

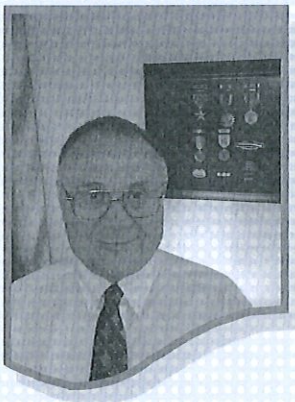
NEWS

March 2023

→ MINISTRY UPDATE ←

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UPDATE



We have almost finished eleven apartments, with half of them occupied. Our goal is to finish one new apartment every two weeks. That, of course, will depend on the flow of money and labor.

With most places, the starting price for labor is \$14 per hour, so it is very hard to get dependable labor with any knowledge to work at prices we can afford. My guess is that inflation will not come down without a recession. Anyway, keep us in your prayers. A large building has been purchased for pennies on the dollar. We are in the process of obtaining financing to get the building erected, along with a maintenance building, parking, a fence, and a gate. The building will have most of our offices and counseling rooms, as well as a chapel. This will get us out of the tent we have been using for church services for the last fifteen years. The building will also have a storm shelter big enough for all of our residents. Their offerings have made this possible without outside money. I still



Offering a hand up, not a hand out

joe@huminc.org

use donations for a few beds. Your donations are a continued help now and for years to come. We are continuing to work on several projects. The first is another location in, or near, Oklahoma City. The second is a larger and safer location for our SSI guys at the Love Foundation near Chandler. The third project is our effort to locate a place in Arkansas to house the many Arkansas guys we have accepted but can't come here because we only have tents to house them. There are many, many Arkansas offenders who have been paroled, but they can't be released until they have a green zone in which they can live. They are "free," but they have to live in prison. We have had a lot of good men from Arkansas come through our program. I have noticed that there are quite a bit of mental health problems there, as is true of the men here in Oklahoma. Fourth, we need a location near Tulsa as soon as possible. Oklahoma is a religious state in the Bible Belt, but not a godly one. Tulsa is at the center of religion. Teaching "The Teachings of Jesus Christ" and practicing them are two different things. The latter has been set aside. The church and the world have become pretty much the same in objectives and in principal. We are getting very ripe for the Antichrist. We want to introduce to you our chaplains at Hand Up 2 (our campus on Shields Boulevard). This is the park where married couples live. Mike and Carrie Chorast have been the chaplains there for at least six months. We believe that

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program will flourish in the months to come. Pray for them as they shepherd this group of people. We want to express our most sincere thanks to the Sindt family for their generous donations long after their son was moved from Hand Up to a nursing home in Kansas. He and they will never be forgotten. Please read the note they sent with their most recent donation.

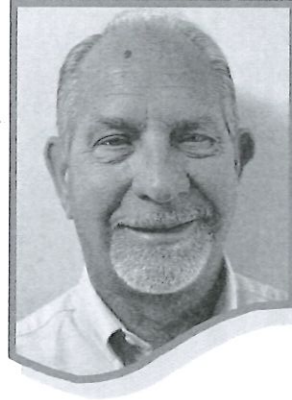
— *David Nichols,*
President & CEO

Letter

I am grateful for the ministry of Hand Up. It helped our son so much. He is still in the nursing home in Logan, Kansas. He shares his faith and regularly attends the Bible studies and church services. Your ministry was such a blessing to us, Shannon's family, to see such a change in our son. He was an adopted son. He came to us when he was three years old. His mom didn't want him, and his dad kept the other children, except another son we also adopted. He was nine years old. Both boys had lots of problems in their life, even after coming to live with us. Our prayers were answered when Shannon came to Hand Up Ministries. He still reads the Daily Bread

devotion. It is one of my favorite devotionals also. Thanks so much, and we pray daily for your ministry.

