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# Charity & Children

*The historic publication of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, first to tell the story for 136 years.*



@bchfamily

January/February 2023

Issue 1

Volume 136

## God works a world away to bring Princess home

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

**T**he file folder Amanda and Jared Stone held in their hands said the child was unadoptable. But their testimony tells of a mighty God who can orchestrate mighty things, turning what others call impossible to probable and the probable into the miraculous.

"We began the adoption process never expecting to wait three years," Amanda says. "We knew God had laid this on our hearts but it was hard."

Jared says they embraced God's calling. "You can count on God," he says. "His calling is always followed by a wilderness experience. He prepares you for the promise and gives you hope for what is coming."

The little girl was born at 29 weeks. She struggled for life. The Philippine orphanage where she first lived was overcrowded. Initially diagnosed with Down syndrome, she struggled to eat and digest food. Her future looked dim.

With little notice, she was moved to a smaller, Christian-operated orphanage. What was thought as hopeless became probable as "gentle hands poured Jesus into her every day." Loving attention brought progress, although it was slow. Despite the care, some of the little girl's disabilities lingered.

"It was God at work," Jared asserts. "The three years we waited were years God transformed this sweet little girl's life and prepared us to be her home." (Continued on page 6.)





# Join us and become a foster parent for a child in need

By **Michael C. Blackwell**, President/CEO (Chief Encouragement Officer)

**P**icture this, more than 16,000 children are in the North Carolina Foster Care System. That's the size of the City of Morganton or the Town of Clayton. These children don't need to be in a system. They need to be in a home.

These children need love, acceptance, blessing. They need a loving family in a loving environment. They need to feel—in the words of an old hymn—"safe and secure from all alarm."

This is where you come in. You and your church can do so much to alleviate the harsh reality of this system by realizing foster care as a personal option or as an outreach in your church.

BCH's *Every Child Foster & Adoption Ministry* is catching on throughout North Carolina. More than 700 churches have shown an interest in foster care, adoption, and foster to adopt. Check out [www.every-child.org](http://www.every-child.org) for more information. Every child deserves a safe, stable, and loving home. Our mission—in partnership with the Baptist State Convention—is to ensure that every child in North Carolina receives the caring home he or she deserves. Currently, BCH has 162 foster homes and there are 157 children being served. The total number of foster children who have been served is 624.

The church is the answer. YOU are the answer. BCH will train and license

couples in churches to be foster parents. We will see that you get the support, love, and encouragement you need. This is a win-win situation. Children—whom Jesus said "of such is the Kingdom of God"—will feel protected, encouraged, and loved. You, as a foster parent, will share in a godly ministry.

On the day I write these words, I spent an hour with many of our Foster Care Program staff from across the state. One veteran staff member told of having three foster children, all three of whom were subsequently adopted. We have Trustees who have adopted children they first fostered in their home.

Challenges? Of course.

Blessings? Absolutely!

Let me encourage you, your church, or your Association to discover the Blessed

Assurance of doing something about the plight of homeless children. Write Dr. Mark Smith, our BCH staff member who is shepherding the Every Child initiative. He will reply immediately to your entreaty. His email is [mesmith@bchfamily.org](mailto:mesmith@bchfamily.org).

BCH's new strategic plan is entitled EMBRACE—for such a time as this. We are in an upward spiral of growth and much of that is in foster care, adoption, and foster to adopt. Join with us. You will experience *Riches Beyond Measure*.

## Mission:

sharing hope . . . changing lives

## Vision:

To provide the highest quality of Christian services to children, adults and families in a caring culture of measurable excellence

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# Ministry continues upward spiral of growth in 2023

By **Blake Ragsdale**, Managing Editor

Despite uncertain times, Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) has been undeterred in embracing opportunities to grow its outreach to vulnerable children, families, and individuals. "We at BCH never shy away when God leads," said BCH president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell. "This is a time of rapid change and with that change comes a good amount of uncertainty. But it is not a time to falter."

