

Chimes

April 2018

Welcome Brown Family!

We want to welcome David, his wife Lisa, children Jonathan, Sophia Brown to our Rockland community.

David will become our Discipleship Pastor in May when he graduates from seminary. He is currently completing his Masters of Theology with emphasis in Biblical Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary. In 2016 David received the Nathan D. Meir Award for excellence in servant leadership at this school. He received his Bachelors in History and Minor in English from Texas A & M.

However, in addition to his schooling, David served in the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, began as a Private and ended active service as a Captain. He was deployed three times including two combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan receiving multiple medals and honors for his Service in the Marine Corps.

His professional ministry experience includes his current position as Junior High Director, earlier interning and teaching Youth Ministries and leading as Camp Counselor, all at Faith Bible Church, Dallas.

That was within the church, his Mission experiences took him to Costa Rica, Vietnam, Bulgaria, Belize, Bhutan, India, and Sri Lanka in a variety of service activities: teaching, preaching, setting up VBS, building, training pastors and ministry leaders.

Through the years, his volunteer positions have taken him to Carlsbad, California, Woodbridge, Virginia, College Station, Texas, De Soto Texas in addition to his work in Dallas. He taught Sunday School for 5 year-olds, 2nd & 3rd graders, 5th & 6th graders, Junior High students, and boy's high school.

Now you would think that with all of that, David might not have time to participate in extracurricular activities but just look at what he has done: organized a young men's flight club ministry, managed the Youth Worship team for Faith Bible Church, held a Black Belt in Marine Corps Martial Arts, played on rugby teams at Texas A&M, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, Camp Henson Okinawa.

With all of those accomplishments, David shows his true colors with one of his favorite scriptures is: *"Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture."* – Psalm 100:3

From someone who knows him well, they describe David: *All of his gifts flow from a character consumed with emulating the love, truth and strength of Christ. In all my interactions with David, he has displayed a powerful and dynamic ability to interpret and articulate scripture."*

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David sent this letter to our congregation to be published in Pastor Jim's weekly email to us all. It is worth repeating now:

Dear Rockland Community Church,

Greetings from Dallas Texas! My wife Lisa and I are eager to join you soon and in the meantime, it is my pleasure to share with you a little bit about how being in community has affected my life. Raised by missionary parents, for most of my life I have had consistent community with fellow Christians. In my teen years I discovered the tremendous joy and love that comes with being a part of the Body of Christ. In years since any time I ever moved to a new place it was my top priority to find a good church to fellowship with because I hungered to be in community with fellow members of Christ's body. I had felt and seen the impact of that in places I had been previously.

Jesus has inspired my love for the Church to grow over the years as He teaches me just how much He loves His bride, and as a result it is one of my greatest passions to disciple others in their love not only for Christ but for His Church. I echo the words from the author of Hebrews, "Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." Hebrews 10:24-25.

God bless you, Rockland Community Church! I look forward to getting to know all of you better in the near future!

*Your brother in Christ,
David Brown*



David, Lisa, Jonathan and Sophia Brown

The gift of MOPS

When you see the sign on the church that says “MOPS meets here” ...what do you think is going on?

MOPS stands for Mothers of preschoolers (Children 0 to 6). Yes, it's a strange name, but it describes a welcoming, safe, inviting ministry of Rockland Community Church for moms in the church and in the community. It is for moms of any age, faith or no faith, expecting a first child or mom to many. It is a time and place when moms can come together and be reminded of the importance of the work they are doing as moms, of who they are as women and where they are encouraged to discover who they are as a child of God.

MOPS started in 1973 at a church in Wheat Ridge, Colorado. Seven young moms were challenged by the Family Ministry Director to figure out what would engage them in the church and help them grow through the tumultuous phase of early motherhood. The moms tried many things and finally settled on a format that met their needs. A format that still resonates today. They never thought they were starting anything, but God knew what was happening!

Now, after 45 years, MOPS is an international organization with over 4000 groups, meeting in churches in 47 countries and reaching over 100,000 moms. The universal experience of early mothering brings women together in a global sisterhood that transcends borders, cultures and languages.

The world is changing and yet there are some things that never change. The importance and influence of moms is one of those things!

