

extensions

building up the church one investor at a time

Spring 2008

Spotlight on Investor Olive Grady

Watervliet, Michigan is the town of “flowing water”. Because of the ministry of CEIF investor Olive Grady, waters from the Spring of Life are flowing there, too. It all started a little over 20 years ago while Olive was in California. She had recently left the mission field in Mexico where she had expected to stay until she retired. After three months of service, though, she was prevented from staying due to an altitude sickness that she developed. This unexpected occurrence thrust Olive into prayer, seeking the Lord’s peace and direction for the next step of her life. She got into her car and drove, processing, praying, and seeking as she went. She returned with the clarity she sought: Olive was to return to Michigan and buy a house to use for hosting travelling missionaries.

Easy enough, right? Well as anyone who has followed the Lord for any extended period of time can attest, that is never the case. This was no exception. Olive found many obstacles awaiting her in Michigan, among those: her unemployment and lack of a house even after nine months of searching and laboring. But, she **knew** that God called her, and she knew He would provide—and provide He did! Soon, her realtor called to tell her of a house in Watervliet! When she went to see the house, she immediately felt at home; this was it! BUT, Watervliet was known for having foul drinking water. How could she offer that to those staying with her? So, the expense of obtaining a water softener and an iron filter was added on.

From November of 1987 through today, Olive has had a total of 1,127 visits in her home, 482 have been missionary ones! She records each in a guest registry. Visits have ranged anywhere from a single meal up to a week. On one occurrence she

hosted a family of five for a week.

Olive feels blessed to help others in this way. The only negative she encounters is the large amount of cost and labor involved with the necessary groceries and upkeep. Olive does not charge those who stay with her; she is constantly trusting God to provide for her to continue this ministry. Even on a **very** tight budget, her arms are continually open to receiving guests under her roof.

While listening to Olive, I felt compelled to “pull up a chair” and drink in the depth of her life’s experiences. There is a spring of “flowing water” coming from her life lived for furthering God’s kingdom! Her “teacher-story-telling” voice shared with me stories of Mexico’s earthquake of ’85, her visit to a pen-pal in Switzerland after 53 years of writing, and her continued involvement in various boards and committees in her churches and community (she attends a Hispanic and an Anglo church). I felt I was peeking into a window of her heart and am so thankful. I pray you, too, have enjoyed a sip of the ‘flowing waters’ of Christ after reading this.

Olive, keep ‘sticking your nose in strange places’; and keep telling your stories. There are still so many that **want** and **need** to hear them.

Please join me in praying for Olive. Pray that God provides financially for this hospitality ministry to continue, even raising up people to walk along side of her financially. Pray for more to be blessed by Him through her ministry of hospitality.

If you know of missionaries in need of a place to stay, please contact me here at CEIF and I’ll be sure to ask Olive to get in touch with you.

Olive Grady, Watervliet, MI
as told by: Colleen Stegmann



KITCHEN CORNER

“Sunshine Carrots”
...a tasty side dish.

- 5 medium carrots
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon ginger
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 2 Tablespoons butter/margarine

Slice the carrots crosswise about 1” thick. Cook in salted water until tender. Drain.

Meanwhile, combine cornstarch, ginger, sugar, salt, and orange juice in a saucepan over heat. Cook, stirring constantly until the sauce thickens and bubbles. Boil 1 minute, still stirring constantly. Stir in butter or margarine.

Pour sauce over hot carrots.

4 servings. Enjoy!

by Maureen Keutzer
(friend of Colleen Stegmann)
LaMoille, IL

If you have a special recipe that you would be willing to share with others, please e-mail us at newsletter@ceif.org.

Living H₂O

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.”

- Isaiah 43:18-19

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Colleen's Corner



It's SPRING!!!...times of spring cleaning, spring wardrobes, and the rejuvenation of spring breezes and spring rains.

But let's not skip ahead.

When I look out my car window or take a walk to town, I see evidence that the war for Winter is over and yet, it's still not quite Spring. It's as if we are in a place of 'in between'...there's garbage clinging to tree trunks and gathering at store fronts...the icky grey snow polluted with exhaust piled in corners...puddles and mud where once snow and ice were a walking path...and that 'beloved' sight of grass that lures us to walk again on it? Well, once stepped on, it squishes and oozes beneath the weight, creating nothing but muddy shoes...and disappointment.

We know Spring is coming... budding branches, flowers, sunshine, wispy clouds in blue skies...and green, green, green... but just not yet. This 'in between' is first needed, as bleak as it looks. No matter how much we would prefer to skip over it or desire to cover it up and not look at it; it is staring us in the face.

I pause to ponder this...and God speaks to my heart...
"What are you not wanting Me to see?"

My heart pours out its response, "What God!? What garbage am I hiding? Oh...that...well, I thought I took care of that. See how I tucked it away? Like the winter snow that covered all this garbage. But...that didn't work, did it?"

"Nope."

"But, I don't want you to see that. I don't even want to. Don't You think it's better just to leave that there as such and... not let You see?"

How easy it is for all of us to do so... to mentally and spiritually take that blanket of freshly lain snow, cover up

the trash in our hearts...and tuck it away. It looks so much nicer like this; it feels so much nicer-for the moment. And then we dust off our hands and feel successful at life; we have gotten rid of the garbage.

But God's love cannot and will not leave us here, 'successful' according to our definition. Instead, He penetrates our hearts and melts away that 'snow covered blanket' with His question, "Will You let Me see you? Will you let Me 'Spring clean' in you?"

He knows what lies beneath, in the most hidden parts of our hearts. He knew it before we did...and He knows the cover we tend to hide under, meticulously labeled as our job position or wardrobe or Christian mask of "everything is ok", etc. Standing before His all knowing eye, with our hearts exposed, He invites us to trust His love and let Him get rid of that which we tried to, but failed. We are faced with a decision: Will we let Him?

He won't until we do.

It is time for you and I to start living as the new creations God has purposed us to be.

But...will you let Him? Will you let Him clean house? Let Him have your relationships, your sense of self, your decisions, your past and present and future...your finances? All those things buried deep within you that are dirtying up your heart? He has come to make all things new...will you let Him?

Nugget for your Noodle

Don't let yesterday take up
too much of today.

- Unknown

Pro-claim Him!: Pr-ayers & Pr-aises!

There's a new addition to our website and newsletter for our Churches and Investors!!! It is an online prayer board called "Pr-ayers and Pr-aises"! Now you have an added opportunity to join in the ministry of CEIF! You can lift up the prayers listed as well as post your own prayer requests, being comforted in knowing that your brothers and sisters in the Lord will be lifting them up. What an awesome opportunity to be the Body of Christ to one another! Please, also keep us posted with praise reports. We want to share in praising God with you, too!

Just visit our website at www.ceif.org and click on the link. If you don't have access to the web, but have a prayer/praise to share, please feel free to call, write, or fax us and we'll be happy to post them for you! We at CEIF are so excited for this addition and will be joining you by lifting up the prayers during our weekly staff meetings.

A few praise reports will be highlighted in this section, also, in the hopes of encouraging you and testifying to the awesome power and love of our God. Nothing is impossible for Him, so let's lift Him (and prayers) up! **Pro-claim Him!!!**