BCH is in the process of adding and expanding its footprint through key ministry initiatives:

**River Hill Refuge:** Construction of three new family foster homes in Shelby, NC is well under-way. Couples aspiring to be foster parents will be able to do so by living at these new homes which will allow them to care for more children, including sibling groups, than their personal homes will allow.



**Laura's Homes:** BCH will be overseeing two existing cottage homes for children in Shelby. The leadership of these independently

operated homes asked BCH to take ownership which will begin in January. **Truett Ministries:** Through the support of the Dogwood Foundation, BCH acquired the two additional facilities on the same property as its Truett Home, a cottage for children, in Hayesville. Turner Cottage, named for C. B. Turner who made a \$200,000 renovation gift, will be a family foster home. The other will be an independent living home for youth aging out of the foster care system and have little or no family support.

**Emmanuel Home:** Renovations are almost complete at Emmanuel Home in Thomasville. A dream project of BCH's Christian Adoption Services, the location on the outskirts of Mills Home in Thomasville will provide a home and support to women who chose adoption for their babies.



Above clockwise, River Hill Refuge, three family foster homes made possible by gifts from the Westmoreland family, is being constructed in Shelby. Emmanuel Home in Thomasville is being renovated for birth mothers who have chosen adoption for their babies. Laura's Homes in Shelby provides cottage care for children in the NC foster care system. Turner Cottage in Hayesville will be a family foster home for foster parents who need additional space to accept children. The Independent Living Home, sharing space with Turner Cottage and BCH's existing Truett Home, will help youth aging out of foster care. Watch for more information coming soon.





# Let your love shine bright in the coming new year

By **Brenda B. Gray**, Executive Vice President, Development & Communications

**B**y this time, you might be taking down the Christmas Tree, packing away the ornaments, and putting up all of the other Christmas decorations until next year. However, I want to ask you not to *put away* Christmas so fast. The decorations, yes go ahead and put those away, but the meaning of the season, the joy and the memories, no! Let's place them in our heart for safe keeping to draw upon when we need them to direct us to make a difference, to care for others, and to offer the meaning and experience of a true Christmas. Let's cherish these moments and lessons for our future and the future of others to come.

Charles Dickens captures the spirit of Christmas in his wonderful work *A Christmas Carol*. Dickens creatively illustrates the lesson of how to reach out to those in need through Tiny Tim—a small child full of courage and hope but who is dependent on others for help. The heart of Dickens' Scrooge was transformed by the courage and love he witnessed this young boy share with all those around him. Scrooge's whole life was transformed and he determined to make a difference by helping to change the life of others.

As we remember our past dating back to 1885, many Tiny Tim's have walked through our doors. First, there was nine-year old Mary Presson who came in need of refuge and a home. Since Mary entered our doors, thousands of children have found refuge. This past year we touched more than 156,000 people. Children and families whose lives have been transformed by God's love and grace. Everyday, children, families, and individuals walk through our doors in crisis. They are lives full of so much trauma—children of Christmas past and children of Christmas present.

What do our memories and lessons of Christmas past and present teach us about those we will be called to care for not only today but in the future? In Matthew 25, we read: "Whatsoever you have done for the least of these, you have done unto me."

This is our Christmas message—our challenge of Christmas past, present, and future. How many more will walk through our doors this year needing refuge, needing healing, needing home, and most importantly needing to know the love of God. We continue with a strong sense of commitment to strive to meet their needs and to point them to the One who

does indeed transform. We do not do this alone. Thank you for walking this journey with us!

One of the ways you can ensure we are there for the future is through planning and preparing to leave a legacy gift. January is "Make Your Will Month." Did you know that the majority of Americans die without a Last Will and Testament? Whether you name Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina to receive a portion of your estate or not, it is important to put your wishes in writing. Otherwise, the state will determine how your assets are distributed. Planning allows you to determine how you want to leave your legacy.

Consider preparing or updating your will using one or more of these accepted ways to make a bequest.