Moms are raising the next generation and many of them are doing it without the community support or family ties that were common in past eras. Today families are mobile, marriages break, culture intrudes with messages of unrealistic expectations, screen time and social networks seem more connective but leave moms feeling alone and often overwhelmed with the responsibilities they face. In other times, women had their mothers, cousins, sisters, friends who were part of their daily lives and were available to walk with a young mom, especially in the early days of motherhood. From the beginning of time, women have gathered at the well, the quilting circle, the family table. Women have always needed each other. MOPS has rediscovered the back fence or the front porch.

MOPS fosters relationships that lead to transformational conversations. The question: Will you be my friend? Is answered with a resounding YES! Here a mom can find:

- Trusted friends
- Shared life stage common experiences
- Friendships with diverse women coming from all parts of society (Teen to PhD. can bond over the common experience of “terrible 2s”)
- Mentors willing to share life experiences and encourage them on their journey
- Face to face and hand in hand connection

The early stages of parenting are times of decision making for the new family. (Yes, Dads are critically important in the forming of a family, but MOPS is about moms primarily). This is the time when families decide how they will raise their children and what they will be connected to for this parenting journey.

There is no better connecting point for a young family than the church. MOPS introduces moms to a church community through the doors of friendship, hospitality, helpful, practical teaching, and mentoring. The success of MOPS is when the mom who feels the furthest from Jesus comes through the door and takes even one step closer to knowing Him. Because when a mom knows Jesus...her world is changed! MOPS is:

- A community of Grace
- Connection to women in a fleeting, yet critically formative phase of life
- Intergenerational relationships
- Discovery and Learning Lab for moms
- Part of Church DNA – connecting all generations to Christ.

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MOPS grows best through “Word of mom”. It has spread around the world with one mom bringing her friends and neighbors to meet friends, a faith community and Jesus.

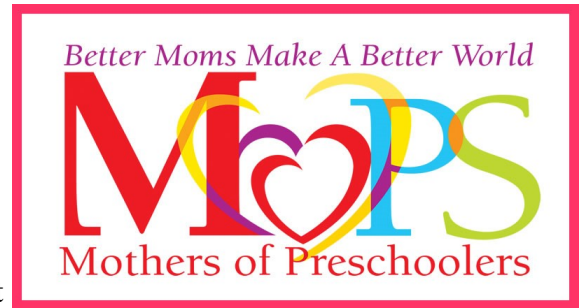
There are many in the RCC congregation who have been part of the MOPS story. Linda Smith, Jed Burnham, and Linda Chowdry have served on the Board of Directors. Lois Rice helped start one of the earliest MOPS group right in Evergreen. Karen Parks joined the staff when there were 60 groups and got to see God at work as MOPS grew to 4000 groups. Many others have been leaders and members of local groups around the country.

How can you support MOPS at RCC?

- Invite a mom you know to come and see what MOPS is about. A MOPS leader will even call and follow up with your invitation.
- Encourage a mom when you see her wrangling a temper-tantrum throwing child in the grocery aisle. A smile and a gentle word can restore calm and give patience.
- When you see a young family at church welcome them with warmth and a smile. They will appreciate knowing that this is a good place to find what they may be seeking.
- Consider helping with the MOPS kids program (ask Dick Parks about his experience as a helper). BTW, two helpers are needed twice a month until mid-May.
- Be a MOPS mentor. Talk to Dianne Wittman about this opportunity.
- Always prayer. These women need prayers to sustain them in this most important phase of life.

The story of MOPS goes on. Rockland MOPS is a dynamic, life-changing ministry. As we approach Mother’s Day, celebrate the moms in your life, especially the new moms who are starting on this adventure. Share the gift of MOPS with them!

-Karen Parks



Johnathan Dismuke from the hospital
with his prayer shawl

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The faithful women of the Prayer Shawl Ministry team meet on the second Monday of each month from 1:00-3:00 in the conference room. We share prayers, knitting and crocheting patterns, yarn and sisterhood.

We welcome anyone of any skill level to participate in this group. Our shawls are distributed to many people who are in need of comfort.

For more information please contact Liz Hawkins
at Ephawk123@gmail.com



Mean Street

To: Mean Street Ministry Volunteers

Hello, I am writing to introduce myself to all of the wonderful volunteers of Mean Street Ministry! My name is Diane Chapman and I have just joined the staff of Mean Street as the new Volunteer Coordinator.

