



Connections

October 2022

RESIDENT STORY

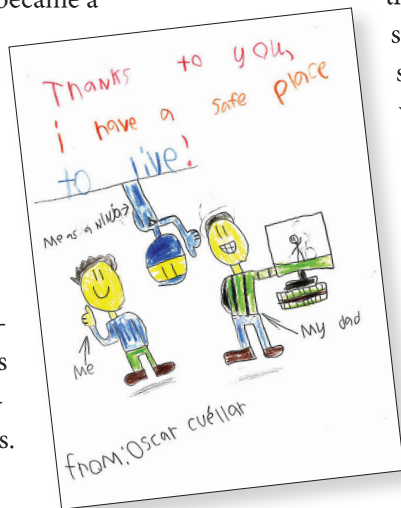
Prayers and Blessings on a Journey



*Oscar Cuéllar
laughing with
his son Oscar Jr.
on a summer
morning at Open
House Ministries.*

Last month friends at Open House Ministries said their goodbyes and prayed for Oscar Cuéllar and his son as they made plans to move across country. Their story at Open House Ministries started when Oscar became a single dad, struggling to make a new life for his young son.

As Oscar's love for the Lord grew he became dedicated to raising his son to follow God, and friends at Open House Ministries were witnesses. It wasn't unusual for Oscar Jr. to volunteer to pray at morning devotions, asking God in his young voice for everyone to have a good day, expressing thankfulness for having a place to stay. It was easy to see how grateful they both were to be surrounded by other Christians, worshipping and working to build a better future for themselves.



In the time they spent living in the shelter, Oscar worked in our bicycle shop, Wheel Deals, learning mechanical skills and waiting on customers. You could pick out Oscar's hearty laugh in the room while he joked with staff and people in the bike shop. He greeted everyone with a warm smile and his kindness was always present at Open House Ministries.

You could find Oscar Jr. working on action adventure stories, developing superhero characters and villains. His superheroes were often representations of his dad, and the stories reflected the adventures they've had together. Their close bond is a testimony to Oscar's devotion to follow Christ and be a good father to Oscar Jr.

They are looking forward to traveling to Oklahoma and reuniting with family. Please keep them both in your prayers as they continue their adventure with God in a new place. ●

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

A Greater Foundation

My wife and I aren't huge risk-takers. No one is going to mistake us for Indiana Jones. Yet, on many occasions, we made choices where the future was unknown and uncertain. Marriage, going to seminary, starting a church, having children, asking others for help, moving to Vancouver... none of these choices came with guarantees. With every one of these, we faced a decision. What choice will we make given our fears of failure, rejection, and uncertainty?

I learned that the resolve to act wisely and do the right thing despite our fears is the essence of courage. Courage is not the elimination of fear; that is recklessness and folly. Nor is courage mindlessness. "Don't think, just do it" is equally reckless.

In fact, I believe courage is best understood in relation to love. As courage moves us in the direction of, and in proportion to, what we love. If we love nothing or love weakly, we will live cowardly lives. Likewise, if we love only ourselves, we will lack the courage to act for the good of others. We will end up like the people of Israel during the time of the judges, doing what is right in our own eyes. This self-centered courage may be personally beneficial, but only for a time. Eventually, with city walls left unattended, destruction will overtake us.
(Continued)

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER CONTINUED

So what is required if we are to avoid this fate? Not men and women of greater skill. Not men and women who lack fear. What is required is a greater foundation to anchor our love. While the love of others is beautiful and results in the courage to put others' needs before our wants, the love of the Lord results in the courage that can change the world. If the love of the Lord can take 12 scared fishermen and turn the world

upside down, the same is true for you and me. • *Chaplain Jon Nichols*

"For Christ's love compels us because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

CHRISTMAS ANNOUNCEMENT

Adopt a Family for Christmas

Christmas time is quickly approaching at Open House Ministries, and we invite you to celebrate by adopting one of our families this year.

If you would like to participate, the following guidelines may be helpful.

Last day to drop off gifts will be Tuesday, December 20th.

Gift Guidelines and Ideas

- Toys and clothing items from the family's wish list, wrapped and delivered by Tuesday, December 20th.

- Gift cards such as Target, Fred Meyer, WINCO foods or a gas card. Unwrapped toys and gifts cards are also welcome.

To adopt a family for Christmas, please contact **Claudia Merritt** at 360-737-0300 or email claudia.merritt@sheltered.org, and she will give you the details needed for your family adoption. *Thank you!*

SECONDHAND SOLUTIONS HOLIDAY BAZAAR

"Twas the Night Before Christmas"



Save the Date!

November 7th 4 pm ~ 7 pm

Enjoy great holiday shopping, festive cookies, and holiday themed drinks!

Come early and enter to win our door prizes!



**OPEN HOUSE
MINISTRIES**
We're a family shelter

900 W. 12th St. | P.O. Box 242
Vancouver, WA 98666-0242
360-737-0300
www.sheltered.org

SHELTER NEEDS

- Bottled water
 - Paper towels
 - Clorox wipes
 - Pull ups of all sizes
- Thanks!*

VOLUNTEERS!

We need your help in donation operations. Shifts are available seven days a week in 4-to-5-hour shifts. Please fill out an application at www.sheltered.org

GRACIOUS GIVING

Year End Giving

As a supporter of Open House Ministries, your gifts throughout the year have enabled us to help change our residents' lives in so many ways. By providing a stable living environment for families, continuing education, and most importantly, regular Bible-based encouragement, you make that happen through your generosity.

Many of you have been very creative in your giving and, as we mentioned in last month's article, have decided to make gifts directly from your IRA to maximize your gifts and avoid unnecessary taxes. Another way we have received numerous gifts is from your Donor Advised Fund (sometimes known as a Giving Fund or similar names). These funds can be set up in numerous ways, but one of the best ways is transferring appreciated stock to avoid capital gains taxes. This makes larger year-end gifts possible and gives you the flexibility to delay making a large gift, such as to our new capital campaign, yet provides you with a current year tax deduction. This can allow you to take time to prayerfully consider where, when and how much to give and plan a more comprehensive giving strategy.

Giving appreciated assets can make you a more cheerful giver because these assets are almost like a gift from God. Thanks to His leading, you have enjoyed a blessing that acknowledges the fact that He is the rightful owner of all that we have, and we are just trying to be a good steward of what He has entrusted to us.

If you have any questions about how to give through funds like this or would like to discuss other unique ways to make a generous year-end gift, please contact me, Ross, or Jean at Open House 360-737-0300 or email me at ross.merritt@sheltered.org.

Thank you for your continued support for Open House Ministries. Please remember us in your will or estate plan. •