

Happy 40th Birthday OCC!



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Linda Ragsdale, Executive Director



*OCC Staff and Board
Present Linda with her
"Retirement Rocker"*

Friends of OCC gathered in June to celebrate the 40th birthday of Ouachita Children's Center and the work we do with youth in crisis. Not only did we have a great birthday celebration, but the party had another purpose: to send our Executive Director Linda Ragsdale off to a happy retirement, complete with a hand crafted cedar rocking chair!



*Board Member Kate
Schaffer Celebrates
Linda's Retirement*



*A Beautiful Cake and
Delicious Food made
the Party Perfect
thanks to
Special Touch Catering*



Girl Interrupted



Sometimes, it takes a substantial interruption of downward spiraling behavior to save a young person in trouble and help a family regroup. That's what happened when Renee* and her mother, Lisa*, began working with Cathy Dickens – OCC's Clark County Case Manager.

Renee was making a lot of wrong decisions – trying to fit in and, in doing so, she created very challenging chaos for her family. Things escalated to the point that her family needed a break. Renee needed to bring herself back under control, so she came to the OCC Emergency Shelter in Hot Springs. She responded well to the structured environment, got along with others, and began making much better decisions. All positive!

When a family is in crisis, it's often difficult to see things clearly – to know exactly what to do or what's appropriate. A big concern of Lisa's was that rather than facing consequences for her actions, Renee was “on vacation” at OCC. Of course, that wasn't the case because Renee was being guided, given boundaries, and receiving therapeutic care that offered her the possibility of making some real change, but the family decided to remove her and – in retrospect – they realize that was probably premature.

Renee soon began spiraling out of control once more with more consequential decisions. However, thanks to the continued guidance and case management the family received from Cathy, Renee began to find her way. She returned to school where she had a pretty bad history, but knew it was time to, “live up to what I did in the past,” as she put it.

At first, going back to school was a bit bumpy, but she was determined to work hard and re-enter the mainstream student population. She received the “Star Award” this past spring for most improved student and finished the school year with good grades. As Renee reflected on her time spent under OCC's care, she advised, “Talk to someone before you do something stupid. Getting help was the good part. The bad part was being away from my family and not trusting them.”

Her mom shared this with Cathy, “It was hard to watch someone you love make such bad decisions. The *not knowing* – not knowing why she was behaving in that manner, not knowing how to help her – that was the hardest part for us as a family.”

The work that this family's case manager did is what happens at OCC every day. Cathy looks back over her time with this family with great satisfaction. “Walking into their lives as a total stranger and gaining their trust and respect as I did my job was very rewarding.” Congratulations to Renee, Lisa, and their family! We know great things are in store for your futures!

**Not their real names*

OCC Board & Staff Retreat

Our board and management staff spent a few hours together for a retreat - reviewing where we've been this past year and what our goals are for the future. Our board members give hundreds of hours a year helping to navigate our organization, govern the way we fulfill our mission, and provide financial oversight for our budget and resources. Take a look at the list of our board members and the next time you run into one of them, give them a big pat on the back because they are incredibly dedicated to our mission of helping youth in crisis.

State DYS Director, Betty Guhman gives a presentation at the Board Retreat as Board Members and Staff Listen



Connection Between Childhood Trauma and Opioid Addiction

Did you know that children who have had three or more adverse childhood experiences are at much greater risk to abuse drugs, alcohol, and tobacco? In fact, a 2016 study demonstrated “a clear dose response relationship between the number of traumatic experiences and increased risk of prescription drug misuse in adults.”¹

In another study, 80% of people seeking help for their opioid addiction had at least one form of childhood trauma and two-thirds were witnesses to violence as a child.²

We know that prevention works. Evidence shows us that prevention is the single greatest solution to drug abuse because it reduces the demand for drugs. Trauma-informed care can help to both prevent and treat opioid addiction. It can include programs that work to limit exposure to trauma and programs that teach resilience for those at risk of exposure to adverse childhood experiences.

