




**OPEN HOUSE  
MINISTRIES**

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

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#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<b>Anthony &amp; Amanda Found Hope</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chaplain's Corner</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Moving &amp; Grooving!</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Kaleo Missions Visits Open House Ministries</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Case Manager, Katie, Speaks At Bible Study</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>You're Invited! Growing Hope Together Benefit Luncheon</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Wheel Deals Spring Bicycle Tune-Up Special</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Second Hand Solutions Now Open Mondays</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Beneficiary Designation</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Shelter Needs</b>	<b>4</b>



# Connections

*May, 2019*



## *Anthony and Amanda Found Hope*

### **The story of Anthony and Amanda**

"Open House is a bright light in a dark place. They bring hope to people who don't have any," states Anthony.

It wasn't long ago that Amanda and her husband, Anthony, were in that dark place. But now... they do have hope.

***"Open House isn't just a shelter. It's a life changer – a place to heal, grow and build a foundation for the rest of your life." ~ Anthony***

Anthony was homeless off and on for a decade battling addiction, mental illness and broken relationships. Amanda had her own challenges with drugs and homelessness. Both homeless, the two met, married, and ended up living in a tent in Vancouver.

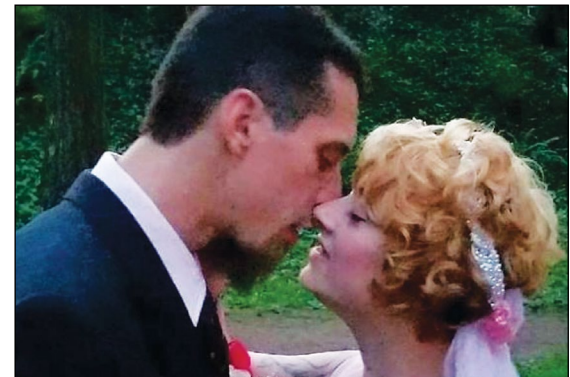
Anthony has known Mark Roskam, Open House Ministries' pastor, for five years now. Amanda met Mark when she and Anthony were living in their tent just down the street from the Open House shelter.

Anthony tells us, "Mark met me right where I was, deep in my own mess. I believe he saw a young man wanting to do right, but not knowing where to start. He brought me back to the Lord, and gave me guidance

even when I was being stubborn. He loved me like his own son."

With Mark's encouragement, the couple submitted an application and were awarded a residence at Open House. Tough program work and valuable job skills training started immediately.

"At first the classes were a lot to handle, but as time went on, I got into a rhythm.



I quickly realized that the classes were there to help me grow closer to the Lord," says Amanda.

Anthony began working at the shelter's front desk assisting donors and Second Hand Solutions Thrift Store. Amanda worked in Wheel Deals Bicycle Shop running the register, making nightly deposits, ordering parts online and answering phones.

Nine months later, both Anthony and Amanda continue to reconnect with the Lord and are working to bring their families back together. Anthony has two young children. Amanda's two children currently spend weekends at Open House.

*(Continued on page 2)*



# *A Severe Mercy*

Chaplain's Corner - May, 2019

The relationship between Ramon and Natasha was filled with volumes of hard memories: anger, substance abuse, neglect and destruction. Sadly, their three boys had been through most of their parents' upheaval. Finally, their world crashed down, just as if GOD had exercised His *severe mercy*, saying, "*Enough is enough!*" Finally, in 2018, this family came into Open House Ministries, essentially being sick and tired of being sick and tired.

In September 2018, both Ramon and Natasha came to the end of their self-willed lives and committed themselves to Jesus. On April 13, 2019, surrounded by family and friends, their wedding vows expressed the saving life of Christ, and the new foundations for their family. The text was from Psalm 127, "*Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain; unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.*" The "old house" of their past lives has been torn down and a new foundation has been laid!

There are very many hard days at Open House Ministries, while our families grapple with the devastation of their lives, and begin to respond. We watch in faith, trusting that "*GOD is not slow to fulfill His promises—*

*Because of the Lord's great  
love we are not consumed, for  
his compassions never fail.*

*They are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness*

*Lamentations 3:22-23*

*but is patient—not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance"* (II Peter 3:9). In His *severe mercy* – GOD allows our poor foundations, our self-made ways, our dastardly decisions and the consuming consequences – to lead us to a place of brokenness and surrender.

