put together an elegant evening that included dinner while each child presented their letter.

It was a special night here at Valley Restart, where we took a moment to pause. To be grateful and thankful for all we have. Out of the mouth of babes, we truly see what matters.



Christmas at VRS

Celebrating 21 Years of Operation Holiday Cheer

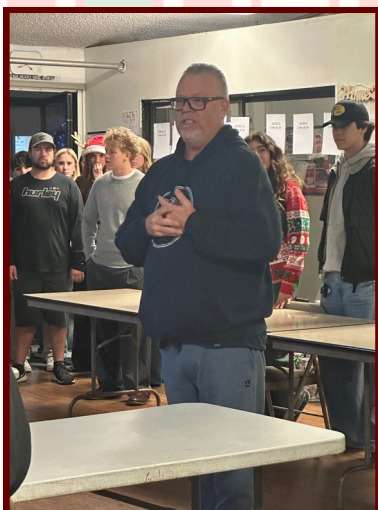
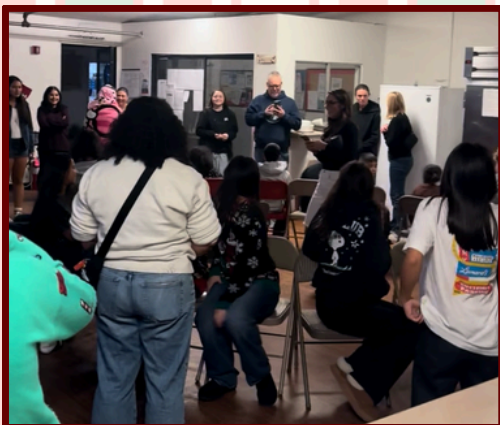
For the past 21 years, Ryan Leonhardi from Chaparral High School in Temecula, along with his team from Operation Holiday Cheer, has brought joy, hope, and holiday spirit to Valley Restart. Year after year, Ryan and his dedicated students, alumni, and parents have made it a priority to spend time with our residents and children—bringing gifts, playing games, and helping assemble new toys, creating memories that last far beyond the holiday season.

On behalf of the entire Valley Restart team, we would like to dedicate this article to all the students, parents, and supporters who have made Operation Holiday Cheer possible. Words cannot fully express how meaningful it is to see the joy these students and alumni bring to our children. Their kindness and generosity truly make a difference.

Ryan's long-standing dedication to our shelter does not go unnoticed. His commitment over the years reflects a deep passion for service, and we are incredibly grateful for the impact he and his team continue to have on our families. We thank him for these many years of support and hope for many more to come. We would also like to extend a special thank you to Mia Prio for her incredible collaboration and dedication. Your energy, leadership, and heart played a key role in making this event a success, and your efforts helped ensure our children experienced a truly joyful and memorable day.

Once again, thank you to Chaparral High School, Operation Holiday Cheer, and everyone who participated in making this event so special. Your generosity and compassion continue to brighten the lives of our families.

Written by: Diana Kraus



HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

Valley Restart at the Christmas Hemet Parade 2025 CHRISTMAS PARADE "THE GREAT OUTDOORS"

On December 6th, 2025, Valley Restart proudly participated in our second annual Christmas Parade, and this year's theme, "The Great Outdoors," made the experience even more special. With the help of staff and volunteers everything on our float was made entirely by hand, inspired by a shared vision of our beautiful San Jacinto Mountains, Hemet Lake and Diamond Valley Lake.

As we walked the streets of Florida Avenue, waving to the crowd and handing candy to children, we were excited to showcase our presence in the community and share who we are. Events like this allow us to remind our neighbors that Valley Restart is here- not only a shelter, but as a resource for the community.

In addition to providing shelter, Valley Restart offers support services, community resources, and warm evening meals to our registered visitors. Our goal is to continue serving those in need with compassion, dignity and care.

If you or someone you know needs assistance, we encourage you to reach out and learn more about how we can help. Donations and volunteering are always welcome, whether online or in person.

Written by: Diana Kraus



ELKS LODGE FUNDRAISER

Thank You, Elks Lodge of Hemet!

On December 14, 2025, Mayra and I had the honor of representing the Valley Restart Team as guests at the Elks Lodge in Hemet during their annual show, "An Old-Fashioned Christmas." We were deeply grateful to be selected as the beneficiary of this year's fundraising event, with all proceeds generously donated to Valley Restart.

Thanks to the kindness and generosity of the Elks Lodge members, our pantry was restocked with two full tables of food at a time when our shelves were running low. Their support made an immediate and meaningful impact on the families we serve.

On behalf of the entire Valley Restart team, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Denise Schwab, Cat Peel, and all the officers, members, and volunteers of the Elks Lodge for their generous donations of food, gift cards, and monetary contributions.

Thank you, Elks Lodge of Hemet, for welcoming us and for your continued commitment to serving the community and our veterans. Your generosity truly makes a difference.

Written by: Diana Kraus



Pictured Left from Right,
Mayra, Cat, and Diana K.

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS



Carol and Dunimus in computer class.

Dunimus has been excelling in computer class, becoming an expert at typing!

THANK YOU TO FRINGE HAIR SALON



We are thankful to Fringe Hair Salon for doing a coat drive for us. A very thoughtful and much needed gift!



THANK YOU TO THE VINE RADIO STATION



A HUGE Shout out to The Vine Radio station for your "Socktober" sock donation!

Over 700 pairs of socks!

Pictured: Chris Thompson, General Manager & Diana Hagy, Executive Director



NAZARENE CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY



LIVE MUSIC PROVIDED BY MENIFFEE NAZARENE



They did it again! Each year, Krystal and the team at VCS Billing reach out to Valley Restart with one goal in mind-to ensure our children have gifts to open on Christmas Day. Thanks to their generosity, our kids once again experience the joy and excitement of receiving presents during the holiday season.

On behalf of the entire Valley Restart team, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to everyone at VCS Billing who contributed to this incredible donation of toys. Your continued outreach and collaboration year after year make a meaningful difference in the lives of the families we serve.

Thank you for your kindness, generosity, and commitment to helping make Christmas special for our children.

Written by: Diana Kraus



Monday, January 6

9:30a.m. - 3p.m.

**Valley Restart Shelter
200 S. Menlo Ave., Hemet**

WE CAN HELP WITH:

- Bronchitis and strepthroat
- Cold and flu
- Cuts, wounds, and bites
- Diabetes and hypertension screenings
- Diagnosis and treatment of acute & chronic illness
- Falls, sprains, and strains
- Laboratory services
- Prescription refills (no controlled substances)
- Preventive health screenings
- Referrals for mental health and public services
- Sinus, ear, nose, and urinary tract infections
- Sports physicals
- Vaccinations
- Well-child checks
- Women's health exams

Our knowledgeable staff can help identify programs that may cover your service costs.

MOBILE HEALTH CLINIC

Appointments:

 **Call 833-434-2229**

 **Text 951-467-8610**

**Appointments are limited,
reserve your spot today!**

**For the latest information,
visit RUHealth.org**

