



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

Connections

September 2025

COMMUNITY BLOCK PARTY OUTREACH

Constructing Community at the OHM Block Party and Resource Fair



Clark County Rotary Club helped make the BBQ a savory success. Rotary members donated to the BBQ and worked alongside our great team of volunteers, serving over 900 meals to people at the event.

Road construction didn't detour the fun on August 14th at this year's block party and resource fair. Neighbors and friends joined us for barbequed hamburgers, hot dogs, ice cream treats, popcorn and cotton candy. More than 50 organizations were on campus, sharing information and services with visitors. Positive Life Radio kept gospel



Staff and volunteers from the Humane Society for Southwest Washington served guest's pets with preventative care, shots, and supplies.



The Good News Team from Vancouver Church brought their Yum! Truck, sharing gospel messages and yummy ice cream treats.



Morning DJs, Chris Gilbreth and Liesl Vistaunet, connected with block party guests. music playing while guests enjoyed the carnival on West 12th Street.



A fashion show featuring clothing from our thrift store, Revival House, and bicycles from Wheel House bicycle shop entertained guests, inviting them to visit our new stores at OHM West and enjoy a refreshing drink from The House Coffee Shop.
(Continued)

FUNDRAISER FUN

**GIVE
MORE 24!**

A GREATER VANCOUVER CHAMBER PROGRAM



OPEN HOUSE MINISTRIES
Is teaming up with
Red Robin to raise funds
during **GIVEMORE 24!**

YOU CAN HELP!
DINE IN OR TAKE OUT
A MEAL

Red Robin will donate 20%
of the sale to
Open House Ministries

ALL DAY
Thursday, September 25th

Red Robin

- Visit Red Robin at the Grand Central Center location on Columbia House Blvd. Vancouver
- Tell your server you're there for **GIVE MORE 24!**

TOURS & TALKS

Want to see Open House Ministries up close?

Join us for a First Friday Tour
Noon to 1 pm

To sign up, contact us at
events@sheltered.org

More Than We Realize

"What can be done?" and "What can I do?"

These are the two questions I hear most often. Maybe you've asked it too, driving through town, seeing tents and tired faces, wondering with a heavy heart: *Is there anything that can be done?*

I appreciate the honesty behind these questions—both of them. *What can I do?* That's personal. It's about *me*. My life. My choices. *What can be done?*—That's bigger. That's about systems, policies, and structures. Both are important. But they're not the same question.

When it comes to systems... it can feel hopeless. We recognize that one-size-fits-all solutions rarely work. And while we may know what *doesn't* help, the leap from that to knowing *what does* can feel like an unbridgeable chasm. I don't pretend to have all the answers. I'm not writing this to advocate for a policy—I wouldn't even know where to start. But I can speak to what I've seen: how people change.

If you've ever raised a child or walked with someone through a hard season, you already know the shape of this work. At Open House Ministries, yes, we have classes, job training, and counseling. Yet transformation doesn't follow a calendar—it can't be confined to office hours. Personal accountability isn't taught in a one-hour lesson on Thursday afternoons. It's learned in a daily rhythm of small choices, honest conversations, and the steady example of people who stay when things get hard.

Thus, when someone asks me, "What can I do?" I often respond with another question: "How many children could you parent well? How many with high needs? How many if they've experienced trauma and abuse?" I'm guessing the number in your mind got smaller each time.

That's because even the most loving, capable person has limits—and that's okay. I'm not asking to compare our residents to children, and I'm not trying to make you feel small. I'm inviting you to be free from the burden of thinking you have to fix everything alone.

I can't do much as an individual either. But not much is still *something*. And *together*—as a community—we've already done far more than we sometimes realize. Look at this place. Thirty-seven years of faithful ministry. Lives changed. Families restored. That's no small thing.

Even so, Open House Ministries is limited. We serve one corner of the Pacific Northwest. Our waitlist grows. The need exceeds our reach. That's hard to admit—yet it draws us to worship the One whose work is never hindered and whose reach is never short:

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us—to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20–21)

• Chaplain Jon Nichols

The Columbia Play Project brought their house construction kit, and local boy scout troops helped volunteers entertain kids with games and a dunk tank. Guests participating in the construction map game waited for raffle prizes from our stores, gift baskets, gift cards for food, and more!

We are grateful to everyone who participated and helped with the block party. We hope you will join us again next year when the roads on our campus are no longer under construction. •

Special thanks to our staff, volunteers, and the following 2025 Block Party & Resource Fair Sponsors and Supporters:

BSA Troops 320, 393, 5320, Burgerville, Clark County Rotary Club, Columbia Play Project, Franz Bakery, Frito Lay, Home Depot, Humane Society SW, McDonald's, Olive Garden, PepsiCo, Positive Life Radio, The Chef's Store, CostCo, Vancouver Church Yum Truck, Walmart



Executive Director Renee Stevens looks on as Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle proclaims August 14th, 2025 Open House Ministries Day.



MINISTRY BLESSINGS

Over 40 volunteers from Liberty Bible Church joined us on campus for their annual *Liberty on Mission* event. They cleaned, sorted donations, helped prepare for the Christmas Bazaar, and provided

back-to-school clothes and supplies for kids.

We appreciate their amazing support for Open House Ministries, and loved having them join us for chapel on Wednesday. *Thank you all!*



SHELTER NEEDS

Clorox wipes • Paper towels
Deodorant • Kid's shampoo • Baby wash
8.5 x 11 Copy paper • Bottled water
One-pound packages of hamburger



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