So much of what we do at Open House Ministries is to build meaningful conversations about GOD and His ways with our residents. Very early in our times together, we talk about

GOD, who is not vengeful and angry, but who eagerly desires a full deconstruction and a radical reconstruction of each Life. These Biblical truths are supported by a Christ-Centered Community, reflecting the grace, mercy and truth of Jesus. It is my greatest privilege to witness the end of many personal rebellions against GOD. But better yet, we are witnesses to the transformational work of our Cornerstone, Jesus.

Thank you for every prayer, every dollar, and every effort that you make to help this ministry. We see what you are doing, and it reminds us that we are literally co-laboring with you in this vital ministry and mission.

We love you.

*Mark Roskam, Chaplain*

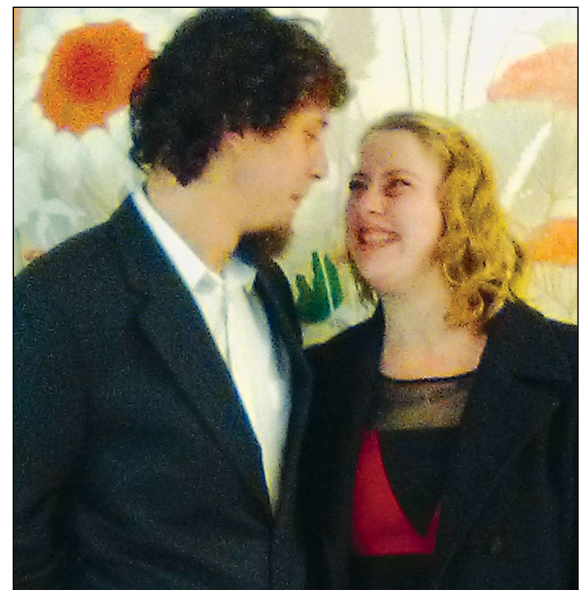
## *Anthony & Amanda's Story (Continued from page 1)*

"I am married to the most amazing woman and am coming up on a year sober. For the first time in a long time, I am headed in the right direction," says Anthony.

Anthony now has a full-time career position while Amanda searches for the same.

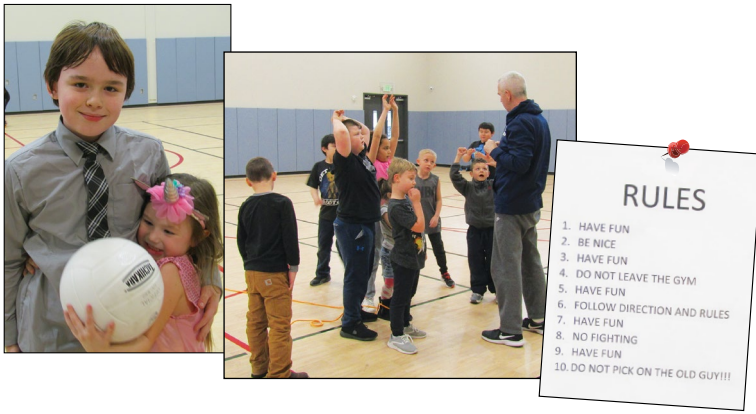
"The Lord does amazing things in our lives if we just let go and let him do the guiding. A lot of our troubles come from us trying to do things our way. Jesus is a patient parent waiting for us to come back and listen to him so he can love and lead us to where we are meant to be," says Anthony thoughtfully.

Amanda chimes in, "Open House gave me my whole world back. They showed me how life is supposed to be living for the Lord and how to impact the world around us in a positive way."





## Moving & Grooving!



Open House is well known for helping its residents connect with their spiritual and emotional sides. But they are also helping address their physical needs too. The new 3,700 square-foot gymnasium in the McClaskey Family Resource Center plays host to recreational play and programs for our younger residents.

