

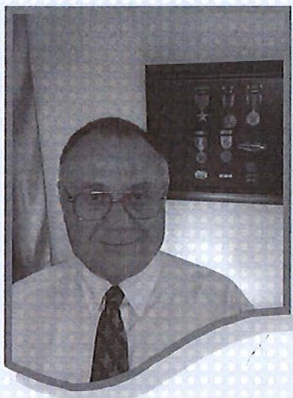
# NEWS

June 2024

## → MINISTRY UPDATE ←

David Nichols — President  
Main Office — (405) 236-3349

# UPDATE



Grace, peace, loving kindness, and a spirit of joy in the Lord to all who seek the Lord. I am so privileged to see gifts from God for the people who let the Lord be their God. My responsibility is to

provide the atmosphere where they can find these gifts from God. We have accomplished that in all of the areas we can control or influence.

In a world of sin and godlessness, the devil finds people he can use to push fear and anxiety on anyone he can. The devil has to use people to achieve evil and death, just like God uses people to achieve right living and life. It takes time and trials to get a person to where he can learn to cast his cares on the Lord. If a person is still weak and full of anxiety, he usually stresses and tries to find a way to escape in drugs or something that will calm him for the moment. Many times that action may be something that brings them to more bondage. The devil hates all of God's gifts of grace, and he will try to prevent any of us from making the right choices to be able to accept these gifts. These gifts require believing His



promises.

The Bible tells us the Law of Moses teaches us right from wrong. The Law of Moses didn't have the power to cleanse us, but it taught us how to live. We know the New Testament teaches us that law and order is necessary for our safety, and those who administer these things are vessels of God. Like teachers, they will be held to a higher standard in judgement. So, if they use the law to hurt someone, God help them, and if teachers use the law to hurt people, God help them also. We all will be judged as we judge others. That is why we are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Some of our enemies decided to destroy the success of many of our clients by making them homeless. That would be the end of their success, and that would make it impossible for them to complete their probation. That, in turn, would soon put them back in prison. Their probation success is based on them getting and keeping a job to pay for counseling, court fines, child support, probation fees, polygraphs (lie detector tests), past due debts, etc.; while having money to live on, transportation to make it all happen, plus a bathroom and a bed, etc. Without Hand Up, that has proved impossible for most. We did have the help of our lawyer (the best in Oklahoma), and things are now back to normal and we are again able to help these men as we have always done in the past. That means the companies who have needed these men and our help can now hire them again. We want to thank God and

# NEWS



each one who helped.



We now have seven beds at the farm, with four active greenhouses, and we are working on more. Each greenhouse is 25' by 60'. One is aquaponics with greens ready to serve. One is strawberries, and another is all tomatoes. It is contracted to a genius; who hires some of our men to learn the business. We have a total of 28 greenhouses, so we will soon be growing a lot of healthy food. As time goes on, we will be raising a lot of good fish also.

[www.huminc.org](http://www.huminc.org)

Please check out Hand Up's new website. Debra McCullough did the work, and she has definitely been a godsend. The website is [huminc.org](http://huminc.org). God always provides, and I am sure you will be hearing more from her in the future.

What Hand Up does is "doing of the word," not just hearing it (which is dead faith). I could list 20 reasons why we do what we do, and I am still waiting for anyone to come up with a single reason why we shouldn't be doing it. Hurt

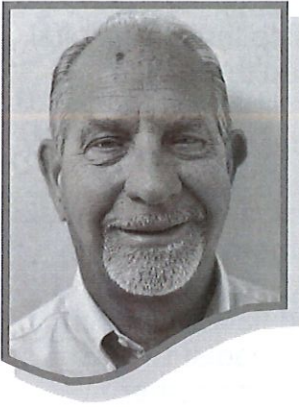
and fear can cause people to hate and do the opposite of what God says to do. So I pray for each of those and ask all of God's people to be doers of the word and not hearers only. I pray churches will eventually overcome the political cloud that prevents action to help all the people Satan has destroyed, regardless of the labels society has put on them. God bless all.

-David Nichols

## FOREVER GROWING

Not only is Hand Up Ministries growing in numbers as more men coming out of prison are looking for housing and assistance, but our connections are growing. No ministry or program exists or thrives completely on its own. It makes connections and networks with other programs or ministries with similar interests or goals in order to support one another in the struggles. In recent weeks, Hand Up Ministries has been networking more and more with other groups and agencies who share interests in helping those coming out of prison. We have been able to start networking with several in the Chandler area where we helped establish a quarterly meeting with likeminded individuals where we can share ideas, resources, and possible solutions for the challenges that arise.

In and around Oklahoma City, primarily through the efforts of Stephen Yanny, the park manager at our 59<sup>th</sup> street location, we have been networking for several months with a vast array of other entities who share common interests and goals. Just this week through shared efforts these groups have come together to share contacts and resources to aid Hand Up to solve a critical issue involving offender registration and parole officer supervision. These connections have proved invaluable in many situations. We have found that not only have we learned from these different groups, but Hand Up has been able to educate many of these group leaders as to how solve some of their challenges. We have been able share the systems that Hand Up



has been successfully using for years to provide the best outcomes for our clients.

Growth is challenging, but it can also be rewarding and interesting as we learn to partner with others in the journey.