As my job develops, my hope is to be able to meet each of you and hear your heart and passion for this wonderful ministry. I would like to learn more from you about the volunteer positions that you fulfill – both the joys and the difficulties, and discuss how I can best support and serve you as you graciously and generously give of your time, talents and treasures to help the most vulnerable among us.

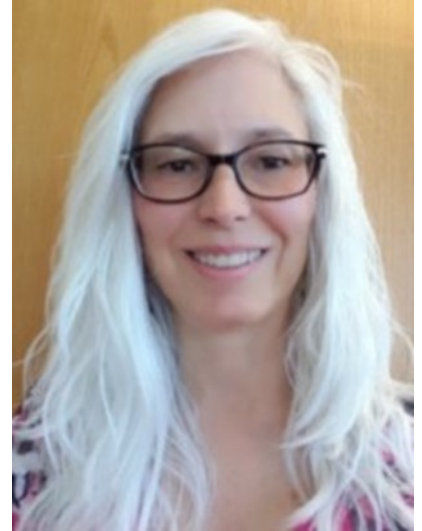
If you haven't volunteered at Mean Street for a while and would like to re-engage, please contact me at your convenience. If you have inquired about volunteering and have not yet been spoken with regarding the right opportunity for you, please forgive us! Transition has been taking place at Mean Street and we are excited to be implementing a new vision for the ministry, and we SO would love to have you volunteer with us. Please once again contact us and I will return your communication right away so we can discover the right opportunity for you at Mean Street!

A little about me - I have been affiliated with Mean Street for a couple of years as the trainer of the Soujourner life skills classes which we are again incorporating in March. I also have a background in volunteer management as well as counseling and training.

Please feel free to contact me with any thoughts, ideas or questions that you have for me, and I look forward to working with you all as we continue to do our work as unto the Lord.

In Christ,
Diane Chapman

Volunteer Coordinator
Mean Street Ministry
303-232-2500
www.meanstreetministry.org
Diane@meanstreetministry.org



Mean Street - The Rising

Our little Skylar has left to join the Job Corp in Utah. We will miss him. I remember the first time I saw his cute face sitting in the corner at the Rising. I asked if he would join us at the big table. "No, I can't." Why, I asked? "I have a social disorder so I can only talk to one person at a time. I can't be in a crowd." So I sat with him with his permission.

Skylar left home at 17 and is now 24. Seven long years homeless, we now know that his step mom is very toxic to him so he truly could not go home. His home was an abandoned freezer by the 58th & Wadsworth Light Rail Lines. Alone, but safe from others. The freezer kept him safe from the cold weather. He has never come to the church on cold weather shelter days. By God's love and grace, Skylar gave up heavy drugs but hung onto pot. As a child his parents put him on Ritalin to calm him down. He truly thought he needed drugs to survive life. In truth, Skylar is very intelligent and full of life. He proved his IQ by passing the GED with high scores without prepping for the test. Amazing, since he was a drug user for years.

Karen worked with Skylar the most to set new life goals for Skylar. In a few short months after years as a rejected, homeless, helpless young man, Skylar flew off to begin to learn a trade to restore him as a member of our society. He knows he will be tested to show he no longer has drugs in his system. I sincerely ask for you who are reading this to say a faith filled prayer that he will succeed. He is leaving his life as a loner to join a group environment without help from Ritalin or street drugs. Skylar became our adopted son/grandson to many of us. We miss him daily. We pray he will succeed. We love Skylar. We love our God who rescued him from destruction. We love our ministry provided to us through Mean Street Ministry. Pray for us. Pray for those who come to us.

