

# Our Community, Our Children

339 CHARTEROAK ● P.O. BOX 1180 ● HOT SPRINGS, AR 71902 PHONE (501) 623-5591 ● FAX (501) 623-4226 ● www.occnet.org



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## He Carried His Mom's Remains in a Box

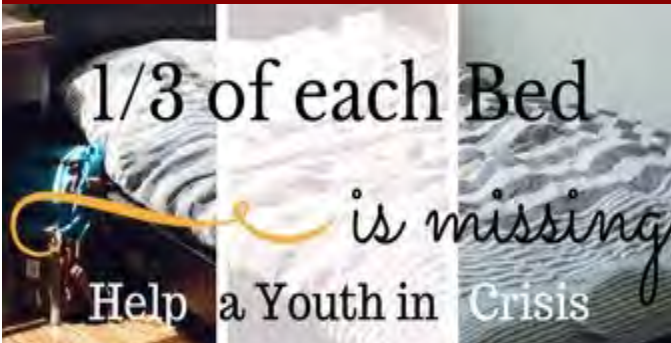
Luke (*not his real name*) has had a lot to deal with in his young life. His dad is in jail and his mom died. For the past year, he has carried her cremains around in a box – that is, until he arrived at OCC. His case manager voiced a wish that we could somehow find an urn for the mother's remains and that's when our staff went to work.

A gorgeous, hand-crafted urn from Fox Pass Pottery appeared a few hours later, along with an offer from Hot Springs Funeral Home to transfer the cremains to the urn and properly seal it. A few of our staff gathered with Luke as the solemn transfer took place and then a local minister – Tim Culbreth, memorialized this mother for the young man.

For the first time since she died, he experienced the dignity of an actual memorial and the gift of a proper urn. Luke will soon move to another part of the country to live with a relative and when he does, he will no longer carry his mother's remains in a box. He will carry an urn and a moment in time when OCC went above and beyond to help him along the way.



## #GivingTuesday is November 28th!



What better way to follow up Black Friday than to support youth in crisis on #GivingTuesday by donating through our website: [ocnet.org](http://ocnet.org)! This international online giving day offers you the opportunity to solve some of the world's most pressing concerns.

Here at Ouachita Children's Center, our at-risk young people are those who have experienced life altering trauma. They're not statistics. They're not from some far-away place. This is *Our Community*, and these are *Our*

*Children*; they are real flesh-and-blood youth are often in dire situations that cannot be put on hold, even for a few days. *Sibling groups who are awaiting placement in foster care. Young men and women who need immediate intervention and help. Youth who need safe shelter while arrangements are being made for something more permanent.* Nothing about OCC can be paused and each situation is urgent.

Here's why #GivingTuesday is so important, especially this year: **funding cuts present a very real threat to our ability to adequately meet the needs of our kids.** In fact, for every bed occupied here by a youth in crisis, we still have a 30% deficit to cover those expenses – in other words, **1/3 of each bed is missing.** What that translates into is we need an additional \$40 per day per youth to cover the costs of their care.

Since this is our **40<sup>th</sup> year as OCC**, how about making #GivingTuesday a \$40 for 40! Please consider participating in **#GivingTuesday by donating in increments of \$40:** \$40 - \$80 - \$120 - \$400 - \$4,000! Your contribution goes a long way in meeting the urgent needs of youth in crisis. When they are at their most vulnerable, your gift helps assure that they receive the resources and care they need.

This #GivingTuesday – November 28, go to our website ([ocnet.org](http://ocnet.org)) and let's make sure there is 100% coverage of a bed and not just two-thirds!

## Regardless of Circumstances, OCC Kids are Still Kids

Our kids - regardless of why they're at OCC - are still kids, and milestone events like Homecoming at their school are very important. For Homecoming 2017, our girls were given a make-over by Maurine Miller at Merle Norman. None of them had ever had their makeup done or worn a special party dress!

Hot Springs School District provided their party clothes, and OCC staff Daniella, Renee, and Marcus helped them get ready by doing everything from hair, nails, and grooming, to discussing etiquette and responsible celebration.

