



THE NEXT CHAPTER

Chapter 1: Looking Back

Since its 1947 foundation, Hope Harbor – through the staff, volunteers, and donors working as the hands and feet of Jesus – has served over 2500 children. From caring for orphans and foster children to residential treatment care for struggling youth, we have set our vision on fulfilling the two duties of our charter document:

- to assist children from Oklahoma and adjoining states whose parents cannot or are not meeting their needs
- to serve families by providing family counseling and educational programs to prevent abuse and strengthen family life.

Chapter 2: Shifting Gears

Hope Harbor has always endeavored to serve children and families where needs are the highest. We find, at this time in Oklahoma, startling statistics concerning children in foster care. The moment children enter the foster system, they face the most vulnerable hours of their lives. What they have known is gone. What lies ahead is uncertain.

For thousands of siblings in Oklahoma, this crisis is compounded by a heartbreaking reality: 67% of brothers and sisters are separated from each other and placed in the homes of strangers, often several communities away from each other. This places additional burdens on case workers and strains reunification efforts, which would allow them to return home.

Another disturbing statistic is related to the foster parents themselves. After completing months of state-required training and vetting, approximately half of foster parents resign within the first year. The reasons are many, but include: lack of support, poor communication, insufficient training, and feeling undervalued. When a foster parent set leaves the system, the foster children must endure a new placement. This is termed a “disruption” for a reason.

At Hope Harbor, we believe this doesn't have to happen.

Chapter 3: Provision

Hope Harbor isn't just looking for foster parents. We're building a Christ-centered community committed to the support of:

- Christian foster parents who are dedicating their lives to this ministry
- Foster children who are victims of circumstances beyond their control
- Biological children who are living with both of the above.

Our large homes will allow sibling groups to remain together, with plenty of space for everyone. Our dedicated team will wrap our arms around each member of the foster family, providing support and meeting needs, walking with them each step of the journey.

Hope Harbor will provide support to both biological and foster children by offering spiritual training, after-school programs, therapy options, summer engagement opportunities, and plenty of indoor/outdoor active space, encouraging spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical health.

We propose to provide parental support by ensuring opportunities for spiritual growth, community interaction, training, local services, date nights, and housing amenities.

Hope Harbor believes that each foster parent unit that stays is another one that does not need to be recruited. Additionally, each Christian foster parent who stays at Hope Harbor benefits the placement of all children in the home, both biological and foster.

Chapter 4: Reaching Out

The Bible tells us that Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy. Certainly, he is doing his part through the thrashing of families who find themselves within the foster system. With this in mind, Hope Harbor looks to connect with the biological families of our foster children during these times of crisis. Facilitating relationships, offering spiritual guidance, and meeting the needs of our foster children's biological parents, Hope Harbor anticipates providing opportunities for these families to be better equipped to reunify with their children.

Chapter 5: The Children are Coming!

Many of you have been wondering when our doors would again be open to children and that answer is this August 2025. For those of you who have been with us throughout this transitional journey, our hearts are so grateful! For those of you who have promised to support when the children return, this is your moment! The foster care crisis is real, and Hope Harbor is stepping into the fray. Join us as we seek to do our part to bring Jesus' healing touch to the vulnerable and hurting!

Support Hope Harbor! We are currently upgrading our facilities, installing a playground (see article inside this newsletter), and preparing job descriptions for our foster family community support team. We can no more tackle this next chapter of our story without you than we could have at any point in our history.

You Matter! Your prayers matter! Your financial support matters!

What's Happening at



- April**
 - Stumpff Cottage floods
 - The administration building is made ready for renovation, Phase One (offices/entry)
- May**
 - Work Day at Hope Harbor, May 3, 2025
 - Tucker Cottage lightning strike – burns to ground (*see article on page 7*)
 - Board meets to determine how best to communicate new information to congregations
 - Renovations in Stumpff and Chapman Cottages
- June**
 - Board members will be traveling, speaking to elders, mission committees, or other appropriate designated contacts to update the status of Hope Harbor
 - Recruiting begins for foster parents
 - Summer campaign to raise money for the playground (*see article on page 4*)



JOIN HOPE HARBOR'S FOSTER FAMILY COMMUNITY

At Hope Harbor, we believe every child deserves to feel safe, loved, and connected to their siblings during life's most challenging transitions. We are building a special community of Christ-centered foster families dedicated to keeping brothers and sisters together when they need it most.

