




OPEN HOUSE MINISTRIES

www.sheltered.org

P.O. Box 242
Vancouver, WA 98666
360-737-0300

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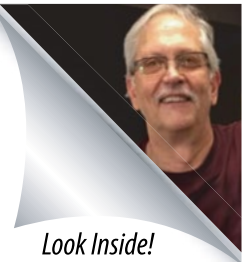
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*I can do all this
through him who
gives me strength.*

Philippians 4:13

Connections

October 2019



Confidence, trust flowed on the river

"God is so obvious. And I'm so thankful he's so obvious," said Nicole of a summer rafting/camping trip she helped chaperone for Open House middle-school kids. "The smiles," Nicole shook her head, "The kids had a different aura about them there," she said.

The appointment our pre-teens had with nature was a rare opportunity for Open House's young residents. Seeing how big and grand God's creation is in a beautiful location was a whole new experience for some of them, and it's a memory they'll get to draw on fondly throughout their lives.

*"Sleeping on the ground
is not for humans."*

~ Nicole, rafting trip volunteer

"One girl was crying because she missed her mom so much the first day," Nicole shared. "But the trip ended up being such a confidence builder for her and other kids. She had such a good time."

Eleven kids from Open House Ministries and our transitional housing units went on the two-day rafting excursion on the Deschutes River. And we sent two volunteer chaperones, both graduates of our program and former residents of the shelter who now work at Open House.

John, the other chaperone selected, shared, "The kids loved it! Some were hesitant and shy at first, but by the end, some of those anti-social kids were running to the circle. It was awesome."

The rapids were real, offering challenge and awe. One of the girls on the trip fell out of the raft as it bumped down the river. It was a great life lesson, John explained. Before loading the raft, trained rafting guides explained to the crew exactly what to

do if one of them fell over. "Had they not been listening, they would not have known what to do," John said. "But they listened! Good! And she was safe. The kids were so inspirational." He said the situation was quite calm and it taught the team a lot about listening, guidance and trusting the friends around you.

John said, "I think I enjoyed the trip even more than they did. ... To explore everything that was created for us, but I never enjoyed, was great for me. I loved it."

The trip was a confidence builder, not only for the kids who went but for the former shelter-residents.

"Getting to go meant so much to me. There's no way anyone would trust me with these kids a few years ago. So thank you," Nicole explained to staff members, grateful for the new life she built at Open House. "The kids turned to me for help!" she exclaimed in disbelief.

As the lyrics from artists Michael and Lisa Gungor go, "You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things out of us." That's easy to see in our program graduates. ❤️



One of Vancouver's best-kept secrets: Chapel at Open House

Chaplain's Corner, by guest writer Dina Hovde, Open House communications manager

Attend chapel at Open House Ministries each week and you'll hear and feel a strong theme.

"He loves us in our weakness, but He loves us too much to leave us there."

"Jesus has a heart for those laid low by life."

"God chose you! You know what it's like to be humbled. You know what it's like to be broken. You've had to find hope in the middle of chaos."

I've heard those things, more than once, over a summer of chapel meetings led by Open House's Mark Roskam. The chaplain's sermons remind residents at Open House that God is crazy about them, that His grace is bigger than we can imagine and that they have unique value and an ability to do incredible things.

Mark was away most of September, attempting a cross-country bike ride on historic Route 66 with his brother, Mike. The two were riding with hopes of raising \$66,000 for operations at Open House and awareness for homelessness all along their path.

They did raise some good awareness and \$27,000 before a horrible accident on Sept. 22 ended their quest. The driver of a pickup truck didn't see the brothers as they were cycling in Oklahoma and ended up hitting Mike. He was taken by ambulance to a hospital, treated for a concussion, face lacerations and other injuries.

We're so thankful the accident did not have a worse outcome. And while disappointed to end their ride, the Route 66 crew needed to get Mike home to heal. Open House was in total agreement.

"The big story here is the goodness of God. We have our brother!" Mark said. "Our God is at work. And that's the Open House story in a nutshell," he continued.

That *is* the story of Open House. God saves! And he heals. Just as God helps heal broken bodies and gives us strength to endure hardships, he heals the brokenhearted.

Each week, Mark weaves a sermon together with what he learns from residents at Open House and their individual hardships. He sometimes quotes them. Recently, he's been quoting a husband and father who had a near fatality before arriving at Open House. He said, "It took me fighting for my life to quit killing myself." Heads nod. Residents relate.

Mark also involves residents in worship. As they lead others in song, you can feel the room swell with warmth and hope.

The Open House community sings, "There's no shadow You won't light up, mountain You won't climb up, coming after me. There's no wall You won't kick down, lie you won't tear down, coming after me."

"God wants to be in relationship with you," Mark says. "Without God, life doesn't work very well. We were never meant to live without God. He knows exactly why we're broken and can enliven us again."

Showing a group of broken people how to trust God and be in relationship with Him, reminding them of their great value, is always the theme at Open House Ministries.

Thank God Open House is more than a shelter. ❤️



A tax-lessening way to bless us

In 2 Corinthians 8:2-3, Paul wrote about a group of believers whose joy at what God was doing overflowed into generosity. They joyously took part in God's work through their giving.

Does seeing the life-changing work Open House Ministries is doing, helping to change the lives of homeless families on Earth and for eternity, fill you with that overflowing joy? If so, and if you're 70½ or older, we encourage you to consider giving to Open House Ministries by making a charitable rollover from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA). This is a

great way to partner with us.

