



Jance Groff, 32, is getting help and learning how to help himself with drug and alcohol addiction at the Everett Recovery Cafe, a day center on Broadway. (Dan Bates / The Herald)

## Everett Recovery Cafe helps people deal with addiction

[Julie Muhlstein](#)

Fri Sep 16th, 2016 11:00am

Jance Groff lost his job. He lost his apartment. Alcohol and drug abuse took a punishing toll, but on his way to sobriety the Everett man found a life-altering haven.

Groff, 32, now lives in clean-and-sober housing. But these days, his real home is the [Everett Recovery Cafe](#).

He spends several hours each weekday in the renovated house at 2212 Broadway. At the cafe, he eats lunch with new friends. He works in the kitchen. He attends support meetings, and plays Jenga or chess. Day by day, he is building a better life.

“Being in this program helped me realize I had to change,” Groff said at the cafe Wednesday. “I need a solid routine, and this has helped me keep a solid routine.”

A nonprofit that [opened](#) in 2015, the [Everett Recovery Cafe](#) was the longtime dream of Wendy Grove, its founder and executive director. Grove, formerly a teacher at Machias

Elementary in the Snohomish School District, began volunteering at [Seattle's Recovery Cafe](#) in 2009. She was later part of its staff.

The Whidbey Island woman [told The Herald in 2014](#) that she “fell in love” with the Recovery Cafe’s mission of helping people deal with addiction, mental health issues and homelessness. “I decided we needed one up here in Everett,” she said the year before the local cafe opened on Broadway across from Walgreens.

The Everett Recovery Cafe is modeled after the one at 2022 Boren Ave. in Seattle, but is financially independent.

Grove said Wednesday that the Everett cafe has about 50 members — membership is free — and logs more than 600 visits each month. Memberships will likely be capped at about 75 because of the building size.

Rules are few, but house managers work to ensure safety. People coming in are asked to be at least 24 hours drug- and alcohol-free. There’s no formal drug testing, but if someone appears to be under the influence they are told to return later. Members are required to attend at least one hour-long support meeting per week at the cafe.

Meetings are on the second floor, with the kitchen, dining area, and space for games, conversation and music on the main floor of the house. Cafe hours are noon-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. One Saturday each month, the cafe hosts an open-mic night. Members share their talents, some using the cafe’s karaoke machine.

“Someone plays guitar, another plays violin, and I tell some native stories,” Groff said.

A Tulalip tribal member, Groff has shared [his storytelling in the Hibulb Cultural Center](#) Longhouse Room at Tulalip. At the cafe, he has told the traditional tale of [“Mink and Tetyika.”](#) His mother, he said, teaches [Lushootseed](#), part of the Salish language group spoken by the Tulalips and other Northwest tribes.

“She’s been happy with how far I’ve come,” said Groff, who earned a GED at Everett Community College and thinks about getting more education. He started using drugs and alcohol as a teenager.

Also stopping by the Everett cafe Wednesday was Edward Brockavich, 40, who held his newborn daughter Skylah in his arms. Brockavich said his involvement in the cafe came by way of Snohomish County’s Therapeutic Alternatives to Prosecution (TAP) program, which required him to do 200 hours of community service.

“This opened the door for everything,” said Brockavich, who believes the cafe was the key that helped him become a more responsible worker, husband and dad. “They make you feel like family. It’s been a huge blessing,” he said.

Generosity keeps the door open. Grove said the cafe received a Multiyear Local Impact Grant from the [Rotary Club of Everett](#) this year. Along with the grant of \$5,000 per year for three years, she said, Rotary members have offered to lend their time to help the cafe's effort. Other volunteers are there daily to make lunches.

The community has a chance to contribute at the Everett Recovery Cafe's annual fundraising event, "Sowing the Seeds of Recovery and Harvesting Hope," 5:30-7:30 p.m. Oct. 29 at Floral Hall in Everett's Forest Park.

"You step through the door here, you leave all that behind you," said cafe floor manager John Reardon as he pointed to the street outside.

For Groff, walking through the cafe's door was a first step to a new life. "Now I depend on this place," he said.

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## How to help

"Sowing the Seeds of Recovery and Harvesting Hope," the second annual Everett Recovery Cafe fundraising event, is scheduled for 5:30-7:30 p.m. Oct. 29 at Floral Hall in Forest Park, 802 E. Mukilteo Blvd., Everett. It will include free appetizers, dinner, music and cafe stories. Reservations are required by Oct. 10; send email to: [reservations@everettrecoverycafe.org](mailto:reservations@everettrecoverycafe.org)

Learn more at: [www.everettrecoverycafe.org/](http://www.everettrecoverycafe.org/)



Among the various chores to do at Everett Recovery Cafe, Jance Groff likes helping in the kitchen. (Dan Bates / The Herald)



Wendy Grove, seen here as people arrive for lunch, created Everett Recovery Cafe after volunteering and working at a similar facility in Seattle. (Dan Bates / The Herald)