1. Denote a specific amount to be given to BCH.
2. Specify a percentage of assets to be given to BCH.
3. Indicate the residue of the assets to come to BCH.
4. Name BCH as the contingent beneficiary. This is a bequest made on condition that a certain event must occur before distribution to the beneficiary.

The following are considerations when planning a charitable bequest for BCH.

1. Unrestricted bequest: This is a gift for BCH's general purposes – to be used at the discretion of BCH's governing board.

2. Restricted bequest: This gift allows you to specify how the funds are to be used. It's best to consult BCH when you make your will to be certain your intent can be honored.

3. Honorary or memorial bequest: This gift is given "in memory of" or "in honor of" someone.

4. Endowed bequest: This bequest restricts the principal of a gift, requiring us to hold the funds permanently and use only the investment income.

The official legal bequest language for Baptist Children's Home of North Carolina is: "I, [name], of [city, state, ZIP], give, divide and bequeath to Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc. [written amount or percentage of the estate or description of property] for its unrestricted use and purpose."

Anonymous gifts will be kept confidential. But, allowing us to recognize your gift can encourage others to do the same.

This year, as you begin your planning for 2023, will you place near the top of your list to find ways to make a difference in your world. Plan deeds of kindness for others. Take time to enjoy the abundant life God has given us. And each day celebrate God's grace in your life and determine to share it with others.

Just as Scrooge transformed Tiny Tim's hopes and dreams into reality, you have done the same for many Tiny Tim's through the 138 years of ministry at BCH.

Dickens reminds us that the spirit of Christmas is the love of Christ! It is a love to be shared and lived out each and every day. It is my hope and prayer that the spirit of giving we have held close this Christmas season will burn bright in our hearts throughout the coming year as we care for "the least of these"—today and tomorrow.

Call me at 336-689-4442 and learn more about how you can help give a legacy gift to ensure a better future for those we serve.

**God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them.**

**Hebrews 6:10**





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You can provide children, single mothers, special needs adults and all those Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) serves with necessities and opportunities they've never had before.

## How to shop:

Look through the online catalog at [bchfamily.org/gift-catalog](http://bchfamily.org/gift-catalog) or access it by scanning the QR code



## Three ways to make your gift:

### 1. MAIL THE ORDER FORM WITH A CHECK:

- Find your item(s) on the form below. They are listed in the order as they appear in the catalog.
- Write the quantity in the space provided beside each item(s).
- Total your purchases and make your check payable for the total amount to "Baptist Children's Homes."
- Cut out the order form. Place the form and check in the enclosed pre-paid postage envelope. Please fill out the information on the envelope. If using your own envelope, the address is BCH, P.O. Box 338, Thomasville, NC 27361

### 2. MAKE YOUR GIFT ONLINE:

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### 3. MAKE YOUR GIFT BY PHONE:

Call 336-474-1312 to make a credit card gift by phone.



Item	Amount	Quantity	Your Gift	Code
Birthday Sponsorship - child	\$50		\$	GC001
Birthday Sponsorship - cottage	\$600		\$	GC002
Prom Dress/Suit	\$150		\$	GC003
College Care Package	\$50		\$	GC004
Christmas Sponsorship - child	\$50		\$	GC005
Christmas Sponsorship - cottage	\$600		\$	GC006
Christmas Meal - child	\$50		\$	GC007
Christmas Meal - cottage	\$600		\$	GC008
Winter Coat	\$50		\$	GC009
Shoes	\$75		\$	GC010
Clothing Wardrobe	\$400		\$	GC011
Suitcase	\$50		\$	GC012
Fishing Pole - child	\$25		\$	GC013
Fishing Pole - cottage	\$300		\$	GC014
Sports Equipment - child	\$50		\$	GC015
Sports Equipment - cottage	\$600		\$	GC016
Art Supplies	\$25		\$	GC017
Counseling Session	\$100		\$	GC018
Night of Safety	\$150		\$	GC019
Life Jacket - camper	\$25		\$	GC020
Life Jacket - camp	\$250		\$	GC021
Personal Tent - camper	\$100		\$	GC022
Personal Tent - camp	\$1,000		\$	GC023
Boots - camper	\$100		\$	GC024
Boots - camp	\$1,000		\$	GC025
Canoe	\$1,500		\$	GC026
Welcome Care Package	\$35		\$	GC027