You will pay no taxes on a charitable rollover of up to \$100,000. With a direct transfer to Open House, it will also satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) and reduce your taxable income, even if you don't itemize on charitable gifts.

If you have any questions about financially blessing us in this way, please contact Ross Merritt, our donor relations volunteer, at Ross.Merritt@sheltered.org or call Open House at 360-737-0300. ❤️

Grease Monkeys for God

Grease and talk about God fills a day's work at Open House Ministries' Wheel Deals Bicycles. The bike repair and sales shop is one of two job-skills training areas at Open House. Residents work alongside volunteers, learning about bikes, customer service, sales, marketing and, most importantly, Christ.

The volunteers are crucial in fulfilling the shop's labor needs and teaching residents their way around pedals, brackets and spokes. Many of the volunteers are avid cyclists, with extensive experience fixing bicycles. These volunteer mechanics fix and assemble bikes brought to the shop five days a week at Wheel Deals.

Bob Orth has been volunteering at Wheel Deals for two years now. He's a retired mechanic who used to build gear boxes for Boeing, the huge aerospace manufacturer outside of Seattle.

"I did a Wright brothers reverse — went from working on airplanes to bikes instead of bikes to airplanes," laughs Bob.

The retiree shares his extensive mechanical talents two days a week.

"The shop has helped me grow because seeing how residents grow during their stay is inspiring," says Bob. "Hands down, it's the best job I've ever had and never been paid for!"

Another volunteer in our shop, Steve Jorgensen, was not officially trained in the industry, but is extremely mechanically inclined. By day, the Vancouver resident teaches high school

Bible at Firm Foundations Christian School in Battle Ground. He has been lending his time for one and a half years, volunteering weekly in the summer and one to two times per month during the school year.

"I love how this shop directly supports the work of Open House, all while turning wrenches to rehab bikes. Meeting the residents is a bonus blessing," says Steve.

The time and talent that these two men — and their fellow Wheel Deals volunteers — give Open House, makes a serious hands-on impact helping homeless families who live at the shelter long term. They walk alongside



our residents as they learn the ways of Christ and acquire valuable job skills.

Wheel Deals is looking for more experienced bike mechanics to make the shop run as smoothly as possible. Interested? Contact our volunteer coordinator, Claudia Merritt at 360-737-0300. Learn more about Wheel Deals on our website at www.sheltered.org/wheel-deals-bicycle-shop/ ♥





Breaking the Cycle of HOMELESSNESS

Thank you!

Seeking to raise awareness about solutions for homelessness and \$66,000 for operations at Open House, brothers Mark and Mike Roskam set out to cycle Route 66, from Chicago to California, in September. Their cross-country fundraising adventure was cut short when a horrible accident occurred on Sept. 22 along their route in Oklahoma. Both men are OK, but they had a huge scare, and Mike suffered multiple injuries when the driver of a pickup truck did not see them cycling and ran into him.

Medical attention was swift. An ambulance took Mike to an emergency room, and he started getting the help he needed for a concussion, lacerations and a lot of road rash. Mark was unharmed. The Roskams and Open House leadership all agreed it was time to end the ride to concentrate on Mike's healing.

If you donated to "Route 66: Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness," thank you. At the time of the accident, the men had raised \$27,000 for Open House. Donations related to the ride for Open House are still being accepted at www.sheltered.org/route-66/. And thank you for all the prayers and support both before and after this accident.



Tours & Talks

Tours are available for anyone interested in learning more about Open House Ministries and seeing the shelter in action. Please contact



Leslie Cook, our development co-ordinator, at 360-737-0300 to sign up for an already available tour

date or to create one that works better. You can also sign up on our web-site: www.sheltered.org/tours/.

The next planned tour happens on Oct. 25. Join us! Scheduled tours happen at lunch time and come with a brown bag lunch.



The Vancouver Business Journal writes on Sept. 13, "If you want to see lives restored, faith renewed and the cycle of homelessness broken, visit the Open House Ministries, a family shelter in downtown Vancouver. OHM is a faith-based organization that helps homeless families heal their lives."

www.vbjusa.com/news/top-stories/open-house-ministries-extends-hand-of-hope-to-families/

The Roskam brothers and "Route 66: Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness" were highlighted by KGW TV in September: "Brothers to cycle Route 66 for Vancouver homeless family shelter fundraiser; Brothers Mark and Mike Roskam hope to raise \$66,000 dollars for Open House Ministries."

www.kgw.com/article/news/local/brothers-to-cycle-route-66-for-vancouver-homeless-family-shelter-fundraiser/283-593fc393-1685-447a-a5eb-29e7df6e819f

"It's a golden ticket if you get here and the golden ticket is that we help people find peace with God again," Mark Roskam says in a story by Clark County Today. "Because most people through whatever has happened in their life, have crashed and burned and with it has gone their faith. So we really want people to find their faith and hope in God again, through Christ."

www.clarkcountytoday.com/lifestyles/biking-brothers-helping-the-homeless-through-cross-country-fundraiser/

From The Columbian's recent story, "A fresh spin on helping the homeless:"

"The faith-based organization has been open since 1986. It allows families without homes to stay for up to one year rent-free. Mark Roskam said the ministry works closely with the adults in hopes that they will be able to break the cycle of homelessness."

www.columbian.com/news/2019/aug/13/a-fresh-spin-on-helping-the-homeless/

SHELTER NEEDS:

Children's socks and underwear, size 4 and 5 diapers, hair conditioner, deodorant and paper towels are currently needed.

Thank you!



Please consider Open House Ministries in your will or trust.