Rest in peace
By Rev. Rick Reynolds

David lived upstairs from Nightwatch in 1994. My first week on the job he told me he would help at night, if we needed him. “Just come pound on my door.” Many times I’d do that, and Dave would join me in helping homeless people. Dave told me his story over the course of several years. Military brat. Prison, but exonerated. No record. He came west for a new start. Because he was a country boy, he lived in the woods, far from people and houses. When Dave was reported to the sheriff, they brought him downtown, and dropped him off in Pioneer Square, with all his gear. He had no idea how to survive the city.

Day and night, Dave volunteered at Nightwatch, A few years later, he moved into an apartment, and got a paying job. I’d buy him lunch, he’d tell me stories. We drifted apart, and lost touch. Our friends in common died or moved away.

The snow made me remember Dave. His teasing, his laugh, his desire to help. How did he survive outside in this cold. How does anyone?

Rest in Peace, my friend.

Lord, keep our homeless friends safe in the dark and cold. Increase our ability to help all we meet.

Patience and resilience
By Tonette Winston,
Shelter Dispatch Manager

Our clients are patient, resilient and forgiving. I am learning to be the same!

One client is struggling to work two jobs, to improve his situation. Shelter policies work against him. Shelters have fixed hours. Can’t come back late. Have to leave early in the morning. If a person works until 11:00 pm, or a graveyard shift, there aren’t options for them.

My homeless friend working two jobs had to remind me. Take a deep breath. Explain to the people running the shelters how we were trying to help him, and why it was important.

I changed my approach, and a beautiful thing happened; I found him a 24-hour shelter that will accommodate his work schedule and allow him to change his situation. He was so excited when I shared the news, and thanked me repeatedly. I finally acknowledged it was my voice, but his words that made this happen.

We are unable to do this good work without the support of Nightwatch donors like you.
Thought I’d seen it all
By Ann Sakaguchi,
Deputy Director

When you’ve been at Nightwatch for a while, it can seem like you’ve seen it all, and heard it all. Then something happens and you realize there is more to see and hear. It is humbling.

“Pete,” one of our tenants, has been gone for several months. He had a medical emergency, went to the ER, then was transferred to a rehab facility. But it didn’t matter. The other tenants welcomed him back in their midst. Like a family, they shared a meal on Christmas Eve.

The Nightwatch senior tenants are a big family. Mostly, they get along. To be honest, some independence. But he will never come back to his apartment here.

Another tenant — Dennis — decided to pick up Pete in his taxi cab and bring him to the building for Christmas Eve dinner, as a surprise for the neighbors. Like old times.

The Nightwatch senior tenants are a big family. Mostly, they get along. To be honest, some independence. But he will never come back to his apartment here.

It is humbling.

“Pete,” one of our tenants, has been gone for several months. He had a medical emergency, went to the ER, then had a long hospitalization. Now he’s in a rehab facility, trying to regain strength and some independence. But he will never come back to his apartment here.

The Nightwatch senior tenants are a big family. Mostly, they get along. To be honest, Pete wasn’t particularly well-liked by the others. He could be grouchy or preachy or noisy or just plain annoying. He’s been gone for months now, and people seemed okay about it.

Another tenant — Dennis — decided to pick up Pete in his taxi cab and bring him to the building for Christmas Eve dinner, as a surprise for the neighbors. Like old times.

Since his medical issues, Pete is not the same. It’s hard to be social when you can’t speak naturally. But it didn’t matter. The other tenants welcomed him back in their midst. Like a family, they shared a meal on Christmas Eve.

I was astonished when I heard this report.

I am touched by the sensitivity and caring of Dennis, to even think of going to get Pete. I am proud of the other residents who welcomed Pete home, if only for one meal. I pray for Pete, that his remaining journey on earth will be joy-filled.

And I thank God for reminding me that I have not seen it all.