

BLANCHET HEATING UP



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Summer 2015

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A note from Executive Director, Greg Baker...

During a staff session at the Blanchet House the call came in from my daughter Kimberly that our grandson, Trey Flowers, was very ill with a sick liver. I was totally shocked with the news and had a difficult time believing that something like this could happen to such a healthy, growing boy. I alerted family, friends and then started praying. Looking at Trey, anyone would assume he was fine. He did not appear sick, feeble, feverish, or that he was predisposed to any of the garden variety of illnesses that a healthy 15 year old athletic boy would ordinarily have. Yet, in a short period of time, the facts would reveal just the opposite and matters were going from bad to worse quickly.

My first meeting with the Doernbecher medical staff was an eye opener. The doctor, who was very cautious about discussing the prognosis, provided an outline of possibilities to our family. The array of medical terms and measurements that were thrown around were certainly beyond me. They were terms that described the good and bad with respect to the condition of Trey's liver and it became clear to me that even the doctors themselves could not identify exactly what was wrong with Trey and his liver. It seemed that in no time our grandson's condition became worse and he crashed through the accepted norms of the Doernbecher liver team. As quickly as Trey had arrived at the Doernbecher hospital he was being life flighted to the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford in Palo, Alto California. Our prayers increased as did our fears. I sat there watching as a frightened mother whose only child's life was being threatened, constantly wondering if Trey would beat the time that was ticking against his favor. He needed a liver transplant, but the question was, will he get a liver in time?? I found myself in tears for my grandson and daughter. Here I was helpless against a virus that not even the experts understood. None of these thoughts helped. Prayer was all we had and needed.

Trey arrived at Stanford on Thursday, he was listed on the donor list on Sunday and by Tuesday the donated liver of a 17 year old daughter of grieving, yet grace-filled parents was offered for Trey. This liver meant that Trey had a good chance of surviving. Within the next eight hours Trey was operated on successfully and his old liver was replaced by a new one thanks to the gift of life from that 17 year old young woman; we hope to thank for her sacrifice someday. The mere thought of the family who lost a loved one at such an early age is mindboggling to me. Yet, their awareness- making her organs available to save another's life is equally amazing. My grandson is alive thanks to this young lady's sacrifice and her family's bravery. We are all extremely grateful for this gift of life. When Trey was able to talk with me after his surgery I asked what him what was the most important thing he remembers about it all. He replied "Prayer works Papa". That says it all as far as I am concerned. To all who helped with prayers and hope including the Doernbecher Medical staff, Stanford Medical team, Riikka Salonen, Central Catholic High School, the Blanchet Board, staff and family as well as the hundreds of families and well-wishers, a tremendous heartfelt thanks to each of you and remember, **PRAYER WORKS.**



Trey sitting in a handcrafted, personalized Adirondack chair made by Tim Barrett and the Woodshop crew at the Blanchet Farm. In Trey's words, "This chair is my new throne, thank you!"

Food for Thought:

"He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint." — Isaiah 40:29-31

LENDING A HELPING HAND SINCE 1952.

Blanchet CASE MANAGEMENT

The Blanchet House case management team has been busy working to refine and develop several key programmatic components over the past few months, in addition to meeting with their full and eager caseload of guests both at the house and at the farm.

The Men's Corner Blanchet's Featured Resident

Jason Spencer - Continued...

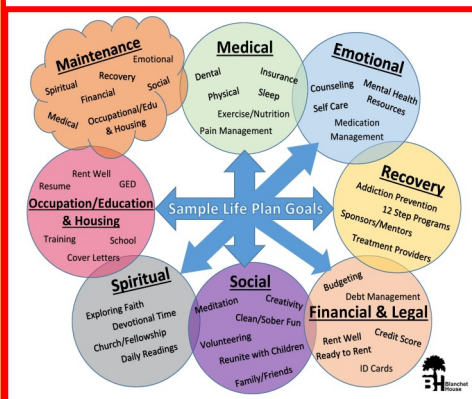
"Some of these questions you sent my way were difficult to think about and figure out how I wanted to answer. Living in this house is difficult for me. As we talked about last time, I feel as if I approach a lot of new situations as a young boy; awkward, uncomfortable, and figuring things out for the first time. But what I have come to realize in the months that I have been here is that restoration for me is growth, not change. And my personal growth is through struggle, pain and uncomfortability. Restoration is an awkward place, but there is an insertion of always being present to your feelings. The restoration is not in passing the pain, but in addressing it head on and I set that bar very high for myself. Because it's not about grasping that bar, it's about always reaching for it.