Pray that God's Will be done on earth as it is in heaven. -Cheryl Smith

Children's Ministry

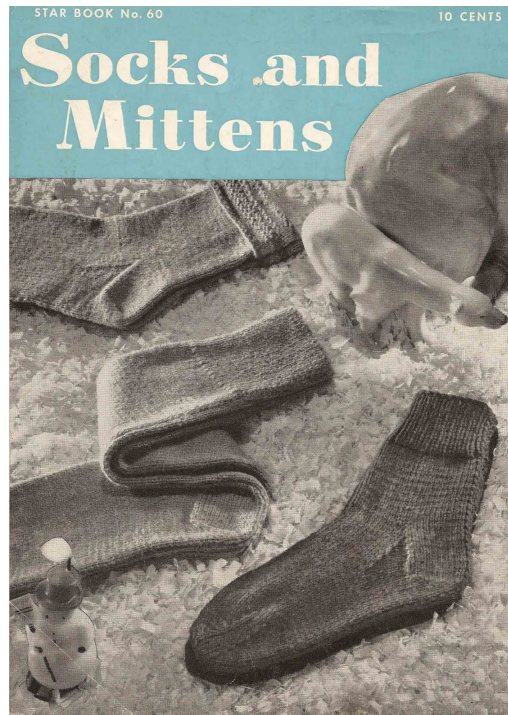


Warm feet. Warm hands. Warm heads. Spreading Warmth to the Homeless.

We have experienced a warmer than normal winter in Colorado this year, yet as we all know spring can bring some chilly days and freezing nights making it tough to stay warm. This is especially true for those who find themselves homeless. Thankfully, we have some generous children and adults at Rockland.

Each February Children's & Family Ministry sponsors a hat, gloves, mitten, scarf and sock drive for Mean Street, one of our ministry partners. This year's collection provides enough to cover 80 toes, hands, heads, and wraps for necks.

What a beautiful outpouring of God's love and grace to those in need of warm clothing this time of year. Thank you to all who contributed to the collection for our brothers and sisters in Christ!



VBS is Coming...

Ahoy Kids!
Prepare to set sail on an incredible adventure!

June 18-22
9 am to 12 pm
Age 3 by 5/1 thru completing 5th Grade

\$40/child

Registration begins April 1

A graphic for VBS 2018 titled "SHIPWRECKED". It shows a small island in the middle of a blue ocean. On the island, there are palm trees, a small wooden shipwreck, and the words "SHIPWRECKED" in large, 3D block letters. Below the letters, it says "RESCUED BY JESUS". The text "VBS 2018" is written in a large, stylized font in the upper right corner of the graphic.

Contact Lori Fullmer– LFullmer@Rockland.Church or Heidi Barnett– HBarnett@Rockland.Church for more Info on VBS!

A tropical island scene with a palm tree, a hammock, and a sloth.

Join the 2018 VBS Crew!

Opportunities abound as we prepare to set sail on an amazing adventure with Jesus at Shipwrecked.

Stop by the Children's Check-In Table outside Fellowship Hall to find out more!

Family Fun Night!



Children's & Family Ministry

invites all at Rockland to a night of fun with Illusionist David Laflin

Friday, May 11

Fellowship Hall
6:00-8:00 pm

Complimentary Dinner & Show

Reservations due by Sunday, May 6

David Laflin is quick to point out that everything he does is simply an illusion. Only God can do real miracles. Through his illusions the reality of the love of God is revealed in a way that people of all ages connect with. David's greatest desire is to bring families together for an experience they will never forget in the name of Jesus Christ!

RSVP to Lori Fullmer–
LFullmer@Rockland.Church
or go to www.Rockland.Church

Elders Corner

We elders continue to try to find ways to better communicate with the congregation. Last year each elder wrote one or more articles for the Chimes about what was happening in his or her ministry team. This year we thought we'd try just letting you know generally about what's going on month to month. As always, please contact any elder with questions or comments.

Let's begin with the Congregational Meeting held Super Bowl Sunday. Believe me, the game was much more exciting.

- During the meeting, the budget for next year was approved. Rockland continues to be an exceptionally generous church giving in excess of 20% of the total money given to Rockland to Outreach.
- Two changes to the by-laws were approved. The first changed the number of pastors eligible to be elders from all eligible to just the lead pastor. As we continue to grow and add pastors it makes less sense to keep adding them to the Elder Board. Ed Lange will continue to participate in elders meetings. The second change allows the clerk and the historian to also be deacons or elders. This was something overlooked when our by-laws were originally drafted, and it allows Rockland to take advantage of the experience and expertise of these two individuals in other leadership roles if desired.
- Speaking of leadership, new deacons and a new elder were elected. Hopefully, you got to see them the following Sunday as they were affirmed at each service. The outgoing deacons and one elder were recognized for their service to Rockland.
- The congregation approved the transfer of the Old Rockland property to a newly formed entity that remains solely owned and controlled by Rockland.
- In new business, the idea of a bell choir playing at the early service was discussed, and there was concern that the wedding policy might not allow adult children of members to be married at Rockland. The policy as listed on our website, states we "welcome our members, regular attendees, their family members and those individuals who grew up in the life of our church to be married at Rockland ..." and would include adult children of members. The elders are committed to prayerfully considering these and other ideas we hear from God's people at Rockland.