They were able to attend the pep rally, the game, and the dance thanks to this amazing and caring community. This is just one of many examples of how it "takes a village" so that our kids can participate in an American tradition. Even if it was only for a few brief hours, they got to be normal teens.

When you support OCC, you give our kids a safe place to have moments like these. They will never forget this experience or the many people who supported and provided for them to have a much needed reprieve from the harshness of life and enjoy a wonderful night out.



## From Mark Howard, Executive Director



“Once upon a time ...” That’s how some of my favorite stories begin. The stories continue with something like, “there was a frog, a prince, a girl, a boy, a man, a woman, a beauty, a beast ... a *something*.” Often the story line continues, “... in a galaxy far, far away, in a kingdom, a basement, a castle, a cave.” These are the kinds of imaginary stories that have a time, place, and the potential for an interesting and exciting journey. I am always struck by the fact that even in imaginary stories, a reflection of our own journeys is often revealed.

Cindy, my wonderful wife, says that I can sometimes be described as a frog, a boy, a beast, and her favorite, “He is something!” I’m sure she means that in the most complimentary way. I’m not sure how often I would make the “prince” list, though!

Today, my story might start out: Once upon a time in Arkansas, there was a man who came from a far-away place to live in a village – okay, a rather large village – to be part of something much greater than he could ever think of or hope for. A place where people care about others – especially children. A place where people are very, very friendly and are committed to raising the level of compassion for others. A place where the only arguments are about how best to help those who need it the most. This is a place where anyone would want to live.

I’m beginning to think I may have found such a place on my journey. Thank you, Hot Springs, for allowing me the privilege of being part of such a wonderful community. Thank you, Ouachita Children’s Center, for allowing me the honor to serve such a caring and compassionate organization. As we begin this journey together, I want to thank all of you for allowing me to be part of a mission that makes such a tremendous difference to others. May we all work together to see this story close with, “...and they all lived happily ever after!”

*Mark Howard became Executive Director of OCC on September 1st. Prior to taking on this new role, he was the executive director of Presbyterian Children’s Home in Talladega, AL. He has extensive experience in child care and nonprofit fields, as well as administrative experience in the business sector. He holds a B.S. degree in organizational leadership and an M.B.A. in Business Administration.*

## Mark Your Calendar! Magic is Coming to Hot Springs to Benefit OCC!

**Caroling at the Castle**      **December 2, 2017**  
**OCC Campus**                      **6pm—7:30pm**

*Start your holidays off right with an evening of magic and wonder! Featuring carolers from Fun City Chorus, New Life Christian Fellowship choir, Centro Cristiano Hispano choir, and Herself on a Shelf! Beautiful lights and luminaries, hot cider and cookies, and three Harry Potter Designer Christmas trees will be raffled.*

### *For More Information*

- ◆ Website: [bit.ly/hphotosprings](http://bit.ly/hphotosprings)
- ◆ Facebook: @hphotosprings
- ◆ Contact Sallie Culbreth, Community Relations Director
- ◆ Email: [sculbreth@occnet.org](mailto:sculbreth@occnet.org)
- ◆ Phone: 501-623-5591 x 223

**Please note all children under age 12  
must be accompanied by an adult**

**Yule Ball Formal Gala**      **January 6, 2018**  
**St. Luke’s Episcopal Great Hall**      **6pm—9pm**

***A Perfect Christmas Gift for  
your favorite Muggle or Magic One!***

*A winter celebration of the Triwizard Tournament. Enter through a maze, find your dragon egg, swim through Merpeople to the silent auction, place your name in the Goblet of Fire and be announced, Marquee Haupert’s string ensemble and classical ballroom dancing followed by modern music of the rock band Father CB and the Non-Prophets and DJ Courier Coleman spinning vinyl for your dancing pleasure. Delicious hors d’oeuvres, wonderful drink, and one of the most memorable gala’s you’ll ever attend. Formal attire or dress wizard robes are required. Adults: \$75, Youth 12-17: \$25, and Children 7-11: \$15. Space is extremely limited. Tickets go on sale December 1<sup>st</sup>.*

## Social Hosting is Unacceptable

“Social Hosting” is providing alcohol to a young person under the age of 21. While there is good news that underage drinking is diminishing, it is shocking how many adults – parents and older friends – allow teens to hold drinking parties. Not only is this unacceptable, it is also illegal. Social Hosting ignores the fact that an underage brain is still a developing brain – one that can be impaired by alcohol abuse. Social Hosting ignores the fact that underage drinkers are more likely to be involved in risk-taking behaviors that leave them prone to injury, sexually transmitted diseases or unintended pregnancies, impaired learning and memory, and victimization.