“For the kids, the gym is all about having fun and burning off energy,” says volunteer Jim Pogue of the importance of play—both structured and unstructured.

Pogue and his wife, Lisa, run weekly gym time for kindergarten through fifth grade. Basketball, dodge ball, capture the flag, red light/green light, and freeze tag are mainstays.

“Most importantly, we always start off with a quick message – like why game rules are important, playing fair, or being kind to our teammates,” says Jim, a mortgage business owner by day.

Jim adds, “Many of the kids have been through a lot and some have emotional challenges. It’s my hope that they can leave those worries behind for a while and enjoy just being a kid on the court. My real gift is loving on kids and having fun with them.”

## Kaleo Missions Visits Open House



Over the years, Open House Ministries has been blessed by the efforts of Kaleo Missions, a partnership-based ministry dedicated to caring for the poor and marginalized people of the U.S. The amazing group brings various youth

groups from around the nation and Canada to serve in whatever capacity is needed. In the past, these individuals have washed bikes, sorted clothes, cleaned windows and ministered to children in the Day Care.

Recently, Open House hosted another Kaleo Missions youth group from Livermore, California, who served our school-aged kids in the gym. They played games, had a Bible lesson and created crafts along with providing a snack.

“The biggest blessing to me is looking in on the activities and seeing all the one-on-one time spent with our kids,” says Vikkilynn Rolfs, Day Care Director.



## Case Manager, Katie Fessel, Speaks At *Friend To Friend Bible Study*

Open House’s own, Katie Fessel, spoke to *Friend To Friend Bible Study* at New Heights Church in Vancouver. The Case Manager shared the history, goals and mission of the shelter with more than 50 people. Other non-profit organizations including New Heights Church, Meals on Wheels, Winter Hospitality Overflow, and Clark County Food Bank also presented. Afterwards, attendees had the opportunity to sign up for various volunteer opportunities throughout the community.





# You're Invited!

**PLEASE JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL BENEFIT LUNCHEON**

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

*(Doors open at 11:00)*

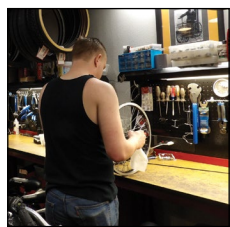
**Warehouse 23**

100 Columbia St #102, Vancouver, WA 98660

**Contact Leslie Cook for ticket information**

**[leslie.cook@sheltered.org](mailto:leslie.cook@sheltered.org)**

**(360) 737-0300**



## Wheel Deals Bicycle Shop

**Spring Bicycle  
Tune-Up Special  
Only \$60\***

Full inspection of all operating parts, including tires, tubes and all bearing centers. Includes truing wheels, replacing cables and housing, setting brakes and indexing shifting. Schedule soon to avoid the summer rush.

*\*Extra charges may apply for broken or missing parts.*

915 West 13th Street, Vancouver, WA 98660 • (360) 205-5617

*(located on the Open House Ministries campus)*

**100% of all proceeds benefit homeless families in Vancouver!**

## Second Hand Solutions Thrift Store Now Open On Mondays!

Our thrift store will open on Mondays beginning April 22nd. Volunteers are needed to fill several positions (on Mondays). Please visit our website, [www.sheltered.org](http://www.sheltered.org) to apply online or call Claudia Merritt for more information at (360) 737-0300.



## BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION

Charitable giving can be as easy as designating Open House Ministries as a beneficiary on your retirement account, life insurance policy, or any other financial account. Named beneficiaries usually supersede instructions in wills and trusts which is why it is important to keep your beneficiary designation information up to date. By reviewing your beneficiaries regularly, you can be assured that your assets will be distributed according to your wishes. You can direct a portion or all of an account to go to charity. This is another easy way for you to significantly support the ministry of Open House and it will not have any effect on your current financial situation. Please feel free to contact us ([ross.merritt@sheltered.org](mailto:ross.merritt@sheltered.org) / (360) 737-0300) if you would like more information or have any questions. Thank you so much for your continued support to the work of helping homeless families restore healthy relationships with each other and with Christ!

~ Ross Merritt, Donor Relations Volunteer

## SHELTER NEEDS:

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



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