



## Options to sponsor The Festival of Trees

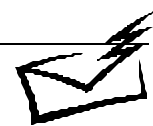
For years Options has focused on providing quality services and opportunities for our consumers and made a strong effort to improve and adapt those services based on our experience, research and consumer feedback. Lately, there has been an increased awareness that this same focus, which enabled our success as an agency has produced the unintended result of working in a kind of closed loop within the mental health community. We need to reach out to the community and potential community partners to increase awareness of mental illness and the services available to mental health consumers. Partnership and alliance with community members and other service organizations will enhance community integration and social resources for consumers and provide an opening for caring folks to be aware of and perhaps contribute to our mission. We sought an annual event that would raise our profile and also give the community a memorable experience that is associated with Options.

The Options Board of Directors brainstormed and reviewed several ideas before deciding on a Festival of Trees. In June, Cathy Dahl was retained as the Event Coordinator by the Board to provide focus and direction. Many communities, nationwide, have developed this annual, festive event to kick off the holiday season. The first annual Festival of Trees will be a special holiday event to be held on the weekend right after Thanksgiving, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. at the Josephine County Fairgrounds Pavilion.

*This issue of the Options Newsletter is featuring an interview with Cathy Dahl so that we can get to know the Event Coordinator and some of the details of preparation for the big event.*

### **Email**

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## Interview with Cathy Dahl, Event Coordinator for the Festival of Trees.

### ***Could you tell us a little bit about your background and experience?***

First of all, my name is Cathy Dahl and I am the Event Coordinator for the Festival of Trees. I have coordinated many events in other communities; however, this is the first "Festival of Trees" that I have ever worked on. I have a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Business Management, a Minor in Communication, and an Associate degree in Marketing. I really enjoy working as an Event Coordinator and hope to be able to do more events here in the Grants Pass area in the future.

I have always loved attending different "Festival of Trees" events in other cities and thought that it would be a lot of fun to do one, so this became the perfect opportunity. I'm very excited about coordinating the first "Festival of Trees" in Grants Pass and I feel that the money raised is going to a very worthy cause. The Options staff and Board Members are terrific to work with and we're all looking forward to having this be an extremely fun and spectacular holiday event that the whole community will enjoy.

### ***What has been the general response to your solicitation for tree sponsors and other involvement?***

There has been an extremely enthusiastic response from the community about participating in the "Festival of Trees".

It's fun to talk to people about being a sponsor or a volunteer because their eyes light up as we talk! Everyone loves the idea and they want to be a part of it!

### ***How many sponsors do you have so far?***

We've barely started contacting businesses and community members about being a sponsor and so far we have close to ten who have committed to sponsoring a tree! We would like to have a hundred trees on display! So we really need those who are interested to contact either me at 472-0612 or one of the Options Board Members right away if they would like to be a sponsor and need more information.

### ***Tell us about the Premier Opening Night Gala and Auction.***

This is the most exciting time to come to the Festival of Trees! We hope to have local wineries participating in the Premier Opening Night Gala with wine tasting. Also, our caterer, Star Catering in Medford, will be serving delicious hors d'oeuvres, cheeses, and fancy desserts. During the evening Wayne Liska, our auctioneer, will be auctioning off most of our gorgeous trees. . . Afterward, there will be dancing to live music with the beautifully decorated trees in the background. It's going to be a night to remember! Tickets are \$40 per couple or single and will be available through Options Board Members and me.

## **Options Receives Grant from U.S. Bank**

Options is very pleased to announce the award of a \$10,000 grant targeted for continued support of the Employment Works Program. In these lean economic times it is especially validating to receive this generous support. This money will be used to supplement federal and state funding to continue this vital resource and opportunity for consumers to access educational and vocational opportunities in the community.

Employment Works is the first program of its kind in the state of Oregon. As other agencies have learned about the positive results we are experiencing, we have taken a leadership role in helping them establish supported employment programs of their own. In 2002 Oregon was chosen by the Johnson and Johnson Foundation to be one of the states to receive funds to create demonstration projects based on the IPS model. The State Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services in turn contracted with Options to do the actual hands on consultation. Since the beginning of the project, the Employment Works supervisor has been providing training and consultation to Polk, Douglas and Jackson counties to develop and maintain employment programs suited to their area. This contract was just renewed for an additional twelve months.

**Do you know yet who will be providing the live music on opening night?**

No. Any ideas? We are still in the planning and implementing stages right now, so there are still a lot of details to work out.

What other kinds of live entertainment will be happening over the week end?

We hope to have some fun holiday entertainers, singers, and choral groups. If anyone is interested in participating they can give me a call at 472-0612 and we'll talk

**Tell us about the activities for children.**

There will be a separate area in the Pavilion called "Santa's Workshop" where Santa's Elves will help children make holiday gifts and crafts and play games.

Also, I hear that Santa Claus himself will be at the Festival of Trees all day Saturday and Sunday to visit with the children who come to see him. Pictures with Santa will be available, too.

**What will be served with the champagne at the fashion show ?**

The Champagne Brunch Fashion Show sponsored by Gottschalks will be a fabulous affair! Tickets are \$20 per person and will be available through Options Board Members and myself. At this time we are talking to many local restaurants and caterers about complimentary providing the food. Each restaurant or caterer will have an area with their name on a sign and a table to serve from, all amongst the beautifully decorated holiday trees. Those attending the Fashion Show will have the opportunity to walk around and choose from a wide variety of delicious brunch type foods that are featured at the many local eating establishments. This is a wonderful opportunity for local restaurants to showcase their culinary talents! If you would like to be involved in providing some of the food, please contact me as soon as possible at 472-0612.

**Other than at the live auction during the Premier Opening Night can people buy a tree, wreath or centerpiece?**

Some of the beautiful trees, wreaths, and centerpieces will be available for silent auction or raffles on Saturday and Sunday.

**Beyond tree sponsorship, how else can interested community members support and be involved in the festival?**

Community members can be involved in a wide variety of ways...

they can sponsor and decorate a tree, wreath or centerpiece

they can donate gift certificates, vacations, or holiday gift baskets which will be auctioned or raffled

they can donate food and beverages

they can donate cash, Christmas decorations, nice tablecloths, a children's playhouse, etc.

they can donate the cost of printing programs, posters & tickets

they can sponsor the Santa's Workshop Children's Activities

they can sponsor the Holiday Gift Shop for children

they can be a volunteer decorator

they can be an entertainer/musician/group/singer

they can be one of the costumed Santa's helpers

they can be a volunteer helper in many different areas

they can help with advertising they can rent a booth (there's only 6 available) to sell holiday gifts and crafts

they can sew costumes or build props

they can make beautiful gingerbread houses to display

they can help us sign up sponsors

they can come enjoy the Festival!

This is the sixth issue of the Options Newsletter and marks the beginning of our second year of publication. We wish to thank all the generous donors who have utilized this avenue to support Options. We also wish to express our heartfelt appreciation to the Meyer Memorial Trust, from whom the grant originated to make this newsletter possible.

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