Adults can help curb Social Hosting by setting a positive example, and speaking openly and clearly to teens about your expectations, guidelines, and boundaries. If your teen is going to a party, verify that a responsible adult will be supervising and that alcohol will not be served. Insist that you know what transportation plans have been made, the location of the party or activity, and what the curfew is. If a party is being hosted in your home, limit the number of guests your teen can invite, provide your contact information to other parents, make it clear that alcohol use will not be tolerated, and do not permit already drunk youth to enter your home – call his or her parents, instead.

Parents and other adults greatly influence the lives of young people. Social Hosting is a dangerous and damaging influence. Being involved in a positive and responsible way with youth creates an environment where healthier and safer choices can be made. That is the responsibility of all adults for the well-being of our young people.

**Drinks? Drugs? NAH!**

Take Action Arkansas...Prevention Works



MIDSOUTH CENTER FOR PREVENTION AND TRAINING

## The Holidays Are Upon Us!

It won't be long until we're all in the throes of the Holidays and that's when we see our community really come together for our kids. We have been assessing what is best for our kids – especially when it comes to Christmas and parties – and have come to recognize *that too much “stuff” – too many presents* – can be extremely stressful for our kids who have only recently been removed from traumatic and threatening environments. The overstimulation of strangers and uncertainty about what is expected of them has historically created some challenging moments for our kids.

That said, **we are requesting that groups and individuals who wish to bless our kids please give GIFT CARDS rather than items.** This empowers our kids to use the cards for what they might enjoy (or to shop for their families). Gift Cards that our kids would really enjoy include: Hibbitt Sports, Old Navy, Dick's Sporting Goods, TJ Maxx, Dillard's, Journey's, Best Buy, Hot Topic, Rue 21, Claire's, Spencer's Gifts, and Walmart.

Gift Cards also allow us flexibility for newly arrived youth without having to scramble at the last minute to find gifts. To make sure these gift cards are secure, our Residential Care Director will hold the cards for each youth until he or she is ready to go shopping! That way, our kids won't run the risk of having their cards stolen or lost.

Let the festivities begin!



## Donors July - September 2017

Danny Whitt & Ann Mayle-Whitt  
 Bernard & Gloria Angel  
 George & Mary Kay Benkert - In Honor of Mrs. Carol Freeland  
 William & Kristine Blocker - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Harvey Bradstreet  
 Donald Brady  
 Gary & Melinda Carnahan  
 Bill & Dawn Cattaneo - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Donald Caudill  
 Robert & Janet Chastant  
 Hon. Vicki & Dr. Ken Cook - In Memory of Mr. Victor N. Kingery  
 Richard Crawford  
 Kala Dean - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Dr. Lawrence & Mrs. Caren Dodd  
 Bob Edmonds  
 Max English  
 Mathesia Erby  
 Dr. Stuart & Mrs. Kay Fleischner - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Jeffery & Angela Fuller-Freeman - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Richard & Billie Gaffglione  
 Kim Gillham  
 Kayce Glasse  
 Chappy & Susan Harper  
 Lonnie & Kay Harrison  
 Brian & Amelia Hill - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Randy & Ann Hill - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Tori Hill  
 Julie Isenberg  
 Dr. Donald & Mrs. Malka Ivy - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Janet Jenkins  
 Trina Larkin  
 Dr. Mark & Mrs. Katherine Lefler - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Jane Luschen  
 Joseph & Elizabeth Mahoney - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Vincent & Julia Mathews - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Court Mathey  
 Liz Mathis - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer

Mike Matula  
 Betty Moon  
 Dean Norton  
 Sam Pitner  
 Ann Prince  
 Jill Pullen  
 Linda Ragsdale - In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Ed and Mary Lou Lampman  
 Thomas Riggins  
 Melissa Rigsby  
 Martha Rodgers  
 Marjorie Rogers  
 Daniel Sampson  
 Greg & Kate Schaffer  
 Lou & Susan Siegel  
 Tom Ed & Amy Simmons - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Barbara Smith  
 Dee Soderstrom  
 Frank & Sheryl Staggs  
 Todd & Lanette Stineman - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Morgan Tollefson  
 The Estate of Ms. Genelle V. Triffet  
 Rep. John & Mrs. Libby Vines - In Honor of Linda Ragsdale  
 Joseph Waite - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Joan Wallace  
 Marilyn Ward  
 Mary Warren  
 Andy & Jeanette Westerman  
 Pamela Williams  
 Dr. Peggy Woodall  
 Courtney Young  
 Afamilytree.com  
 Arkansas Blood Institute  
 Atwood's  
 Baldwin Dentistry  
 Bennett's Oaklawn Service, Inc.  
 Chantilly Boutique  
 Christ of the Hills United Methodist Church  
 Christ of the Hills United Methodist Church - United Methodist Women  
 Christway Unity Church  
 Family Dollar  
 First Presbyterian Church  
 The Glory Barn Church - Ladies Ministries  
 Levi Hospital  
 Luna Bella  
 Merle Norman Cosmetics & More  
 National Park College - Wellness Center  
 Oaklawn United Methodist Church  
 Ouachita Regional Anesthesia, PLLC - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Pancho's Taco Pronto, Inc.  
 Pink Avenue  
 Presbyterian Kirk In the Pines  
 ScanTrendsUSA, inc. - In Honor of Mr. & Mrs. Greg and Kate Schaffer  
 Tri-Lakes CASA  
 Vietnam Veterans Organization of Hot Springs  
 WHIRL Charitable Endowment - In Honor of Linda Ragsdale





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 E-mail: info@occnet.org



## WISH LIST

- New Twin size Sheet Sets
- New Matching Comforter Sets
- New Pillows
- New Bath Towels, Washcloths & Hand Towels
- Fingernail Polish
- Flat Irons
- Electric Shavers & Hair Clippers
- Anti-Bacterial Hand Soap
- Female Sanitary Products
- Hair Brushes (both boar bristle & plastic)
- Wide Tooth Combs
- Hair Grease, Pomade, Pink Oil, Moisturizer & Relaxer Kits
- Wave Caps, Shower Caps & Head Scarves
- Small Black Rubber Bands, Barrettes & Ponytail Holders
- Special Event Tickets or passes (~ 20 for our entire group to participate)
- Gift Cards to Retail Stores
- Outdoor plastic stackable chairs

- Magnetic wall boards with magnets for resident rooms
- Area and throw rugs
- Dominos
- New Men's & Boy's Briefs & Boxers
- New Women's & Girl's Underwear & Bras
- Luggage, duffle bags, tote bags, etc.

*\*\* We now refer used clothing donations to Jackson House or Salvation Army, where we "shop" as needed \*\**

### Kitchen Needs

- Stainless steel forks & spoons
- Unbreakable plates & bowls
- 10 oz. Plastic Glasses
- Dish Soap & Dish Towels
- Healthy Snacks—Fruit, Hummus & Pita Chips, Vegetable Trays, Peanut Butter or Cheese Cracker Packages
- Healthy Drinks—Non-Sugary
- Grated Cheddar Cheese

### Volunteer Opportunities

- Special Events
  - ◊ November 18 & 25—Holiday Decorating at OCC
  - ◊ January 5, 2018 Yule Ball set up
- Monthly Poetry, Writing, & Arts workshops
- Barber or Beautician Services (Haircuts)
- Monthly Dance or Music workshops
- Organized Sports or Games
- Organize Closets and Storage
- Maintenance Assistance

*\*\* Contact Sallie Culbreth for volunteer opportunities 501-623-5591 x223 or sculbreth@occnet.org*