



OPEN HOUSE  
MINISTRIES

*We're a family shelter*

# Connections

May 2021



## THRIFT STORE UPDATE

### Blessings Emerge at Secondhand Solutions

**T**hese days Secondhand Solutions is bustling with activity. Since its reopening last June, Manager Amanda Goforth has been adapting and staying focused on keeping everything running smoothly. "A lot of adjustments had to be made to reopen the thrift store during COVID. We originally came back with very reduced hours, reduced capacity (10 people in the store at a time), operating with a reduced team," she said. "We increased cleaning and sanitizing, and put up signage to remind shoppers to stay socially distanced. Residents were unable to come in and work to keep the store from becoming too crowded."



*Checking new arrivals in the ladies department*

Accepting donations required a whole new process too as safety precautions became paramount and picking up donations in neighborhoods had to be put on hold. Since reopening, the store has been receiving six, in-kind donations per day, and they are picking up donations in the community again with enhanced safety measures in place. Store capacity has also increased to 20 people, and management is bringing back resident workers and volunteers. "Just this last week



*Amanda (L) and Melissa (C) helping a resident with work forms*

we were able to re-open on Saturdays, making it our first full week since returning last June," says Amanda. "At the time we thought it would last at most two weeks. Little did we know, that over a year later we would still be adapting to our new normal."

*(Continued)*

## THE LOSS OF A FRIEND

### In Memory of Vince Woods, Sr.

We are sad to share the recent loss of a dear friend to COVID-19. Vince Woods was a graduate from Open House Ministries and led our Righteous Recovery meetings on Wednesday nights.

Vince was an inspiration to all he came in contact with, and he had a positive impact on our residents because of his personal experience.

Vince will be greatly missed. Please pray for his family! ●

## CELEBRATING MOMS

*Happy Mother's Day*





## THRIFT STORE UPDATE CONTINUED

The store is officially back to regular operating hours now: Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm and Wednesdays, 11 am to 5 pm. But even with store hours returning to normal, there are a very limited number of volunteers back on campus. Secondhand Solutions is working on a plan to bring back more of their volunteers in the near future.

Adapting during COVID has been tricky. Plans put in place one week would need to change the next. "I would say first and foremost, we have learned that we must trust in God as we walk through the unknown. Secondly, we have learned to be adaptable," Amanda continued. "Things have changed so much over the last year and the more we learned about COVID-19 the more things changed. We had to learn to adapt fast so we could keep everyone in the community safe."

Amanda and her team have been on a long journey this past year and have emerged stronger, making Secondhand Solutions a safe and fun place to find your next treasure. Plan your next trip to the store soon and share in the blessings. ●



*John's skills being put to task on repairs*

## A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Open House Ministries continues to be a place of blessing this spring as new residents are settling in. We are grateful to have our full program up and running for our residents to receive the training they need to work on life-skills and restore their families.

As Mother's Day quickly approaches, I am reminded no matter the love or loss we may have, we can celebrate the love Jesus provides each of us. It has been an absolute pleasure to witness the transformation in the families who have gone through Open House Ministries: children reunited, parents reconciled, and grandparents restored with their children and grandchildren.

There have also been times when loss was the outcome, and I am reminded of Isaiah 66:13 which reads: *As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you.*



Please continue to pray for Open House Ministries as the school year is ending. Summer camps and activities are coming together and we are always interested in fun ideas for our children.

Happy Mother's Day to all!

Blessings,

*Renee Stevens*

Renee Stevens  
Executive Director

## GENEROUS GIVING

### Making Great Things Happen

It is important to have an up-to-date Will or Trust. In addition to documenting how your property will bless your loved ones, your Will or Trust can be a meaningful and effective way to support Open House Ministries and our work to provide life-changing help to local families.

There are many benefits to planning a gift in your Will or Trust.

- **Assurance.** You have provided for others in the way you intend.
- **Flexibility.** Your gift can be changed during your lifetime if your needs or goals change.
- **Impact.** Support the work you care about most.
- **Influence.** Shape your personal legacy and set an example for others.

Your Will or Trust needs to be drafted in accordance with the laws in our state. We can refer you to attorneys who specialize in estate planning and there are even suitable online programs if you have a fairly simple estate. Please contact either Jean LaCrosse here at Open House or email [ross.merritt@sheltered.org](mailto:ross.merritt@sheltered.org) if you would like to discuss or would like more information. ●

## NEW STORE HOURS

### Secondhand Solutions Thrift Store

Monday - Saturday 10am - 5pm  
Wednesday 11am - 5pm

### Wheel Deals Bicycle Shop

Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 5pm  
Wednesday 11am - 5pm

## SHELTER NEEDS

- Boxed and non-perishable foods
- Men's gloves
- Socks of all sizes
- Men's boxer shorts
- Boy's underwear

## JOB OPENINGS

- Part-time Accounting Clerk
- Part-time Volunteer Coordinator
- Childcare Worker

For more information please email:

[careers@sheltered.org](mailto:careers@sheltered.org)



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