

MINISTRY NEWS

Return of the Open House Ministries Block Party & Resource Fair



Block Party guests eagerly lined up for lunch as volunteers and staff grilled BBQ burgers and hot dogs, welcoming the neighborhood to Open House Ministries.

If you were in our neighborhood on August 11th, you might have heard praise music being broadcast by WayFM filling the air or picked up the inviting aroma of burgers and hot dogs sizzling on our grills. Staff and volunteers came together for a busy day of outreach, blessing our neighborhood friends and people who traveled across town for the event.

Nearly 600 guests enjoyed the BBQ, ate popcorn, cotton candy, and ice cream during the block party. Twenty-five organizations filled the multi-purpose gym and parking lot, sharing information on health and wellness, social service opportunities, and helping guests make vital connections to local resources. The Humane Society for Southwest Washington provided preventative care to a variety of pets, including one rabbit, and two talented hair dressers were kept busy giving free haircuts. The dunk tank had a workout as kids and adults took turns practicing their aim, dropping staff members into chilly water. *(Continued)*



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

You Have Been Blessed to Bless

Ever responded to someone waving only to realize the person wasn't waving to you? It's embarrassing, and I've done it more times than I'd like to admit. Yet this embarrassment introduces an interesting question, "How do you know when something is for you?"

I can remember a moment when I entered my grandmother's kitchen and saw a fresh plate of home-made cookies, and I told her, "Grandma, I'd love to have some of your cookies today, but I'm really full from lunch." Her words, while gentle, hit me like a bucket of ice water. "Oh, honey," she said to me, "those cookies are for neighbors of mine when I see them later."

Why did I think those cookies were for me? I could try and justify it by citing precedent. However, the truth is less pretty. I'm selfish. And well, it's hard not to be as humans. As David Foster Wallace points out, "Everything in my own immediate experience supports my deep belief that I am the absolute center of the universe, the most real, most vivid and important person in existence. We rarely talk about this sort of natural, basic self-contentedness because it's so socially repulsive, but it's pretty much the same for all of us, deep down." *(Continued)*

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER (CONT.)

It is our default setting, hard-wired into our boards at birth. Think about it: There is no experience you've had that you were not at the absolute center of." Wallace is not trying to excuse our selfish impulses as much as expose them.

I often hear the Spirit of God speaking through Scripture, exposing my selfish impulses. Like the gentle yet jolting words of my grandmother, God helps me see a world bigger than myself. A world where the good thing God is doing in my life is not for my ultimate blessing but for others to be blessed.

God spoke similar words to Abraham in Genesis 22. Abraham and his wife Sarah desperately wanted children and sought the Lord for their request. When the Lord responds, he leads them to a new perspective. The Lord tells Abraham, "through your offspring, all nations on earth will be blessed." Abraham was blessed to be a blessing.

Paul wrote similar words in 2 Corinthians 9:11 when he tells the church, "You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous in every way." Or, as a friend of mine says, "be a pipe, not a bucket." Buckets are designed to hold onto things, and pipes allow things to flow through them.

So, how do you know when something is for you? When it comes to the gifts and blessings of God, the answer always seems to be: you have been blessed to bless. Go and be a blessing. ● *Chaplain Jon Nichols*

SAVE THE DATE AND DONATE

GIVE MORE 24!

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

Thursday, September 22

Mark your calendar for this year's non-profit fundraiser. You can help bring hope to families rebuilding their lives at Open House Ministries. Please share our fundraising link with your family and friends, and support families in need. You will be blessed. www.givemore24.org/organizations/open-house-ministries Thanks!

GENEROSITY RISING



GRACIOUS GIVING

Maximize Your Giving

There are many ways to support Open House Ministries (OHM) and its efforts to help families get back on their feet with lasting solutions for our homeless population. We have many generous donors that support us with outright cash gifts and donations for our residents and thrift store. Many of you have supported OHM with non-cash gifts.

When you explore other ways to give your assets, you may be able to increase your impact and experience personal tax savings.

Some examples and options include:

- Adding OHM to your will or trust
- Individual Retirement Account (IRA)
- Real Estate
- Business interests
- Life insurance
- Appreciated assets like stocks and bonds
- Personal property
- Vehicles

If you would like to discuss any of these options please contact Jean at 360-737-0300 or email Ross at ross.merritt@sheltered.org. ●

BLOCK PARTY & RESOURCE FAIR (CONTINUED)



Residents at Open House Ministries walked in a fashion show, modeling a full range of clothing from Secondhand Solutions thrift store. Staff and guests joined together singing out worship songs, giving thanks to God for the opportunity to show love and encouragement to people living in our neighborhood. We are grateful to everyone who participated and supported the block party and resource fair after the two-year break. It was a great blessing. ●



SHELTER NEEDS

- Bottled water
- Paper towels
- Clorox wipes
- 8.5 x 11 Copier paper
- Pull ups of all sizes

TOURS & TALKS

Want to see Open House Ministries up close? First Friday tours are back! Noon to 1 pm Contact us for a tour at events@sheltered.org



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