Item	Amount	Quantity	Your Gift	Code
Bedding Basics	\$100		\$	GC028
Mattress - child	\$150		\$	GC029
Mattress - cottage	\$1,800		\$	GC030
Mattress - campus	\$9,000		\$	GC031
Family Start Up Package	\$400		\$	GC032
School Supplies	\$50		\$	GC033
Wheelchair Ramp	\$350		\$	GC034
Red Bags (Minimum Quantity of 5)	\$3		\$	GC035
Electric Fan	\$25		\$	GC036
Diapers & Wipes	\$100		\$	GC037
Formula	\$200		\$	GC038
Birth Mom Retreat Sponsorship	\$500		\$	GC039
Backpack/Canoe Trip - camper	\$500		\$	GC040
Backpack/Canoe Trip - camp	\$5,000		\$	GC041
Campership	\$250		\$	GC042
Group Celebration Trip - child	\$125		\$	GC043
Group Celebration Trip - cottage	\$1,500		\$	GC044
Event Tickets	\$150		\$	GC045
Chicken	\$10		\$	GC046
Chicken Feed	\$40		\$	GC047
Meals for a Week - Guatemala	\$50		\$	GC048
Meals for a Month - Guatemala	\$200		\$	GC049
Education	\$220		\$	GC050
Bible for child	\$10		\$	GC051
Bible for adult	\$25		\$	GC052
Where Needed Most			\$	GC053
One of Everything	\$6,705		\$	GC054
TOTAL DONATION AMOUNT			\$	



# God calls Christian families to domestic and international adoptions through CAS

By Jim Edminson, Editor

(Continued from page 1.)

Six-year-old Princess wakes in the morning and her “feet hit the floor running.” Amanda and Jared say she is so much like her older sister, ten-year-old Audrey. The two girls are both full of energy and outgoing, never meeting a stranger.

Audrey dreamed of being a big sister. Her mom and dad say the wait to adopt Princess may have been the hardest on her. But it was a wait she says “was worth it.”

“It felt like a long process at the time but CAS walked with us every step of the way,” Jared says. “Princess has been home with us now for almost two years.”

Christian Adoption Services (CAS) has been connecting children in need of forever families for more than 40 years ([www.christianadopt.org](http://www.christianadopt.org)). Through international adoption, homes are found for children who are in need of a loving, stable, Christian family. CAS is a ministry of Baptist Children’s Homes and has been accredited by the Philippines as a child-placing agency for more than 40 years. This international adoption program places healthy, waiting children

who are over age 8, children with special needs ages 2-15, and sibling groups. There are three different tracks to adopt from the Philippines: regular, special home finding, and relative adoption with wait times between 12-48 months.

“We did not initially request a child with disabilities,” Amanda says. “But we could not turn away.”

It was daunting as the couple considered all of their new daughter’s needs. “The special needs listed in her file were all true,

except for being Down,” Jared recalls. “But since coming home, we have witnessed God’s healing in Princess’s life.”

The couple attest that only God can take a child from the other side of the world and bring her to North Carolina.

“It is as if we have always been together,” Amanda says. “God works out everything for His glory. All the healing has come from Him.”

The couple agree that what the Spirit brings together is as powerful as the blood of a family shares. They say adopting Princess has changed the way they “think and see.”

“I cannot stop thinking about what God is doing in the world and how we can be a part through international adoptions,” Jared says.