Please know that our elder team prays for you regularly
and serves because we love Jesus and His people at Rockland.

The newly formed **Elder Board had its first meeting** later in the month. We spent a significant amount of time reviewing the biblical qualifications of an elder and what God has called us to do and be. This was mostly an organizational meeting and a review of where we stand. The structure of the board for 2018 – 2019 is as follows:

- Jed Burnham – Lead Elder
- Bob Ehret – Operations
- Rev Jim Gribnitz – Lead Pastor
- Steve Hannah – Worship
- Jessica Kern – Children, Youth & Family
- Ed Lange – Associate Pastor
- Penny McDonald – Outreach
- Linda Smith – Congregational
- Gordon Steere – Discipleship

Thanks to all who attended the Congregational Meeting
and to everyone who helps make Rockland such a special church.
-Jed Burnham

Hearts for Romania

The ever-popular Hearts for Romania fundraiser was held on February 10 at Mount Vernon Canyon Club. Close to \$31,000.00 was raised at the Valentine-themed event to help fund Rockland's Romanian Outreach scholarship program.

Attendees enjoyed a fun night of fellowship, dinner and dancing. As a special addition this year, Heidi Schmidt's talented Jazz ensemble performed throughout the event. Howard Hargrove again served as auctioneer with "hearts" cash donations and some live auction items. A few of the repeat auction items included a "Romanian Rhapsody Gourmet Dinner & Concert," "A Summer Night under the Stars with BBQ" and "Jazz, Jam Pub-Fest."

Cipri Tehei was on hand from World Vision Romania to speak with the group and offer an update on the program as well as highlights of some individual student's progress. Sponsors were led in a group sing-along, which was videotaped and sent to be shared back in Cluj, Romania.

-Jennifer Kelly



2018 is starting off with a bang at your local Habitat for Humanity!

Two homes are in the pipeline...

Construction of our third home in downtown Empire has begun! We are working Tues. – Fri. (Wed. – Fri. after ski season) each week in Empire to finish that home in July. We'll then start our second home on Grouse Lane off Brook Forest road.

Volunteer!

If you'd like to help, it's easy to sign up for any Build Days! Visit the Blue Spruce website for more information - www.bluesprucehabitat.org, or go to <http://bluespruce.volunteerhub.com> to volunteer! Adults and youth 16 years and older are welcome! No experience is necessary...there are on-site experts to guide you! We hope you'll join us. Questions? Contact Dusty Dodge at 303-909-7565.



Rockland "Saturday Service" Event At Hands Of The Carpenter (James 1:27)

We've had a great crew of Rockland folks to provide oil changes and vehicle inspections in Jan. and March at their new facility in Golden! There are three bays that help about 25 single mothers and widows in need... services that they often can't afford. A BIG "thank you" to our Rockland folks for being great teammates!

Service days take place on the third Saturday in January, March, May, July, September and November. It's only a 1/2 day commitment from 7:45 a.m. until about 12:30 p.m.



We've just started a new program called "**Pit Crews**" where we'll be working the first Wed. of every month from 5 to 8 pm doing vehicle repairs that help support this ministry.

"Hands Of The Carpenter" is a faith-based ministry at Hands Automotive in Golden. No experience is necessary...please consider joining us in this important ministry! Questions? Contact Dusty Dodge at 303-909-7565 for information about both programs, and to volunteer.



Rockland Men's Retreat

We're excited that our Rockland Men's Retreat is on the schedule for **Saturday, June 2.**

This year's one-day retreat at Coors Field, with our own Pastor Jim Gribnitz! We'll study and discuss "Biblical Manhood in 2018".