At OCC, we use trauma-informed care to help our kids navigate through the adverse experiences they’ve had in their young lives. We have shifted away from the question, “What’s wrong with you?” and toward the question, “What’s happened to you?” This helps us to find the resources our kids need to build a better future. We are also a safe, emergency shelter where our youth in crisis are given a reprieve from violence, abuse, neglect, and substance abuse that is taking place around them. Only when a child is safe can their needs and risks be addressed.

Our community can do the same for all of our young people by looking beyond problem behavior to the factors that contribute to that behavior. When we begin to address the issues of adverse childhood experiences (trauma), when we begin to teach resilience and coping skills to youth who are exposed to trauma, then we have automatically taken substantial steps in the prevention of substance abuse, and the treatment for those who are at risk.

Drinks? Drugs? NAH!

Take Action Arkansas...Prevention Works

U.A. MIDSOUTH CENTER FOR PREVENTION AND TRAINING
LITTLE ROCK

¹Quinn, K., et al, *Journal of Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 2016, pp. 169, 190-198

²Sansone, R.A., et al, *Journal of Addictive Diseases*, 2009, pp. 28(1), 64-67

From John Morgan, Interim Executive Director



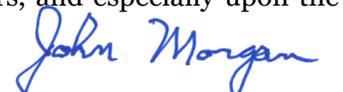
OCC is in transition. We reluctantly wished our retiring Executive Director – Linda Ragsdale – a fond farewell and hope only the best for her as she begins this new chapter and the next big adventure. For now, OCC’s board of directors has asked me to serve as the interim executive director until a new director takes the helm, and I am honored to do so.

People wonder what’s next for OCC and the answer to that question remains constant: we are dedicated to providing the best possible therapeutic care and emergency shelter for youth in crisis. That was true before Linda retired, and that is true now.

I have served OCC for over five years as a Court Liaison and Director of Operations. I assure you that I serve with some of the most dedicated, sacrificial people I’ve ever known. These men and woman have an unwavering commitment to serve our kids, their families, and our communities, both in Garland and Clark counties.

At the end of Hobson Avenue, OCC continues to stand as a beacon of compassion, guidance, and care for kids who have experienced an awful lot of pain in their very young lives. We – the Board and Staff – have big plans for the future of OCC, but our mission is unchanged. Our dedication to our kids is unshakable. Our hope for a brighter future for each child who comes our way never grows dim.

The support of our community, supporters, and partners is what upholds our resolve and I, for one, am so grateful to be part of our ongoing work to help youth in crisis find their way to a better life. Yes, OCC is in transition, but it is a transition built upon a strong foundation of the past forty years, and especially upon the vision imparted by our retired Executive Director, Linda Ragsdale.



Interim Executive Director

Summertime and the Livin' is Busy!



Annie Cooksey's Improv Workshop



Field Trips including to Rave Graphix and Baggio



Box Turtle Visitor



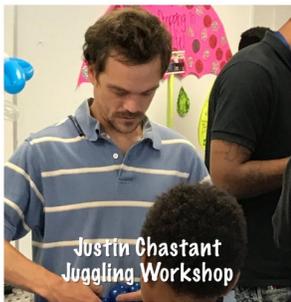
Summer Enrichment Classes



Relaxing and Fun Time at the Lake!



Fur Babies and Pet Therapy Cuddles



Justin Chasant Juggling Workshop



Travis Bratton & Grayson Hunter Taekwondo Class



MidAmerica Science Museum Workshops

School may be out, but that only means our kids have the opportunity to experience a safe, fun, and enriching summer at OCC! They've had enrichment classes, gone on field trips, and had unique workshops covering everything from improv drama, juggling and animal balloons, art, writing, martial arts, and science thanks to the amazing talents of community volunteers and organizations. Trips to the lake to swim and fish and the precious dogs that come each month from Pet Therapy have made this summer one to remember for all the right reasons! **Your support of OCC gives our kids a sense of normalcy in the midst of the crisis that brought them to us in the first place. Thanks for giving that gift to a young person who needs you!**

Staff Training Week

OCC never stops, but one week in June included training for our entire staff. Continuing education is imperative for our staff to maintain the skills and knowledge they need to provide the best care possible for the youth in crisis who need our support and our emergency shelter. Not only did we have excellent workshops, but we even took time to play some team building games that were loads of fun, too. Your support of OCC keeps our staff ready and able to take on the challenges faced by our kids.