## God prepares couple for calling

A wave to each other every day on their ways to and from work for two years led to a meeting, romance, and marriage. Two years later, Casey and Brittany Am-

mons welcomed the news that they were expecting. The couple were elated when their son Knox was born. Brittany thought it was a wonderful beginning. She is one of five siblings and dreamed of having a large family.

“I could not imagine loving anyone more than Knox,” Casey admits. “I thought my

world was complete.”

Soon after Knox’s birth, Brittany began having severe abdominal pains. Something was wrong. Surgery left her unable to have any more children, leaving her heart broken.

“I felt like there was a big hole in my heart,” she shares. “I thought it was a hole only a family could fill.”

Brittany turned to God for answers. “I grew up in the church and was comfortable doing church, but I did not have a relationship with God. My brother had recently been saved. We began talking

and he led me to the Lord. I discovered Jesus was the One who could fill the hole and heal my heart.”

Casey did not grow up in church, but says he was playing the part, “trying to be a good person.”

“I checked all the boxes,” he confesses. “But I knew my life was not what it should be. I wanted to be a better person.”

The couple began to discuss adopting and discovered CAS online. They attended an information meeting at a nearby church. Both felt a stirring in their hearts.

“I was deeply moved by everyone I met at the CAS meeting,” Casey remembers. “It was so evident that they had something that I didn’t have.”

Later that night after returning home, Casey watched a video of Billy Graham preaching a sermon on being born again. “I knew I needed to be born again and right then and there I surrendered my life and gave my heart to God.”

Excited about adopting, the couple submitted an application and were denied. But instead of seeing it as a rejection, they gave it all to God in faith.

“It wasn’t the right time,” Casey says. “God needed time to work in our lives. He would work it out. And in the meantime, we discovered our calling.”

One year later the couple reapplied.



Two-year-old Eli and father Casey

Things started happening. Nine months to the day, Eli was born.

“It happened so quick,” Brittany laughs. “We were chosen by the birth mom, Eli was born on Father’s Day, and the next day we went to meet him.”

Two years passed and the Ammons began discussing adoption again. Both were open to the idea, but Brittany said it needed to be from the Lord. In April, the phone rang. Eli’s birth mom wanted the Ammons to become Eli’s sister’s parents, too.



Sisters Princess and Audrey are close. Princess was adopted two years ago traveling from the Philippines to become part of the Stone family in North Carolina.



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The last day to have your gift doubled is January 31, 2023.



# Guatemala homes need \$100,000 at start of 2023

By **Brenda Gray**, Executive Vice President, Development & Communications

**B**aptist Children's Homes is committed to bringing healing to the orphaned children who come to Good Shepherd Ministries in Guatemala. Through the Good Shepherd Children's Home, the Westmoreland Family Children's Home, and the Mae Home, children are given hope and the promise of a better tomorrow. It is all made possible through the prayers and support of friends and donors.

Recently, I received an update on Mae Home from Roger and Vicki Grossman, (our missionaries in Guatemala). They write:

"Mae Home is near completion but there remains much to be done. The very good thing is we already have had five children living in the home and all of them love it. They have a lot more responsibilities and more of a routine in this home but all are pitching in and are growing in stature and in the Lord.

"The five children range in ages from 16 years of age to eight years of age. The two boys are in their own bedroom and the girls are in their own bedroom. The left side of the building is basically finished—only lacking some shelving, furnishings, and the final security system). This side includes the kitchen, dining area, empty living area, two workers bedrooms with bath, the three girls' bedroom with bath, and the boys' bedroom with bath. On the right-hand side of the home there is a tall wall with glass on top. This is the open laundry area with two *pilas* and clothes lines. The unfinished little room in the middle will be semi open, but roofed with clothes lines. During the rainy season, getting clothes dried is a challenge. The small structure will help. The final two bedrooms for three children in each need some work and the outside lacks a lot of



Mae Home is nearing completion, but delays due to COVID and rising construction costs has created a \$25,000 shortfall. Prayers and financial gifts are needed to complete Mae Home and provide for operating in 2023. Gifts will help in caring for the 35 children living in the three homes in Guatemala.

sealing, more *teja*, and sidewalks. The inside patio area is unfinished. We will have a small vegetable garden for training purposes in this area.