I have taken some really great steps in the time that I've been here. I have an amazing girlfriend who supports and believes in me, a solid community in my church that loves me and a ton of outside volunteer jobs I am doing that help me expand my network in this community. To me, community is how you practice having healthy relationships. I constantly make myself available and I am growing into who I was created to be.

I'm working on the spiritual exercises of Loyola with Father Gary. I've realized that God's love is through the hearts of others and we are all blessed with love, pain, fear, hope. I cannot stress enough that this house is hard. I came here so that God would show me what it looks like to be restored and I made the choice to let Him guide me on this journey. Being in this house and having a staff position has afforded me the time to have laser focus on ripping up all of the hard stuff in my life. And not only do I get to work on myself, but I get to engage with the people we serve here at Blanchet. To me, it is all about that moment of engagement. We feed people, but we also nourish them. We get our shoes dirty, but we don't think we're changing the world. We're not saving Portland, we're feeding people and nobody does it like we do. That sincerity is huge for me. The gift of this program is that I have had complete autonomy to work MY program. I came in here alone, but I'm not going to leave alone. Blanchet is an amazing gift from God and I can't thank enough all the people involved in giving me this chance for restoration. This far exceeded what I thought it would ever look like."

A few updates from Ms. Vicky Spear and Ms. Kristi Katzke include:

- ◇ Case management has been organizing guest feedback meetings from the men at the house and farm in order to continue to review and improve the final draft of the new **life plan**. This life plan document will be implemented in the next quarter to ensure that guests at Blanchet are preparing both mentally and physically for their transition after Blanchet.
- ◇ **Peer Support programs** are being explored and researched regularly in hopes of developing a Blanchet specific curriculum in the future.



A big thank you to Fumiyo Nishimoto, Angel Prater, and Janie Marsh for helping us in this process!

◇ Five guests went through panel interviews, completed all the required paperwork and moved to the **4th floor Transitional Housing Program**

◇ A guest at the farm received subsidized housing through grant resources accessed through mental health services and the housing authority

Traveling Nurse's Service to Others

Mary Grace McDermott first began serving the guests of the Blanchet House of Hospitality from the very beginning of the organizations inception in 1952. As a young nursing student, she was asked by founders and fellow classmates to help in serving Portland's needy and homeless population. All while carrying a heavy course schedule at the University of Portland, Mary Grace embraced this request and started serving breakfast downtown at 5:30 am.

Mary Grace graduated with a degree in nursing in 1953 and in 1975, received her Master's Degree in Public Health from the prestigious Tulane University. She returned to Portland in 1977 and began working at St. Vincent's Hospital in NW Portland all the while keeping her service at Blanchet close to her heart.

Mary Grace has had many adventures and travels over the years, including a trip to Costa Rica with the Peace Corps to help those in need. Upon return, Mary Grace picked right back up with her volunteer service at Blanchet in the late 1990's, serving both breakfast and lunch one day a week. We are blessed to have Mary Grace serving alongside us, now providing foot care to the men in the house on a weekly basis. Not only has she made a lifetime commitment to service, but she has approaches each day with an infectious spunk and humor.

The Blanchet is unbelievably blessed to have Mary Grace and a dose of her special wit to the men. Recently, we have been missing Mary Grace's spunk and humor as she has been under the weather. We hope you will join us in praying for Mary Grace's speedy recovery so she can return to what she does so well...caring for others!



Mary Grace—A legacy of service

July Volunteer SHOUT OUT

A giant thank you to **The Red Lizards** for their outstanding service, time, energy and love for Blanchet and the people we serve.

Blanchet *HOUSE*

The past quarter here at Blanchet has been full of exciting new changes on the residential front. Since the last newsletter we have accomplished the following milestones:

- ◊ Refined and finished the 4th floor transitional housing agreement
- ◊ Moved five guests into the 4th floor program and implemented new policies and procedures to keep them engaged in giving to Blanchet all while working full time jobs in the Portland community
- ◊ Refined codes of conduct, employee/guest policies, and created residential and kitchen manuals
- ◊ Finalized crisis management plans and provided AED & First Aid certification for all
- ◊ Partnered with Cascade AIDS Project to provide HIV and Hepatitis C Training
- ◊ Acknowledged and awarded 90 day, 6 month, and year sobriety certificates to men in the program.

Come help us serve more than a hot meal, help us serve hope. For volunteer opportunities, contact our house manager at 503.226.3911 or darnold@blanchethouse.org.

