




**OPEN HOUSE  
MINISTRIES**

[www.sheltered.org](http://www.sheltered.org)

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*He is  
Risen!*

# Connections

*April, 2019*

Look Inside!

## *Our Shelter Expands!*

### Five New Residences & "Bug" Room Added

Last summer the opening of the Tod and Maxine McClaskey Family Resource Center (MFRC) was exciting! Open House staff and



residents have been utilizing it for gym time, larger church meeting space, special events, and more. In addition, most of the full-time staff moved their offices to the MFRC freeing up space in the original shelter building for new opportunities.

All of our hopes, dreams and prayers are coming to fruition. It's exciting that we're going to be able to help even more homeless families in the near future," says Reneé Stevens, Executive Director of Open House Ministries.

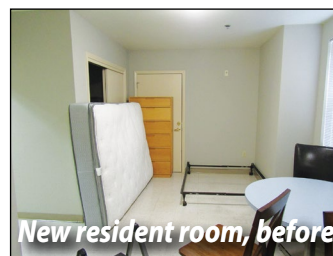
Dave Hamby, Facilities Director said, "By deleting office space and reconfiguring the first floor of the shelter, we were able to add five new resident rooms."

Each apartment includes a kitchenette with a sink, a small refrigerator, cupboards, and table with chairs. Rooms are also outfitted with a dresser and beds for the entire family – doubles, twins and sometimes a bunk bed format.

In addition, a "bug" room will be added to the first floor. "This completely enclosed area of 100 square feet is able to raise the ambient temperature to 130+ degrees to eliminate bed bugs and other critters, acting as

the first line of defense against potential pest control issues after new residents and their belongings are moved in." says Hamby.

Renovations are currently underway and scheduled to be complete by the end of May 2019.



*Are you interested in making a difference for a new shelter family? You*

*and your company, church group, family or friends can have a lasting impact on a family entering the shelter by adopting a Room. Groups furnish bedding, dishes and cookware that families are able to take with them when they transition. For more info, visit or call the Shelter at (360) 737-0300.*





# The Value of Another Storm

Chaplain's Corner - April, 2019

On February 28, 2019, Open House Ministries was put on emergency lock down, as a gunman walked down the street waving pistols at anyone



passing nearby. Moments later, four gunshots rang out, and a man laid mortally wounded by responding police officers. This young man left behind many friends, a shocked neighborhood and a five-year-old daughter.

This critical incident marked a day that we will all remember: many of our residents watched the violent confrontation from the windows of our Shelter, while others could only listen to the gunfire and wonder at who had been shot. The trauma triggered some of our residents, who were again transported to memories of the dangerous days of the past. Within the hour, the Community of Open House was caring for one another, and particularly for our children, a few of whom had actually witnessed the shooting.

Most certainly, GOD protected us. Yet, He also is redeeming that very violence, reminding us that ***“in all things GOD is working for good for those who love Him”*** (Romans 8:28). These are simple words,

but hard truths. Several street people commented on needing to get clean and sober—once and for all. Others spoke of needing to get help with their mental health (issues). Our residents were reminded of the need not just to love their kids, but also to protect them from the violent images of our culture. In group meetings, there were tears of gratitude for our New Life in Jesus, which helps make sense of the senseless.

John Piper says that nothing touches us that doesn't come through His fingers first. As hard as it is, we can know that GOD is working even in the worst of our storms. He does not leave us alone to find our own way out of the blackness, but He helps us as ***“the Father of compassion and the GOD of all comfort”*** (II Cor.1:3). He restores our hope - ***“and hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us”*** (Romans 5:5).

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This Easter, we recall the maelstrom of the Cross, and worship our risen Jesus, knowing that the Storm that He suffered was intended to set us free... free indeed.

*With Eternal Gratitude,  
Mark Roskam, Chaplain*



# Green Eggs and Ham, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter!

## Our Resident Children Are Learning and Growing in Christ

When stepping into the OHM daycare, you can hear the sound of children laughing and playing. The director of daycare, Vikkilyn Rolfs told us that March has been a busy month. For the first two weeks, the kids were reading Dr. Seuss' book **"Green Eggs And Ham"**. Following that same



theme, they made Seuss-like hats, and played at a sensory table. Finally it was time to give green eggs and ham a taste and as you can see by the pictures, some children were skeptical while some readily ate the food and even had seconds!

