

hour. We could be there every week, spend time with David, and get to know each other." Bill tells a story of how he once tried to bribe David with ice cream. The offer backfired, and David refused to move a muscle until Bill brought him chocolate ice cream. After that, every time they heard the ice cream truck pass, Bill was forced to run down the street and bring back treats. "We began to see him give us feedback," Bill says. "Three to four months into patterning, he started giving us the thumbs up—before anything else. That tells a lot! He began developing a whole series of behaviors. He was in there. He just needed us to help him get out."

The group grew close and their focus intensified as the years passed. "We gained strength from seeing prayers answered through camaraderie," says Gene Kimmel. "A limp dishrag began to move on its own, and we took part in that. We shared our lives. David wasn't the only one getting help. I always looked forward to patterning."

Jacque Wonner felt him squeeze her finger once. Cara Anderson remembers when his smile came back—a smile that he uses a lot today. And Cheryl Strauss lost nearly every game of Uno™ and Connect Four™ she played with him. "David gave us more joy than we could give him," she says. "God blessed him with the fruit of the Spirit. It only comes from God."

Of course, the triumphs ambled in one at a time, with much toil and impedance in the meantime. Leone remembers with tears in her eyes a time when David wet his bed. "I was so angry and frustrated, I yelled at him. I made him undress himself and change his own sheets so he could see how much work it was. He did it too—all by himself—but I sat there crying as I watched my grown son struggle for two hours to take off his T-shirt."

Leone is a tiny woman of about 60 years. She could be just about anyone walking by in a hardware store. But when you talk with her, you begin to see a strength and resolve not common to most people. She's simple but solid, and her humility belies wisdom. Saint Basil once said, "Many a man curses the rain that falls upon his head, and knows not that it brings abundance to drive away hunger." Leone does not condemn the events of her life. Nor does she question God for allowing them to happen. Instead, she thanks Him for the astonishing miracles that comprise her daily life. And in so doing, she helps others to see eternity in their midst.

### What It's Worth

Today David lives in his own duplex, feeds himself, bathes himself, and even shaves himself. And he's quite communicative—when his caretaker gave him an unsatisfactory haircut, David yelled, "You bad! You're fired!" His favorite ice cream is chocolate, and his favorite place to eat is in a Corvette. When the weather is warm, he wears his sunglasses and goes cruising for girls with Bill Campbell. When asked what he thinks of his mom, he turns to her and says with a grin, "I love you, Mom!" As I sit watching David sip his hot drink, I understand why his family and community couldn't give up on him.

Nevertheless, I'm convinced those who stopped believing in David did so because of factors greater than their own