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MESSENGER

Helping Families, Transforming Lives



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WINTER 2016

15 Years! Humble Duplex to a Big, Big House

By Cathe Weise, Executive Director

January 2, 2001 was Grand Opening Day. 15 years ago, My Father's House was finally open. It had been a long year of hard work and a lot of prayer. Then, it finally happened... *we're open!*

In the year preceding our opening, co-founder Ray Morris and I were busy... raising funds, visiting local pastors, talking to community members, applying for our non-profit status, establishing incorporation, and gathering volunteers and a Board of Directors. Then there was the property search, negotiating the duplex, cleaning, painting, and gathering of household supplies. More than 100 people came out to fix up that old duplex. Five families moved in, most of whom had heard about us through the local newspaper.

I remember thinking, "What if nobody comes?" That seems so funny to me now, but then all I knew for sure is that I was following my heart of what I knew God was calling me to do. Those first five families quickly became members of my family. I love them all and try to keep in touch as much as I can.

Even then, we knew we didn't want to get stuck at the duplex but had bigger dreams. After years of saving and planning we built what we fondly dubbed the "big house". The nickname came from



the popular song by Audio Adrenaline, "Big House", which quickly became our theme song. We still play it at many of our fundraising events. The entire project was \$3.9 million. I don't know how that happened, except to say, "It's a God thing!" No government funding and not a lot of grants, but rather a whole lot of community pulling together created the miracle of My Father's House, a dream that became a reality.



The past 15 years have been an amazing journey. Being here in this great East County community is amazing and a blessing. We couldn't

have done it without everyone giving, serving, and pulling together.

All I can say is thank you, and I'm looking forward to another 15 years of serving together as we continue our mission of "Helping Families and Transforming Lives".

Gresham Women of Elks Charity Fundraiser

Supporting My Father's House,
Zarephath Kitchen, and
St. Henry's Day Shelter

Raffle

Prizes Include

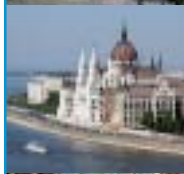
- \$250 Fred Meyer Gift Card
- \$150 Walmart Gift Card
- \$100 Walmart Gift Card

Tickets just \$5 each or 4 for \$15

Purchase tickets at MBank
1290 NE Burnside Rd, Gresham

Drawing on February 26, 2016

Need not be present to win



Bucket List Travel Tours Presents
CRUISE FOR A CAUSE

The Blue Danube Discovery

October 15 - 25, 2016... 11 days!

Budapest, Vienna, Passau, Regensburg,
Durnstein, Roth, Nuremberg, and Prague

Price includes \$1000
donation **plus** a \$1000 matching gift
to My Father's House!

Deluxe State Room \$3795 ppdo
Panorama Suite \$4695 ppdo

Includes land/cruise, port charges, meals and accommodations
as specified in the itinerary (ten breakfasts, seven lunches, eight
dinners), sightseeing and services of a professional cruise director.

Contact Sue Piazza
503-926-4419
BucketListTravelTours.com

Available for purchase until March 31, 2016 or when rooms are sold out

Volunteer Spotlight: Ken Heriford

By Sara Green, Volunteer Manager

Ken Heriford has been involved with My Father's House since we first opened in 2001. Ken

volunteered with Cathie at East Hill Church when the idea of MFH was born. He has contributed in many different areas since the beginning, and for the past two years has been volunteering in the Computer Lab on Thursday mornings. He brings a wealth of information and life experience with him, having pastored several churches, managed Camp Crestview, and worked as Head Custodian with the Centennial School District before he retired.

Ken enjoys being involved in the ministry of My Father's House. He has outlived his two wonderful wives. His first wife was honored with a leaf on our Wall of Faith. He and his second wife volunteered together at the duplex. He was blessed with three wonderful daughters like Carolyn, pictured



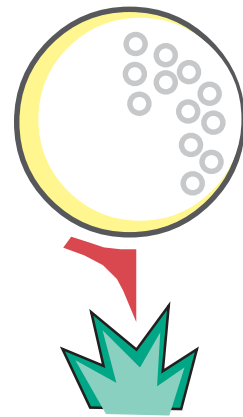
here with Ken on a work day. They have all served at My Father's House in several different capacities.