After that, the kids busied themselves with St. Patrick's Day crafts and more fun at the sensory table.

At the time of this writing, Vikkilynn is gearing up for Easter and putting out the welcome mat for Spring. The children will be learning about Resurrection Eggs which are a great way to connect Easter eggs to the story of Jesus. The daycare staff will be sending the children on a hunt that will lead them to the treasure of Easter!



They will read the story together, open each egg, and find the surprise inside—a symbol of Jesus' journey to the cross.

The teachers and kids will also be reading **"Benjamin's Box"**. What are the treasures in Benjamin's Box? The kids will get to go along with Benjamin and see. Like all boys and girls, Benjamin is very, very curious. When Jesus comes to Jerusalem, Benjamin decides to follow him and find out who he really is. At first, Benjamin thinks Jesus is a teacher, then a King. At last, he learns the good news—news that every child (and grown-up!) will want to share. This book will be used in conjunction with Resurrection Eggs.

Our resident children are growing and always learning! Given the safe and healthy environment at OHM, our children get the enjoyment of just being kids! Unencumbered by fear, hunger, or an unstable family life, they are thriving!

## Open House Executive Director Speaks to Prime Time



Reneé Stevens of Open House recently spoke to Prime Time, a Sunday school class for those that are 60 years and older at New Heights Church in Vancouver. After thanking them for their continued financial support, she shared an overview of her first two years as Executive Director and her vision for the family shelter's future.

"It's exciting to see the building in full swing. Programs are happening and the space is benefiting residents of all ages as well as the community," said Reneé of the shelter's newest addition, the McClaskey Family Resource Center (MFRC).

*If you would like Reneé to speak at your church, youth group, or Sunday school class, please contact Claudia Merritt at [claudia@sheltered.org](mailto:claudia@sheltered.org) or call (360) 737-0300*



Contact Leslie Cook for ticket information  
[leslie.cook@sheltered.org](mailto:leslie.cook@sheltered.org)  
 (360) 737-0300

# You're Invited!

PLEASE JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL BENEFIT LUNCHEON

**Thursday, June 6 from 12:00 - 1:00**

(Doors open at 11:00)

**Warehouse 23**

100 Columbia St #102, Vancouver, WA 98660



## *Second Hand Solutions Thrift Store & Common Grounds Coffee Shop*

We are not your typical thrift store. We believe in providing a positive learning environment, where Open House residents can gain on-the-job training and work experience. In doing this, residents can acquire the tools they need to help end the cycle of homelessness. For every \$24 spent at our store, we are able to house one of our residents for a whole night. Now that's what I call retail with a purpose! We offer a large variety of slightly used and some new items including furniture, clothing, décor, antiques, and a kids' room with everything from clothing to baby equipment. Don't forget to stop by our coffee shop and try our delicious soup or hot dog and one of our delicious drinks!



***Did you know...*** leaving a gift to Open House Ministries (OHM) in your will and/or revocable trust (*otherwise known as a bequest*) is another way you can support OHM and help homeless families regain their independence and their lives. OHM has received bequests from generous donors like you, and they make a significant difference in the support and growth of our programs.

Bequests can take different forms but are easy to make and do not affect your current financial situation. And, you can always change a bequest so they do not need to be considered "set in stone." When you have an up-to-date will/trust in place, it will give you peace of mind knowing that you have completed a task of good stewardship that is important to your family and favorite charity(s).

If you would like more information on how you can help OHM with a gift in your will/trust, please contact us or simply let your attorney know that you would like to do this.

~ Ross Merritt, Donor Relations Volunteer

### ***SHELTER NEEDS:***

Size 4, 5, and 6 diapers, baby food, baby formula, day bus passes, blankets, coats, hats, gloves and hand warmers.



**Please consider Open House Ministries in your will or trust.**