Sincerely,
Jolene Sindt



As usual, there are a lot of things going on at Hand Up Ministries. We have some new staff in management. These new members of our staff are doing great, and we will be introducing them to you in the near future. Hand Up is in the middle of construction to create new apartments, and several of those projects are very near completion. We will have at least five new beds available before the next newsletter. With the new staff we have, Hand Up has been able to give more attention to our residents and coach them along to reach their best success. We are networking with several new groups and agencies who want to assist our men. These groups include EXandUs and SA groups. Oklahoma State senators have reached out to us to offer some assistance with finding possible grants. The path for Hand Up Ministries and David Nichols, our leader, has been hard and treacherous at times, but I believe these are our days to shine. Great things are close by on the horizon. Thank you for your support and interest in our prison aftercare ministry.

— *Ray Riddle,*
Oklahoma Director

TESTIMONES

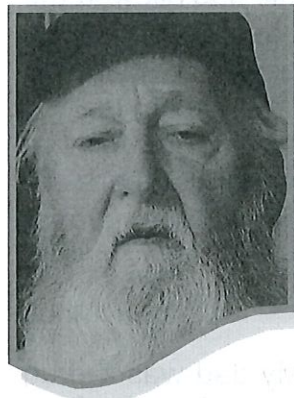
I grew up in a stable, loving family. There was never any kind of abuse in my family. There was no physical abuse, nor was there substance abuse. I started experimenting with alcohol and tobacco when I was 14, and I tried marijuana when I was 16. At 17, I tried cocaine. I continued living that lifestyle into my thirties. When I was growing up, my parents were always trying to instill in me the importance of

God and attending church, but I was a teen and I thought I knew everything. I came to find out that I knew nothing. I was young, dumb, and rebellious. It wasn't until I was in the county jail that I started to understand who Jesus was. I started attending church services on a regular basis, and I enrolled in two Bible study courses. One of these courses was a correspondence course, and the other was at the jail. I loved attending church and learning how the stories in the Bible made me feel. I never felt this type of love before then. I was on a journey of discovering who Jesus was and who I was. The more I learned about who Jesus was, the more I loved Him. The more I learned about myself, the more I disliked myself. As my trial date drew closer, I became very nervous and fearful. I felt more alone than I had ever felt. It was at that moment that my thoughts turned to Jesus on the cross. He must felt alone when He cried, "My God, my God, when have you forsaken me?" That was when I fell to my knees and begged forgiveness for all of my sins. I asked Jesus into my heart to be my Lord and Savior. I felt like a fountain had sprung from the top of my head. I finally understood the meaning of "my cup runneth over." I feel blessed in many ways. Hand Up Ministries is just one of the many blessings God has bestowed upon me.

Anonymous

I was born in San Mateo, California in 1957, but we moved to San Jose when I was one or two. I have two brothers and one sister. I was dyslexic, and I flunked first grade. No one knew how to treat dyslexia then. My family never went to church, but my Mormon neighbors invited me to go to their church. I am not a Mormon, but it was the Mormons who first told me about God. I had a rough childhood. We moved to Ponca City, Oklahoma in 1968. We moved to Oklahoma because my dad abandoned our family. My mom had a brother who lived in Ponca City, and we moved to Oklahoma to live with him. We were poor. My mom got a job at Conoco's headquarters in Ponca City. I struggled in school, and I quit school in eighth grade. I took drugs and smoked marijuana. I fell in with the wrong crowd, and I ran the streets. I was arrested for marijuana when I was 15, and I went to a juvenile home. I was arrested

