



An engaging game of chess during Thursday @ The Gate

**Special points of interest:**

Note our new address—  
PO Box 453

Over 280 youth served  
every week!

Brothers & sisters love to  
hang out at The Gate!

Inspiration comes in many  
forms but you'll always find it  
at The Gate.

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# Inside THE GATE

The Gate Youth Association

PO Box 453

Independence, OR 97351

## INSPIRATION AT TUESDAY LUNCH

Each Tuesday Lunch and Thursday @ The Gate has a special time where someone from our local faith community shares an inspirational message with the students. Following is a talk given by Neil Olson, a dad, a fire fighter, a coach, a committed Christian, and the husband of CHS staff member Stacy Olson, on the Tuesday before Veteran's Day. It was entitled "Two Defining Forces."

*"Only two defining forces have ever offered to die for you... Jesus Christ and the American Soldier. One died for your soul, the other for your freedom."* Lt. Col. Grant L. Rosensteel, Jr. USAF

This quote by Lt. Col Rosensteel found its way into my heart just a couple of years ago and it has deeply seeded itself in my soul.

Even as a child I felt as though I owed something to the veterans that have fought and died for our county and our freedom. As I grew older and became a Christian, it has become an even larger part of who I am, especially after realizing that Christ made the same offer. However, Jesus' offer was for my soul, my eternal salvation, my eternal freedom. Soldiers and veterans made that same offer; however, being mortal men, they could only offer earthly freedom, for maybe 70 or 80 years. That freedom was

paid for by hundreds of thousands of men and women and it is not a guarantee. Jesus' offer, if accepted, is a heavenly contract that can never be broken.

What really stands out to me are the three words "have ever offered". This implies that the sacrifice has been made: one can either accept the offer or refuse it.

Christ died for us. What did he ask for in return? Simply put...a relationship. He wants a relationship with us and for us to live as he lived. Christ wants to see us loving one another, supporting one another, fighting for those that are unable and to spread that love. How better can we spread that love than to spread His word?

Thanks to our veteran's, we have the freedom to spread His word.



## ONE OF OUR AMAZING VOLUNTEERS

The Gate is blessed to have an average of 25 faithful volunteers giving their time weekly so that Monmouth-Independence area students can participate in Tuesday Lunch and Thursdays @ The Gate. An additional ten WOU, community and Gate volunteers and 4 grant-paid staff participate in the collaborative Central High School-The Gate Afterschool Program.

One volunteer who has been a huge asset in both the Afterschool Homework Program and Thursdays @The Gate is Western Oregon University sophomore, Camille Shupe. One of Camille's many goals is to become a middle or high school teacher. From our observations, she will make a great one! Every Tuesday she has been faithful to help CHS students with math, science and writing. On Thursdays, this fall Camille has led large groups of students

in playing Apples to Apples, Capture the Flag (outside!) and even gets students exercising and dancing with video games. On the quiet side, she is an excellent listener and has been involved with very serious conversations about a plethora of teen issues from cutting to concerns for friends making unwise choices.

When not volunteering with The Gate, Camille helps lead a youth group at a church in Salem and works part time at Chucky Cheese and on the WOU campus. She still finds time to pass all her classes, go to a Bible study, play the flute in the WOU band and nurture a diversity of friendships! She truly is an amazing young adult, not unlike all our WOU volunteers for whom we are extremely thankful!

## THE GATE: A FAMILY AFFAIR

As we greeted students last week at Thursdays At The Gate, at least ten sets of siblings came through the door as our numbers topped off at over 100 students! The same is true of the student population at Tuesday Lunch—many siblings attending with their own friends of course! It excites us to think of the future possibilities awaiting us in serving whole families. That could mean parenting classes, post high school preparation assistance, family counseling, game nights.....lots of community collaborations!

One such family is the Vera Family. Since the outset of the first Gate Afterschool Homework Program at Central High School five years ago the Vera Family has been continuously involved with The Gate activities. Just last week three members of the family gathered together for a Thursday afternoon of activities, including homework help, wreath making, fusion beading and soccer, plus a spaghetti dinner before helping with clean up and heading home for the evening.

It all started five years ago with older sister, Erica, who came for homework help every Tuesday and Wednesday and successfully graduated from CHS two years ago. Emelda, a senior, completing her senior project with a Gate volunteer as her mentor, and Jesus, a junior, and competitive CHS soccer player, both continue to use the afterschool program as a quiet place to study, access technology and to get assistance with math, writing, econ or science when needed.

Jesus is always ready to take a leadership role in soccer games at Thursdays @ The Gate or to just hang with friends and play foosball or air hockey.

Emelda, who loves to challenge staff in interesting conversations, recently brought her younger sister who quickly made friends with other Talmadge students and now hopes now to come every Thursday.

The Vera Family is very typical of Thursday @ The Gate families. They say they love to come to a safe, warm place where they are accepted and affirmed and there is always something to do or eat! (Isn't that pretty close to unconditional love?)



Hangin' out at The Gate with sisters and brothers!