"Many thanks for making this ministry to children possible. Please pray and give. Your financial gifts are helping rescue children for eternity."

We need your help now in these three areas:

1. Prayers
2. Mission teams to help us finish the building project. Call Mark Abernathy at Baptist on Mission to schedule a time for your group to go.
3. Financial support to complete the Mae Home. We need \$25,000 to complete this project. We had raised the needed funds for the project but with the lack of teams going during COVID, we had to hire local builders to do the work and the cost of

building materials has increased, resulting in a shortfall.

4. Financial support for operating the three orphanages. We presently need \$100,000.

Thanks to many of you who have already given to make it possible for us to be there for these precious children. We are presently serving 35 children through our three homes. The needs are overwhelming. We need to finish this home and to serve more children at this time.

Thank you so much for your prayerful consideration of a special gift that will give these boys and girls a much-needed chance at life. Remember, these children "are being rescued for eternity." Call me at 336-689-4442 or email at [bbgray@bch-family.org](mailto:bbgray@bch-family.org) if you have any questions.



## GIVE TO THE *angel* FUND

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Give at [christianadopt.org/angel-fund](https://christianadopt.org/angel-fund)





# Alumni remember Edwin and Mary Drury's kindness— Flora Hicks Patton recognized for service to alumni

By **Lib Johnson** (336) 299-7412 [libsjohnson@triad.rr.com](mailto:libsjohnson@triad.rr.com)

**W**e received word from **Nick Lineberry** that his wife, **Louise Faw Lineberry**, died on October 21 and she was laid to rest on Oct. 25. Married for 47 years, Nick helped Louise rear two children from her first marriage and one from their union. Louise and her brother **Tommy** came to Mills Home (MH) in 1946 and both returned to their mother before their classes graduated. She came to a few of the class reunions held by the class of 1957 and several of the MH homecomings over the years, especially if she could be with her dear friend, the late **Barbara Amberson**. She was a very beautiful girl, quiet and reserved, and well liked. She fit into life on the campus, taking part in the church organizations, campus fun activities such as playing in the gym, socializing in the valley, and playing on the girls' junior varsity basketball team. She left MH for a couple of years to live in a foster home but returned around the time of her 8th grade year. She stayed in touch with Barbara especially, and **Mack Pruitt**. Louise's brother Tommy has been deceased for several years. Friends can send condolences to Nick Lineberry at 211 Brook Valley St., Millers Creek, NC 28651.

We were saddened to learn from **Beth Rice Conner** that her sister **Gail Rice Rayburn** passed away on November 9. Gail Rice Rayburn came to MH in 1959 with siblings **Beth Rice and Tommy, Larry, and Lorraine Owen**. She left in the 1960s. She was predeceased by her husband **Tim Rayburn** with whom she had two daughters, **Mandy and Stephanie**. Her siblings, Lorraine Owen Brewer and Larry and Tom Owen are deceased. She is survived by her brother **Robert Owen**, her two daughters, and two grandsons. Her funeral service was held on Nov. 15 at Harwood Funeral Home in Black Mountain, NC. Friends can

send condolences to Beth at Beth Rice Connor on Facebook.

Many alumni were saddened to read on Facebook that **Mr. Jim Graham (James Walter Graham)** passed away on November 6. Some alumni understood early that Mr. Graham was not only their teacher or principal but that he was a very caring friend to children. Many MH children passed under his watchful eye the 13 years he taught and the 22 years he served as a principal. It was written that "He took great pride in his school, making sure all the staff and students were taken care of; nothing was above or beneath him in his duties as Principal." The staff and students were like his family. Over the years, Jim and his late wife **Peggy** always made their home an open door for everyone, especially the children of MH. The family requests that memorials be sent to St. Jude Children's Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

**Harry Walls** posted a picture of **Jeff Picklesimmer** with **Mr. Edwin Drury** on his Facebook page. **Johnny Ogle** entered into the conversation to tell about how Mr. Drury brought ice cream EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT to the Hutchinson boys. Johnny also remembered that Mr. Drury and his wife, **Mary Marlowe Drury**, took the boys on countless circus visits and other fun small trips. And he concluded by saying "I will never forget them."