for burglary when I was 20, and I was incarcerated for 90 days. The remainder of my sentence was suspended. I became a carpenter, and I got married. My wife already had two kids, and we had two kids together. We moved to Kansas City in the early eighties. I stayed out of trouble for seventeen years. My wife and I divorced in 1993. We were living in Virginia Beach. I returned to Ponca City. My grandfather died, and I inherited \$30,000. I got back into drugs, alcohol, and fast women. I was arrested in 2008, and I was incarcerated for eight months. I continued using meth. I was working at Tyson Foods, but the plant closed and I lost my job. I started selling meth, and I was arrested for meth in 2013. I cried out to God in the back seat of a police car, and God came into to my heart right then and there. I knew I was saved, and I fell in love with God. I was 56 years old. I was sentenced to supervised probation. I fell back into using meth, and I didn't fulfill my probation obligations. Six years passed, and I was living at my mom's house. I got pneumonia, and I didn't use meth while I was sick. I finally went to the emergency room. They gave me morphine at the hospital for three days. I didn't have insurance, and I left the hospital. I was delirious, and I decided to self-medicate with whiskey. I blacked out after a few drinks of whiskey, and I attacked my mom. I was arrested for elder abuse, and I was sentenced to five years of incarceration and fifteen years of probation. I got out of prison after two and half years, and I came to Hand Up Ministries in April 2022. Hand Up has been a huge blessing for me. Hand Up is a Christian environment. Hand Up has given me an affordable place to live. I work for Hand Up doing construction, and I receive Social Security. I know God is real. He is my savior.



Randall Fawcett

My early childhood years were good. I grew up in a middle class family. Both of my parents were in the picture, and we had a

stable home. My dad cheated on my mom, and my parents got divorced when I was 11. I started having behavior problems after that, and I began disrespecting both of my parents. I went to live with my grandparents, and they raised me in a Catholic household. It went well until I had to watch my grandpa die of brain cancer when I was 13. That killed me inside, and I rebelled against everyone and hung out with the wrong crowd on the streets. I smoked weed and drank alcohol. I started skipping school, and I got into fights at school. I was expelled from school. I started running with gang members, and I was arrested for strong-armed robbery when I was 14. I spent the remainder of my teen years in juvenile prison, group homes, and foster homes. I engaged in more criminal activity, which led to more criminal charges. I was put into the adult criminal system when I was 16. Life continued like this until I was 26. I got out of prison, and I met a lady with whom I spent the next 14 years. We had five kids together. I got back on drugs, and our relationship ended. I spiraled out of control, and I became too toxic to be around my kids. I went back to prison. I was recommended to Hand Up Ministries by a member of the prison staff. Hand Up has helped strengthen my spiritual beliefs, and Hand Up has also helped me get back on my feet. I would have had no place to go if Hand Up had not accepted me. With their resources and connections, Hand Up has been a great stepping stone, and the people here have led me in the right direction. This has allowed me to gain employment, and I have been able to set some short term goals. I plan on rebuilding relationships I destroyed. I continue to grow with God and learn more about His word. I have learned that there are still good people in the world. We are here for one another.

Anonymous

I had a rough childhood. My dad was a drug addict, and my mom suffered from schizophrenia. I have one brother. My parents divorced when I was 12. We moved to a different city every year. I was raised Pentecostal, but I lost my faith due to

unanswered prayers. I had my own bout with mental illness, but I still got married and bought a house. I was living well. I managed a business, and I had two cars in the driveway. I had a strong support system. I went with my wife to a doctor who convinced us we should use medicinal marijuana. I noticed it affected me differently due to my mental illness, so I would smoke more marijuana to counterbalance the side effects on my mental health. I got to where I was spending hundreds of dollars a week. One day, I decided to take a dose of THC equal to 20 times the recommended dose. In my altered mental state, I committed a crime that I will always regret. While the drug was wearing off, I realized what I had done, and I tried to take my own life. I failed in my attempt to kill myself, so I went to the hospital. I told them to call the police, and I confessed my crime. I was flown to get treatment. I was in a mental ward, but God had people letting me know He was there. He showed me who He was. I was incarcerated for three years, and God protected me the whole time. I never had to fight. I looked for a place to live when I was nearing my release date, and my case manager recommended Hand Up Ministries. Now I am working, and I attend two churches. I always try to follow God's path. Hand Up provides rides and a place to live, and I hope to pay it forward by helping others. Thank God, and thank Hand Up.

Greg Rogers

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

- 4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.
- 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
- 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.
- 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

We appreciate all our partners and donors. It is your support that enables us to assist individuals back into society as new brothers and sisters in Christ.