WE ARE SEEKING:

- Members of the Church of Christ
- Licensed foster families ready to serve or those willing to become licensed
- Hearts prepared to welcome sibling groups into your home
- Commitment to providing both emergency and long-term care

THE HOPE HARBOR DIFFERENCE:

- Housing on Hope Harbor's Claremore beautiful campus
- Monthly stipend to support your family's needs
- A supportive community of like-minded foster families
- Comprehensive suite of services designed for foster families and children in care
- Shared faith foundation and values
- Resources and training specifically designed for foster care
- Ongoing spiritual and practical support

When siblings enter foster care, they often face the additional trauma of being separated. **At Hope Harbor, we're changing that story one family at a time.**

"Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me."
Mark 9:37

Why a Playground?

Hope Harbor is initiating a fundraising campaign to build a playground!

Why do we need a playground? Serving middle- and high-school age students for the past 20+ years, Hope Harbor focused on outdoor recreational opportunities such as running and basketball. With our new foster care model, Hope Harbor will be developing a foster care community where families with children of all ages can thrive. It is important to have a safe area that supports a wide range of movement opportunities, promoting positive childhood interactions and development. Specifically, Hope Harbor seeks to provide a compliant, commercial-grade playground system, encouraging interactions between children of all ages and stages of growth and capability.

Playgrounds are an integral part of childhood. Running, climbing, swinging, and sliding – these activities were woven into the fabric of our own childhoods. A playground plays an important role in encouraging children to seek the outdoors and take part in activities that boost their physical, mental and social development. For a child in foster care, a playground isn't just fun – it's a place where healing can begin, trust can be rebuilt, and childhood can return.

On a playground, a child learns naturally. In addition to supporting imaginative thinking, interactive equipment provides an opportunity to learn new skills, reinforcing a sense of achievement and self-worth. Children learn they can face and overcome challenges – a critical life skill. Through group play, children learn problem-solving, negotiation, and teamwork as they navigate the social interactions in this community space. Children learn to express their feelings, manage frustration, cope with obstacles, and exercise empathy. These vital life skills are grown in tandem with the sheer exhilaration of physical exercise, which in turn fortifies cognitive development.

Our playground will also serve as an integral hub of our foster community, providing a gathering spot for families and children while encouraging community bonding. Parents can share experiences and network while their children play together. These seemingly inconsequential meet-ups can increase their sense of belonging and mutual support while decreasing their chances of leaving the foster system (a big win for everyone.) Our playground will be a core space in our community where parents and children can meet in a safe and welcoming environment to form lasting connections.

Our Summer 2025 fundraising campaign donations will go towards the purchase and installation of our playground. **The first \$20,000.00 in donations will be doubled by a matching grant!** Won't you help us create a space for foster parents to bond and children to unwind? To donate, please either visit our website or mail your donation to:

Hope Harbor Playground Campaign
P.O. Box 1047
Claremore, OK 74018



SCAN TO DONATE

How much is this going to cost? \$80,000 is needed to create a safe and fun space for the children we serve, and we're already off to an exciting start. The first \$20,000 donated will be matched dollar for dollar, doubling the impact of your generosity!

We can't do this without you. Every donation, big or small, brings us closer to installing the playground by August 2025. Together, we can create a place where children can thrive, laugh, and simply be kids.

HOPE HARBOR

MEMORIALS

ELWOOD BENTLEY
John Meszaros

LYNELLE BITTICKS
Barbara Benedict

BUD AND ARLENE BOBSEIN
Nancy Bobsein

LEO AND MABELL BOBSEIN
Nancy Bobsein

BOB BOWEN
Homer Weathers

DONNA BROWN-SANDERS
Laverne Walls

MANVAL AND AGNES BURKETT
Nancy Bobsein

JOHN CAMPBELL
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Nancy Bobsein

RONALD E. SMITH
Barbara Benedict

JAN SPINK
Mary Cozort Harper

BARBARA TAYLOR STUMPFF
Leanna Farr

Thank you for giving hope to our future families and children.



MEMORIALS & HONORS

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A MEMORIAL FOR

☐

IN HONOR

OF

Name of person being
memorialized or honored.
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Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Given By: (Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____



Scan the QR code with
your smart phone to
donate your memorial
or honor gift online at
hopeharborinc.org.