Ken's favorite part about being at My Father's House is seeing the people get all the help that they can, and using that education to change their lives.

One of the things we enjoy about having Ken on our team is that he makes himself available to help us with many other projects throughout the year. He is here when we have a large mailing to do, or a work day in the summer. And every year he has been here with a team from East Hill Church for their yearly Community Care Day.

We appreciate Ken and are so thankful he is a part of our MFH Family. If you are interested in finding out about different volunteer opportunities, please contact Sara at 503-492-3046 x224, or sara@familyshelter.org.

My Father's House announces our...



8th Annual Golf-2-Give Tournament

Plan to join us Monday, July 11, 2016, for a wonderful day of golf at beautiful Willamette Valley Country Club in Canby! This is our 8th year and it keeps getting better

and better! We have lots of fun games, prizes, silent and live auction items, plus lunch and dinner for you to enjoy. Sign up as a team or individual. And we fill up, so don't delay!

Don't golf? You can still help out by providing auction items, sponsoring various holes and games, or perhaps paying for a team to play! We also sponsor a Kids' Clinic for kids in our shelter to learn about the game, with the club pros giving them a lesson. You can help by donating gifts for these kids.

This is an exciting and fun way to help raise funds for the programs at My Father's House. Please contact Sara at sara@familyshelter.org at 503-492-3046 x224 for more information.



Kids from MFH learning the sport of golf

Education, Support, Sharing

A Program Update

Stepping Stone Apartments are considered transitional housing, but it is our desire to create a program that provides a **transformational** housing experience for 12 families at a time. This means that during their year in the program, we continue to build on skills they have gained while at MFH, such as budgeting, relationship skills, and parenting. But we also want to empower them with skills that can help them gain better paying jobs and inner strength. We started off offering Excel and Word classes, as well as onsite GED/high school diploma classes. Now we're working on gaining higher education opportunities for the residents. Sometimes it's slow-going, fulfilling our dreams of more education, but we're getting there!

We also believe a cornerstone to success is a supportive community atmosphere. Once a month we take a break from our classes and have Community Night. We share a potluck meal and "play" together. Last month, while the men took a focus class, the women – having just completed a stress class – had a pampering party.

We also strive to have our families become contributing members of society, instilling them with a sense of gratitude and compassion toward others. Several weeks ago, we did a service project for a local day shelter for the homeless. We packaged homemade laundry soap with encouraging notes for the homeless to use at the shelter's laundry facilities. The families enjoyed spending time giving back to the community, and we are already planning our next service project.

If you are interested in teaching a class or helping with Community Night at SSA, contact Heather at Heather@familyshelter.org or 503-492-3046 x229.



Memory Book Club Helps Heal the Hurt in Kids' Hearts

As the director of My Father's House, I am always looking for ways to enhance the lives of our families. Homeless families deal with a lot of loss and disappointments. Programs for the adults are abundant; but when you start looking for ways to help kids deal with loss, there's not much out there.

When I heard about Memory Books for Children, I was really excited. I read over what author, Tamara Faris had written (see memorybooks4children.com), and I wanted the Memory Books here at My Father's House. I wanted our children's lives to be blessed, changed and encouraged. The theme of Memory Books, "I am Somebody", caught my attention right away. It wasn't long before our Memory Book Club was formed.

The childish chant, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me", couldn't be less true. Take 7-year-old Davey for instance. He knows how words can hurt. The hurtful words spoken by his father the last time he saw him were, "You were a mistake, I wish you were never born!" That stuck with Davey, until his experience in the Club. He told me, "I am not a mistake, I am somebody. Jesus tells me so."

We're happy to continue our Memory Book Club with the hundreds of kids who come to My Father's House. It brings wholeness and wellness to their broken hearts, teaching them *they are somebody!*

SIXTH ANNUAL SHRED DAY

at

COURTYARD FOUNTAINS

Saturday, March 26
10:00 am - 2:00 pm

AccuShred NW

Protect your identity and de-clutter your home or office at the same time by shredding sensitive documents at our Sixth Annual Shred Day. Bring up to four banker size boxes and watch AccuShred Northwest safely destroy them before your eyes! Professional shredding and delicious refreshments are complimentary. However, donations of any amount will be gratefully accepted to benefit My Father's House.

Hosted by Courtyard Fountains at 1545 SE 223rd Ave, Gresham.