OCC Staff Play the "Problem Pit" Game



Residential Services Director, Megan Goldman (L) presents Renecia with the Employee of the Quarter Certificate during Staff Training Week



Renecia Bailey— Employee of the Quarter

Congratulations to our awesome Employee of the Quarter—Renecia Bailey! This woman has a heart of gold and that is nowhere more apparent than in her tireless service at Direct Care Staff with our kids. Congratulations Renecia! You're awesome and we are REALLY proud of you!

Donors May - June 2017

Frank & Beverly Ames - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	Leland Seba - In Memory of Mr. Stanley Seba Gayle Shelton
Phyllis Baltz	Joyce Shepherd
Karen Boothe - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	Todd & Margaret Shiver
Donald Brady	Naomi Smith - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent
Keith & Jean Brown	Robert & Betty Smith - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent
Roxanne Butterfield	Kenneth Taylor
Sally Carder	Grace Tindall
Carrington Chandler	Peggy Vincent
Henry & Marjorie Claeson - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	John & Joan Walker - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent
Charles & Elizabeth Cook	Dorothy Weidman - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent
Vicki & Ken Cook	Danny Whitt & Ann Mayle
Belinda Cosgrove	Pamela Williams
Tim & Sallie Culbreth	Brad & Elaine Wolken
Cathy Dingler	Peggy Woodall
Jason Dugger	Howard & Judy Wright
Amy Ebner	Raymond Wright
David & Gianina Frasher	Christ Lutheran Church - Martha Circle
Alberta Gibbs	Christ of the Hills United Methodist Church - Naomi Circle
Coni Hall	The Glory Barn Church - Ladies Ministries
John & Cynthia Hart - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	Presbyterian Kirk in the Pines - Presbyterian Women
Shelly Hill	AARP Chapter 3
Q. Byrum Hurst	Afamilytree.com
Vivian Huynh	Arkansas Counseling & Psychodiagnostics, Inc.
Jack & Lucia Iafrate	Baldwin Dentistry
Kathy Jordan - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	Bennett's Oaklawn Service, Inc.
John & Karen Karpis - In Honor of Ms. Marianne Wilson	CHI St. Vincent - Hot Springs
Hal & Sue Koppel	First Security Bank
Mildred Martin - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	Garland County Council of Garden Clubs
Elinor Murarova - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	Holy Angels Convent
Dean Norton	Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce
E. & D. Nugent - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	In the Raw Test Kitchen & Juice Bar
Judy Peterson & George Chamberlain - In Loving Memory of Mr. Bernard Nugent	Oaklawn United Methodist Church - United Methodist Women
Ann Prince	The Ross Foundation
Linda Ragsdale - In Honor of Ms. Vivian Huynh	South Hot Springs Lions Club
Mike & Michelle Ratcliff	Stop Animal Cruelty Thrift Store
Thomas Riggins	
Joseph & Melissa Rigsby	
Daniel Sampson	
Greg & Kate Schaffer	
Sandra Schepers	
Sally Schuck	





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CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT



Community Partner

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 asses (~ 20 for our entire group to participate)
- Gift Cards to Retail Stores such
- School Supplies (pens, pencils, notebooks & paper)
- Backpacks

- Summer Bathing Suits & Towels for ages 8-18 (one piece & tankini for girls, trunks & tank tops for boys)
- Storage Shelves & Racks
- 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

*** 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
 - ◊ August 26 Back-to-School Carnival
 - ◊ November 18-30 Holiday Decorating at OCC
 - ◊ January 6, 2018 Yule Ball formal
 - ◊ April 12, 2018 Trash Bag Walk
 - ◊ July 2018 MAJOR festival
- 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
- Construction of a Walking Trail around the Property

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