Afterward, we will enjoy time together on the Club Level during the 5:15 pm baseball game against the Dodgers! Stay tuned for details and ways to sign up!

Please contact Dusty Dodge (303-909-7565) or Peter Miterko (303-882-9741) for more information.



Annual Meeting 2018

Worship. Connect. Serve. Give. Using these areas of Impact, Jim Gribnitz opened the Annual Meeting February 4 highlighting accomplishments seen in 2017. These included areas where Rockland influenced our Outreach Missions at home and abroad, as well as made strides internally to our membership – all designed to “celebrate God.” Statistics were shared from the 12,571 communion wafers and cups served last year, to the impressive 950% increase in Rockland members serving teens at the Clear Creek Rock House.



Dick Parks presided over his final meeting as Lead Elder and led the participants in prayer, reiterating that “God is the head of our Church.” Since there were no significant changes on which to vote, the meeting was fairly straightforward in terms of presentation of the budget, Bylaw changes and the approval of Leadership positions.

Chris Dodge presented an optimistic report on the financial position of the church. Not only did 2017 see additional income to what was projected, but we came in under budget as well. The surplus was such that cash reserves were not needed and funds could be rolled over to the next year. The 2018 budget is very close to that proposed for 2017, which includes the staff expense for the new Discipleship Pastor who will start in May.

The Bylaw changes largely centered on new verbiage to address specific circumstances related to individuals in staff and leadership positions. Requests passed to 1) assign the Lead Pastor to be the sole Pastorate spokesperson on the Board of Elders, and 2) allow both the Historian and Church Clerk to hold more than one elected position.

Several discussions and new business topics were raised during the meeting such as Handbells and the relatively new policy regarding weddings and memorial services to be held at the church. These topics will be addressed further through the appropriate channels at the church in 2018.

Additionally, due to potential liability implications, it was decided to change the legal entity of the Historic Rockland Church and Cemetery property to a Limited Liability Company. This will be done with Rockland Community Church being the sole member.

Rockland continues to thrive as a church, for which we are all grateful to God.

-Jennifer Kelly

Masthead-The Chimes

Our goal is to inform, inspire and connect the people to the community of Rockland church

All articles will be published and/or edited at the discretion of the editor and the staff of Rockland Community Church.

Questions? Call Shirley Johnson 303-670-0520

Editor: Shirley Johnson

Contributing writers/photographers: Jennifer Kelly, Jed Burnham, Dusty Dodge, Lori Fullmer, Karen Parks, Howard Hargrove, Gary Severson, Diane Chapman, Liz Hawkins, Nancy Judge, Cheryl Smith, Karin Wollschlaeger

Production staff: Polly Lownsberry Production Manager

Dorothy and Joe Maruyama, Joy Gabler, Anne and Bill Trimble, Marge and Dick Over, Marion Ilgen, Betty Nissler, Tom Hobson, Jack Kintner, Steve Engle, Sid Platt, Joyce Gollhofer

Jim Gribnitz, Lead Pastor, Ed Lange, Associate Pastor

Rock House



The year 2017 marks our 18th year of focus on changing the lives of teens in Clear Creek County to help them become productive members of society. We do this by helping them graduate high school through our tutoring program and learn critical life skills and encourage them to believe that they can do anything they can set their mind to through our mentoring program.

Your support in 2017 allowed us to build a new state of the art 'sport court' and beautiful patio, all surrounded by durable artificial turf. These improvements have led to us doubling the interest in our two major programs:

- We went from 9 kids in our mentoring program in 2016 to 18 kids now being mentored – each with their own personal mentor who is devoted to their success (100% increase)
- We went from 10 kids being tutored in 2016 to over 21 now involved in the tutoring program.(110% increase)
- Rockland participation in the Rock House went from 2 people in 2016 to 19 people in 2017 (900+% increase)

We also acquired a used 15 passenger van to accommodate this growth. Using this van, we have taken our kids to the Denver Stock Show, two professional baseball games that were donated (each for 20 kids), participated in roller skating, camping, boating, swimming, bowling, trampolines, canoeing, boarding, skiing, Denver Zoo light show, etiquette dinner at the 240 Union Restaurant and many community service projects.

