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MESSENGER

Helping Families, Transforming Lives



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AUTUMN 2010

Inspired, Motivated, and On Their Way

Andy and Tarah, an attractive young couple, couldn't stop smiling as they talked about their perfect wedding day. "We couldn't have married without My Father's House staff and volunteers," says Tarah. "They gave from the 'Wedding Closet' and even had volunteers provide the flowers, style my hair and help me with my makeup! They did everything that could possibly make the day special. We both cried during the vows. We could hardly believe this opportunity to make our dream come true."

Andy and Tarah know they are meant to be together forever. "When he proposed, I was so happy to say 'yes,'" Tarah gushes. "We've had some great times and some hard times, but through it all we've been best friends." Andy nods in agreement.

Andy and Tarah arrived at MFH feeling battered and exhausted from their homeless experience. After losing their jobs and dealing with one-and-a-half-year-old son Adrian's medical issues, they knew they needed help to get on their feet – to get jobs and housing and on their way in life. "Our family and friends were very supportive and we're so thankful, but we needed something more."

They found that "something more" at MFH. Andy states, "I knew immediately that being at MFH was an undisguised blessing, a total God thing."

Tarah agrees. "Before we got to MFH, I was so stressed and depressed. I cried all the time. But here, I feel like there's hope. My life is so changed. I know God now. I am a better wife and mom after just a few months." Both Andy and Tarah agree that spiritual awakening has been an important part of their experience at MFH.

"I love Genesis Process!" says Tarah. Andy expresses his enthusiasm for the Dave Ramsey Financial Freedom class, calling it "very practical and helpful." Tarah adds, "We are learning so much about ourselves, our relationship, life... and Adrian is so social

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Andy and Tarah are both employed and saving money for their in-the-near-future home. They credit the whole shelter program for the success of their family. "We would both like to go back to school," Andy says, "but survival and stability are our priorities."

Andy reflects on his stay at MFH and sums it up by saying, "It's the inspiration and motivation that comes from the combination of staff, volunteers, classes and activities along with the love of God and people." Tarah interjects, "Thank you so much to the whole community for making MFH such an important part of our lives!"



Join the Community Wide Challenge September 27 - October 1

The Community Effect is a non-profit community collaboration group founded and funded by a local dentist whose vision was create a community wide "week of giving" to benefit local charities in the Gresham area. Uniting business, government, city employees, churches, schools, and residents, the Community Wide Challenge is the first of two events scheduled for 2010. It will support three great Gresham-area charities.

Make a pledge today to join in our challenge! Donate a percentage of your wages or business revenue for one day during the Community Challenge. Or, donate gift certificates to your business (or re-gift a gift card given to you) that can be sold at charity auctions, usually at full face value. Or you could sponsor a fundraising event at your business, church, school, or workplace during the Community Challenge week.

Learn more about The Community Effect and events scheduled for the Community Challenge at www.TheCommunityEffect.org.



Our shelter is full and overflowing with 69 kids and 39 adults!

Wish List

- ☆ **Food Items:** fresh veggies, canned/fresh fruit, meats, milk, eggs, cereal, juice, salad dressing, rice, chili, canned pasta
- ☆ **Clothing Items:** PJs, sizes 2-14; boys' pants & shirts, sizes 8-14
- ☆ **Cleaning Supplies:** to clean glass, hands, dishes and laundry
- ☆ **Paper Products:** including baby wipes and feminine products
- ☆ **Also...** gift cards for printer ink and gas for our van; bus tickets

More info: 503-492-3046

Soccer Camp Scores Big

On a brisk Monday morning, 38 boys and girls piled out of our van onto a soccer field in northeast Portland. Kids from shelters often don't get the chance to go to soccer camp, so the excitement was pretty intense. Many of the 4- to 17-year-olds had never played soccer before. All of them learned things like basic soccer techniques: ball-handling, trapping, and running. And the leaders learned how to keep the attention of fifteen 4- and 5-year-olds!



Over ten dedicated volunteers showed up every day for a week to help the kids learn new skills. Timmy, 9, exclaimed, "I learned how to juggle and how to steal. It was awesome!" His sister, 12, said, "I learned that you shouldn't head the ball with the top of your head, just the front."

Every child received a water bottle, T-shirt, and towel, and was awarded a personal soccer medal at the end of the week at a celebration marked with pizza and a team photo. Special thanks to John who headed up the volunteers, awards and fun!

from the Director's Chair



FROM INSIDE THE WALLS...

Recently I was invited to Coffee Creek Correctional Facility to accept school supplies from LIFT, a transitional program for the women there. LIFT stands for Living In Freedom Today, and requires, among other things, service to the community. So, on Friday, Sept. 3, two of us went to the prison, excited to receive school supplies that we so desperately needed, but a little unsure of what to expect. I have to tell you, I was amazed at how much 40 women could accomplish in gathering, promoting, and purchasing school supplies for our kids going back to school. Even more amazing is that these women did it while in prison.

What an amazing group they are!! They were interested in the shelter, in volunteering and using the skills they'd learned to help others... they were excited to give! More than once I found myself brought to tears to see how generous they were. It was good to see that these women took this task seriously and put everything they had into it.

Upcoming Tours at My Father's House
 Sept. 11, 10 a.m.
 Oct. 9, 10 a.m.
 Nov. 6, 2 p.m.
 No tours in December



My thought is this: if incarcerated women could accomplish this much in prison, how much more will they accomplish when they are out! How much more can YOU accomplish, living right here in this community? It's time to take the big step. Join us for a house tour and volunteer training! It's so good to give!

~Cathe
 Cathe Wiese, Executive Director

Great Events in the Community to Support My Father's House

Sept. 27 - Oct. 1
The Community Effect
see back page

Oct. 16
Phonics Phactory 5k Run

Nov. 12
Multnomah Falls Lodge Presents "A Vintner's Tour"

10 Year Anniversary Celebration Dinner



Has it been a decade *already*?? Join us to celebrate ten years of serving homeless families in the Portland Metropolitan area!
Save the Date: January 7, 2011
Hosts and sponsors needed!

MFH can Win \$250,000 With Your Votes

My Father's House has applied for a \$250,000 grant from the Pepsi Refresh Project. The Project requests "ideas" for making a positive impact, then puts them up for vote. Vote by texting 102474 to PEPSI (73774) (standard text messaging rates apply)



or vote online at <http://pep.si/chIdr7>. The grant will help support our new Stepping Stone continued housing apartments. Vote as often as you can - voting ends September 30!

Thank You!

THANK YOU CORY AND ANGELA COATES for sponsoring our "Day at the Park" and to everyone who made it possible for our residents to attend free. 400 supporters and residents gathered at the PGE Park on Aug. 18 to watch the Beavers' game. Sponsor Cory Coates had the privilege of throwing out the first pitch, and Dan Wiese sang the national anthem. It was a great evening!



THANK YOU TO THE EMPLOYEES OF NW SELF STORAGE (storage units throughout the Portland Metro area) for your service and GREAT food at "Celebrate You". Over 400 people attended the open house/BBQ on July 18 and took



THANK YOU GRESHAM ROTARY CLUB for not only sending 15 of our kids to Camp Collins, but also for purchasing clothing and sleeping bags for them! We appreciate how much you care for your community!! Also, thank you to Bob Avila and Bess Wills of Gresham Ford (The Dealer With a Heart) for taking our kids shopping then out for TCBY yogurt. We had a blast!