-Ray Riddle

## Testimonies

I am from Tulsa, and I was born in 1962. I was the youngest of six children. We attended a Methodist church every Sunday, and we all sang in the choir. I went to Sunday school, but I didn't really know the Lord. I skipped church a lot, and I wasn't interested in knowing Him. My siblings and I played sports, and we won many trophies. We had a competition about who could win the most trophies. I played baseball, football, and soccer. I had ADHD, and we had a babysitter who locked me in a dark closet because she didn't know how to deal with me. My dad found another babysitter when he found out. My dad worked three jobs sometimes. He was in law enforcement. My dad taught me to have a good work ethic, and I always gave 100% at every job I had. When I was five, my dad put my siblings and me in a Methodist home because he and my mom were having some problems. This was a very scary experience for a five year old boy, especially since I was separated from my siblings in the home. My parents got divorced, and both of my parents remarried. I lived with my grandparents till I was eight. That was when my dad bought a house, and I lived with him and my step-mom.

I got my first felony when I was 12, and I continued to stray from the Lord in my teen years. My step-mom was verbally and

physically abusive, and my dad let me go live with my mom and step-dad when I was 14. That was when I started using drugs. I blamed it on peer pressure, but now I realize that was only a justification. My step-dad was a truck driver who worked for a moving company, and I helped him in the summers. I didn't finish high school, but I got my GED. I got married when I was 21, and the marriage lasted six years. I have one daughter. I have done construction work and oilfield work, and I have been a mechanic. I continued to do wrong in my adult years, not caring about consequences or who I hurt. I turned my life over to the Lord once, but it didn't last. I let the flesh take over my life, and I went to prison for the first time in 1988. I have been to prison three times.

I came to know the Lord in prison. I was tired of the life I was living, so I surrendered all to the Lord. I felt peace that day. Living without the Lord in my life wasn't working, and I became a born again Christian. My last incarceration lasted 17 years. About a year before I discharged, I looked back on my life, and I realized I had wasted my life. I was 61 years old, and I wanted to do something positive with my life. A friend told me about Hand Up Ministries. He told me how the dedicated staff at Hand Up helped newly released felons with a place to stay and a chance to get back on their feet. I applied to Hand Up, and a few weeks later I received an acceptance letter from Hand Up. Hand Up Ministries was a godsend. Not only did they help me with every aspect of my life, they also gave me hope. Who does this? The staff is made up of men of God. Hand Up helps with jobs, food, transportation, clothing, ID, and everything I needed to get back on my feet.

-Anonymous

One of our residents passed away this week we honor his time with Hand Up, and his service to our Country as a Veteran.

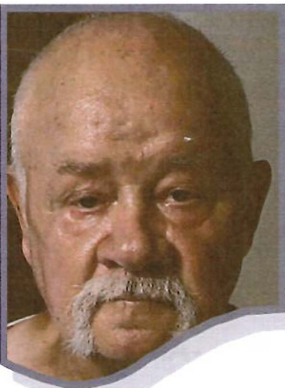
I was born Sugarland, Texas in 1956. I was the middle child of five siblings.

My dad worked for the county, and my mom worked for a large company. My parents got divorced in 1968, and my mom moved us to Ada, Oklahoma. My mom met my step-dad there. My step-dad and I didn't see eye to eye. We attended a Baptist church. My step-dad wanted us to go to church, and the only reason I went to church was keep peace in the family. I graduated from high school in Ada, and I returned to Texas to go to welding school.

I got job Tulsa in 1978. I worked in Tulsa for a year, and then I went to Alaska to work on an oil pipeline. I spent 11 months in Alaska. I wanted to stay in Alaska, but there was no position open with that company. I returned to Ada, where I got a job with a company which made grave monuments. I worked there for 36 years. We helped build the Murrah bombing memorial in Oklahoma City.

I got married in 1978, and I have three daughters and 11 grandchildren. My first wife died in 1989. I thought there was no reason to live, but I met a man who encouraged me to continue living. I remarried in 1996 or 1997. We were married for ten years. I committed a crime in 2004, and I spent 17 years in prison. I started attending church in prison, and I was baptized in Church of Christ in 2015. I got out of prison in 2021, and I came to Hand Up Ministries.

I got a job in July, 2021, and I have been at that same job for four months. I have made many good friends at Hand Up, and Hand Up has given me a chance and made a big difference in my life. There is more to do than sit around the house. I have found a good church, which I attend on Sunday morning, and I like the church service at Hand Up on Sunday night. If any brothers here want me to pray for them or help them, I am glad do that.



-John Anderson

I was born in Talihina Indian Hospital in December of 1964. I had three older sisters, but only two are still living. My dad was shot and killed in a bar in November of 1966. We lived with my paternal grandparents about six miles west of Idabel, Oklahoma. My mother remarried, and we moved into Idabel. During my childhood and early teens, my family had its own church. It was called Water Hole Methodist Church. We had a preacher come every other Sunday, and my grandfather would preach on the other Sundays. My grandfather passed away in 1987, and our church came to an end. My grandmother went to another Indian Methodist church in the area.

I moved to Stillwater when I met my wife. Our son was born in December of 1987. We also had two daughters. We raised them the best we could. Our marriage ended in 2001. It was around this time that I was charged with a crime, and this altered my life forever. Due to the nature of my crime, life has been a struggle. I served 20 months in prison. I sent an application to Hand Up Ministries, and they gave me a home.

I have been at Hand Up for a year. I give thanks to Hand Up for giving me a place to call home. I also want to thank my Genesis One leader for giving me support.

-Anonymous

*In everything do unto others as you would have them do to you,; for this is the law and the prophets.*

—Matthew 5:12

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble (1 Peter 3:8).

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

To Give Online: [www.huminc.org/give](http://www.huminc.org/give)

or

Mail donations to:  
Hand Up Ministries Inc.  
PO Box 2896  
OKC, OK 73101

-----