Through the Rock House Tutoring Program, we are individually tracking each student's achievement every week with every test. In 2017 all Rock House students passed and went on to the next grade level. Our experience tells us if we help a student pass a class, that will lead to passing a school grade and eventually lead them achieving a high school graduation certificate. The Rock House has played an important part in improving our graduation rates going up in the county. We have a 98% graduation rate for those kids that stay with us.

We recently hired a new tutoring coordinator, Barbara Oakley. Barb has over 18 years of varied classroom experience with special needs kids and has a special heart for working with our Rock House kids! Barb has already shown great initiative and has started meeting with the teachers, counselors and administrators working on behalf of the Rock House teens. She is, and will be, an important part of always improving our tutoring program.

We also hired a new social media and volunteer coordinator, Becca Bernal. She is working to update our social media presence like Facebook, and Instagram and refresh our web page so we can reach more kids and more effectively communicate our events. She also is going to be the volunteer coordinator for all chaperones and helpers going forward.

In 2017 we also expanded our "Summer Friday Fun Nights" program and it has been a big hit with the students during the summer. Each Friday we plan special events for our students to look forward to: game nights, movie nights, bon fires, karaoke and much more. Some nights we have had over 30 kids attend and we feel it is a great outreach to introduce teens to what the Rock House has to offer them.

We also provided 62 backpacks with all the calculators and note books to all our teens. This year we asked the parents to come to the Rock House to 'claim' their backpacks for their kids. This allowed us to meet new parents and expose them to the Rock House and what we can offer for their kids. This was made possible by the generous donation of these backpacks from Flatirons Church.

In late 2017 Tommy Knockers called and said that they will provide prepared meals for two mentoring nights per month at their cost throughout all of 2018. This will save us nearly \$5000 per year on food costs – money that we can invest in other things for our kids.

Your support has made it possible for us to offer all of this to Clear Creek County teens. To many teens, we are their second family.

The Board of Directors looks forward to a very active and successful 2018 where we will continue helping insure the success of our students because of your generous participation in this worthy endeavor. Our goal is to grow the mentoring and tutoring program by another 10 kids each ! We can do this only with your continued help and support.

-Ann and Howard Hargrove



Rock House kids at Stock Show in January



All dressed up for Etiquette Dinner at 240 Union Restaurant.



Katie Lein (mentor from Rockland) and her mentee at 240 Union Restaurant



Amy Sideroff (mentor from Rockland) and her mentee at 240 Union Restaurant



Winter fun with RK kids !



Rock House goes to Georgetown Loop Railroad



Overheard by the Church Mouse

So, have you been in a meeting in which someone makes such a profound comment that you want to write it down, remember it? That is what happened at Wednesday morning Bible study when Gary Severson said the following: “Ever Considered the Moon?”

There is a line in an old cowboy song that says, “I want to ride to the ridge where the West commences and gaze at the moon until I lose my senses...” I admit that I am a moon gazer. As I marvel at its beauty, I am reminded that the moon has no light of its own. The “moonlight”, under which countless love songs and poems have been written through the ages, is really the sun’s light reflecting off the lightless surface of the moon. In John 8:54 Jesus said, “If I glorify myself, my glory is worthless. The one who glorifies me is my Father...” When I gaze at the moon, I often find myself praying that God will make me more like the moon, more like Jesus; to neither desire nor seek glory for myself, but only to reflect the glory that is God – His mercy, His grace, His love. To God be the glory!”
- Gary Severson

...Live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly, leave the rest to God.

Somewhere along the line, Christians begin to think there is no such thing as “coincidence” it is God working in and coordinating our lives or “Christ Oriented Incidences”. That is why, when Dr. Karin Wollschlaeger –Lewis announced that she would be traveling to Arusha we thought it would be with our Rockland mission group but not! Saint Joseph Hospital in Denver has a partnership with Tanzania’s Selian Hospital and Arusha Lutheran Medical Center. One branch of this partnership is sponsoring clinical teams that travel to Arusha each year to care for patients and to help build human and medical infrastructure.

Dr. Karin will be going with the team to Arusha. She and her family have been attending Rockland Community Church since 2010. They have done many medical mission trips around the world and were featured in the Chimes when they traveled on a mission trip to South Sudan (2010) bringing solar to both orphanages and a medical clinic and offering medical and surgical care.