Monday - Saturday Breakfast: 6:00am - 8:00am Lunch: 11:00am - 1:00pm

Dinner: 4:30pm - 6:30pm

Blanchet *FARM*

The Blanchet Farm is excited to be spending the beginning part of the summer doing some much needed structural maintenance! A giant thank you to **Malarkey Roofing** for donating 62 squares of roofing and **Oregon Roofers Supply** for providing delivery trucks and labor to help the Blanchet farm finish the woodshop, dorm house and main house roofs.

We will also be doing some siding this summer along with gutter and concrete repair. It is truly amazing the different skillsets, experience, and knowledge of the men who come to the farm and help with all of these repairs. Their work here at the farm helps build self-esteem and confidence, all the while instilling an importance for service. The men are doing good for others, themselves and the Blanchet organization, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment and also helps build a sense of good pride and identity. The better we feel about ourselves, the more likely we are to have a positive view of our life and future goals.

Our garden is doing great, the pigs are getting bigger and soon we will have about 50 more egg laying chickens in addition to our five baby ducks this past spring.



Woodshop Creation of July 2015

Handcrafted Bowls, Plates, and Vases by Tim Barrett

Tim is our Blanchet Farm Woodshop Supervisor and not only designs and builds handcrafted furnishings, but also creates beautiful wooden pieces of art.

His process...

1. Find the right piece of wood (with grain going the right way)
2. Rough it to about 10% of the finished size and then let it dry
 - The wood dries more stable (without splitting) if it can dry from the inside and the outside at the same time.
3. Weigh the bowl blank each week until it stops losing weight
4. Once it's dry Tim can do the finish turning. After it's finished turned and sanded he then decides what kind of coating he wants to use on it
5. Tim regularly uses either oil or polyurethane finishes

Big thank you to **Greg Mockford** and **Karen Story** for a 6 inch jointer and a mortising machine! And thank you to **Dave and Louise Gleason** for a new lathe! Both were needed and are now being put to great use!



Blanchet House Wish List

For the Men: Jeans W32-38, L32-36, Used Carhartt Gear (all sizes), new boxer shorts (M-XXL), gently used polo shirts/graphic tee shirts (M-XL), winter coats, basketball shorts (all sizes), garment steamer, small musical instruments (tambourine, rattles, cow bells)

Sponsorship Opportunities:

Gym memberships, monthly bus passes/tickets, tickets to shows, games, museums, funding for certifications, license/ID renewals

Woodshop Supplies: primer, wood stains, outdoor paint, paint brushes, nails, screws, bolts, lumber, sandpaper, etc. to allow training in the woodshop.

Farm Supplies: Garden tools, power trimmers, old usable paint, hand tools, or other tools for landscaping and maintaining the working 63 acre farm.

Organizational Needs:

Energy efficient used car, industrial letter folder/stuffer, security cameras for Farm

Food Supply Needs:

Coffee (ground or whole bean), Sugar, spices (any and all).

Stay up to date as our needs are always changing.

Please visit us at:

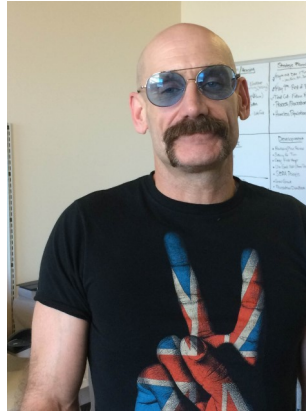
blanchethouse.org/wishlist

To place and order email rsears@blanchethouse.org

Blanchet *WELCOMES*

Mr. René Pugmire (Residential Program and Transitional Housing Manager) —

René was born in Palm Springs, California although his family moved to the Seattle area just before his eighth birthday. He was raised outside of Seattle in a town called Mountlake Terrace and his youth was spent being very active in school, sports and church activities. René's curiosity of the world was sparked in his junior year abroad in Mexico as a Rotary Exchange Student. At 19, he backpacked his way through Europe, Egypt and Turkey and two years later moved to Hawaii to work mainly in the hospitality industry. From there, René relocated to New York City and then ended up going to College in Wilmington, Delaware and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He worked for a non-profit dedicated to HIV prevention as a State Hotline Director. Most recently, René was the Marketing Director of an audience development company that produces Broadway and off-Broadway shows. He has one son, Aeon, who is sixteen years old and lives in Wilmington, Delaware and he is his pride and joy. René is very grateful for this opportunity to be of service to the Blanchet House and to carry its mission; to feed, clothe and shelter the homeless. Having personally benefited from this program, he regularly expresses his commitment, investment and dreams for Blanchet. He is especially invested in its continued success and feels as if it is an honor to be here.



Summertime pictures of
Blanchet Farm - Carlton, OR



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www.blanchethouse.org

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