READER'S BOOK CORNER



If you love reading, this new section of our newsletter is perfect for you! Understanding others' experiences and perspectives can often be challenging, but few things rival the power of a great book to broaden our knowledge and deepen our empathy for those facing difficult circumstances.

This month's book recommendation is "The Body Keeps the Score" by Bessel van der Kolk, M.D. Bessel van der Kolk is one of the world's premier authorities on trauma and its effects. With more than thirty years' experience, he is the founder and medical director of the Trauma Center in Brookline, Massachusetts, a professor of psychiatry at Boston University School of Medicine, and director of the National Complex Trauma Treatment Network. This book has a 4.8 rating on Amazon and is a #1 New York Times bestseller.



This book is an informative read without being too scientific. The first half of the book provides a rich history of the treatment of trauma patients and explains the effects of trauma on: the body, those in relationship with a traumatized person, and society at large. The last half of the book provides hope through recommended healing opportunities for those affected by trauma and those caring for the traumatized.

From Amazon: Trauma is a fact of life. Veterans and their families deal with the painful aftermath of combat; one in five Americans has been molested; one in four grew up with an alcoholic; one in three couples have engaged in physical violence. Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, one of the world's foremost experts on trauma, has spent over three decades working with survivors. In The Body Keeps the Score, he uses recent scientific advances to show how trauma reshapes both body and brain, compromising sufferers' capacities for pleasure, engagement, self-control, and trust. He explores innovative treatments—from neurofeedback and meditation to sports, drama, and yoga—that offer new paths to recovery by activating the brain's natural neuroplasticity. Based on Dr. van der Kolk's research and that of other leading specialists, The Body Keeps the Score exposes the tremendous power of our relationships both to hurt and to heal—and offers new hope for reclaiming lives."

A PIECE OF OUR HISTORY

In the early hours of May 19, 2025, thin tendrils of smoke started curling into the sky from Tucker Cottage. Soon, there were multiple fire engines attempting to put out a blaze. Our oldest cottage on campus had been struck by lightning. When the smoke cleared, the only thing left standing were the external brick walls. Tucker Cottage was no more.

Built in 1981, Tucker Cottage was the first building erected at our current location. It originally served as a group home housing both young boys and girls along with the house parents, Mr. and Mrs. Miller. Mr. Tucker, who had donated the land to Turley, was still living in “Tucker House” at the time. Mr. Tucker wanted to donate land, but only wanted it to be used for helping children. Although he had several offers, he chose Turley because they would be able to build right away. Thus, Tucker Cottage came to be.

Over the years, Tucker Cottage grew to include three additional bedrooms, one of which was creatively fashioned from a converted garage. Its quirky and mismatched layout eventually earned it the nickname “the Frankenstein house.” Odd or not, Tucker Cottage has seen continuous use in the service of children since its foundation. A new kitchen was installed within the past three years, ensuring that delicious food would keep hungry children fed.

Tim and Diane Lynch, the most recent house parents, said the cottage had been affected by lightning previous to the recent event. A tree next to the west wall was struck, sending a surge of current into the house that fried all the computers and overheated the water pipes, causing several small geysers to erupt.

God works in mysterious ways. Due to the cottage’s age, renovation plans were put on hold. Hope Harbor intended to reassess the building after a year, determining the best way to repurpose it under the new model. The Deputy Fire Marshal at the scene stated the cause was a lightning strike and termed it an “act of God.”

It is always sad to see a part of your history disappear. The walls of Tucker Cottage held much laughter, raised many children, and saw many occupants over the years. Its years of service will not be forgotten.



Tim and Diane Lynch, their pups, and a resident inside Tucker Cottage

Tucker Cottage housed many residents during its years of service



May 2025, Tucker Cottage was reduced to ashes in a devastating fire



HOPE HARBOR

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www.hopeharborinc.org

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DONATE TO HOPE HARBOR

Feeling the urge to deep clean? Clear out the clutter and make a difference by donating to Thrift Harbor!



We accept gently used items in good condition, turning your extras into blessings for those in need. From helping families impacted by disasters to supporting foster families and more, your donations make a BIG impact. Plus, all proceeds ultimately support Hope Harbor!

Contact us at 918.923.4860 to learn how your donations can change lives!

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