This trip Dr. Karin who is an OB/GYN faculty member at Saint Joseph Hospital and with the OB/GYN residency program will be going to perform gynecological surgery and help in the clinics. The main focus of the trip, however, is to see if she can help establish a yearly OB/GYN elective for her residents. This would be a month long term each year where a senior resident would come to Arusha and help with surgical procedures and teaching. The goal of this Global Women’s Health elective is to expose residents to health care in a developing country, foster multidisciplinary education and clinical service collaborations. Since Rockland has a partnership with these hospitals in Tanzania it looks like it has all been orchestrated by God. Please keep Dr. Karin and the whole team in your prayers.

...Life is precious and not guaranteed. Don’t postpone that adventure and your dreams.

...So the 3-year-old and her Mom were in the parking lot at Rockland. The Mom was saying, “I know this is a new place but you’ll like it. You’ll make new friends. It will be good.” They walked toward the door. The child reluctant. The Mom repeated “You’ll like this new place. You’ll make new friends. It will be good.” The little girls hesitated, reached for the door and said with a bit more confidence “new place...same Jesus.”

Echo

We are so fortunate in the Food Bank that our donors and volunteers are so generous over the holidays. We try to make those donations last as long as possible because the new year comes and our clients continue to come needing food. While we celebrate some clients over the past few months who have success in being hired for new jobs: one to a cleaning service, a few to King Soopers, one to the hot springs in Idaho Springs and one driving for a home delivery service, we continue to have clients whose lives are overtaken by circumstances outside of their control.

The plans we make are not always the plans God has for us. Jan realized something was not right with her for grandchildren when the oldest, then 4 years old, would come to stay at her house and started the weekend talking jibberish but by the end of the weekend was speaking fine. Weekend after weekend, she would go through the same process with her grandson. After a series of events and the involvement of the law, Jan learned her daughter-in-law was drugging her four children in order to keep them sleeping so she was able to continue her own drug habit.

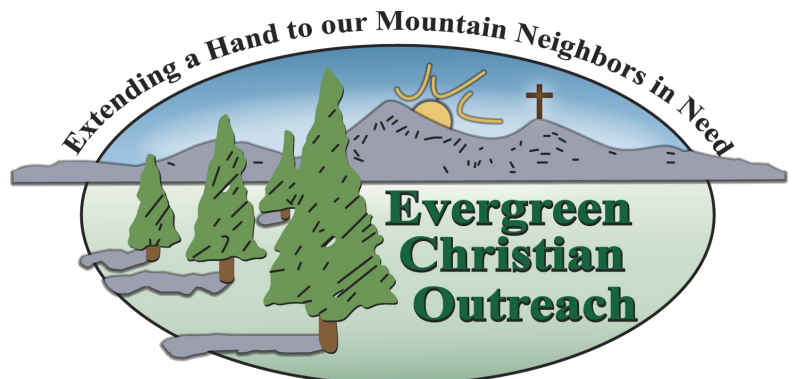
After emptying her own 401K and her husband's as well, years of legal battles, having to move from a \$700 a month home to a larger \$1800 per month home, Jan and her husband took custody of their four grandchildren. All the kids were delayed in their development and required medical attention and therapy. Now the four kids are happy and healthy, ages 10, 9, 8 and 7.

Jan says that she "could not have done it without" the EChO food bank. In addition to shopping weekly at the food bank, Jan has received holiday meals for her family, presents and clothes for the kids, and assistance with medical expenses. Because of the size of her family, the food bank provides larger meats like full turkeys or hams. This allows Jan to spread the meat out across many meals. Jan also commented on the cost of fresh vegetables so the ability to get greens and fruits for her kids has been invaluable. "At one point, the only thing I could feed one of the kids was smoothies."

Four years after taking custody of their four grandchildren, Jan and her husband are slowly getting back on their feet. "After hitting rock bottom, we can now see the light at the end of the tunnel." Jan never saw herself as someone who would need a place like EChO, but feels blessed to have been able to have the resources available.

Clients come and go as their lives change, donations level go up and go down, but through it all over the past 30 years, the EChO Food Bank has been there to help families like Jan's weather the storms. We look forward to being here another 30 years to help our neighbors in need.

-Nancy Judge





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