In a recent issue of *Charity & Children*, I shared the story of how **Harry Walls and Marie Damphouse Gipson**, MH sweethearts from the 1960s, had been reunited in Thomasville with the help of high tech expert **Dusty Jenkins**, a MH alumnus (1941-1954). Thanks to Marie for this beautiful wedding summary. "On November 3, Harry and I were married at God's Acre, Mills Home. That Autumn day, the sun was shining and birds were singing as Harry and I looked into each other's eyes and pledged

our vows to each other, making my dreams come true. We were accompanied by dear friends and family, including **Joseph M. Knight** who was the preacher for our marriage ceremony and **Pete Knight**, who was Harry's Best Man. Other people present were police officer **Raymond Widener**, my close friend **Angela Nemeth**, **Regina Rae Keener**, **Rusty Bunker**, **Barbara Tyner**, Harry's brother **Harold Walls**, and **Fly, the Wonder Dog**. Harry is the love of my life and I am thankful to be with him, now and always."

In carrying out the duties of alumni columnist, I make it a point to write about all folks who serve on the Alumni Council. After many years, I'm finally putting **Flora Hicks Patton** into the spotlight. From Newton, NC, Flora entered MH in 1968 with siblings **Roland and Colleen** and left in 1974. She thoroughly loved living at MH and even though she was a very shy child, she mixed in perfectly with the other kids enjoying her participation in the GAs, Acteens, choir, and "duty" with **Mrs. Richardson** at the Fig Leaf. She would not say she had a favorite among MH workers but she did admit that she highly respected and loved the houseparents **Mr. and Mrs. Frisbee**, **Mr. and Mrs. Griffin**, and **Mom & Pop Wall**, serving Bright Brown, Aydlet, and Biggs respectively. A few years after leaving MH, Flora married **Grady Patton** with whom she reared four sons. They now have seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

When December rolls around, thoughts of preparing for Christmas roll around and I'm reminded of the decorations that have adorned Mills Home Baptist Church. For several years now, Flora Hicks Patton has gone over early to help decorate the church so that it will be beautiful for the youngsters and their friends who come to the campus to share in the "Open House" held annually. This

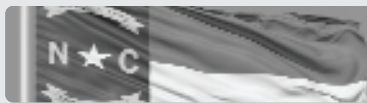
past season, the MH youngsters presented a skit and there was a great deal of singing and rejoicing followed by refreshments. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Flora and some ladies from her Kannapolis home church, aided **Randy Stewart** at the Mills Home Baptist Church in ministering to the Family Care mothers at MH. These are mothers who live on the Mills Home campus with their dependent youngsters as they build a better life for them. Flora led the Alumni Council in establishing a great activity for the MH youngsters by taking popcorn, soft drinks, and a hot dog supper for Halloween fun in October each year. And most folks should be aware that Flora has served as treasurer for the Alumni Association for many years and recently guided us through the difficult task of making the Association a 501(c)(3) organization. As treasurer, Flora has carried out a leading role each year in making the homecoming registration and decorating processes bring Homecoming to a satisfying success.

**Reminders:** Please remember that you can contact **Alan Williams** ([awilliams@bchfamily.org](mailto:awilliams@bchfamily.org)) at any time with **Charity & Children** mailing address changes, additions, or deletions. Remember that **Sharon D. Stiles** is the person to talk with regarding ashes being placed in the Columbarium. Sharon can be contacted at 1588 Elkhart Circle, Gastonia, NC, 28054, [sharondstiles51@yahoo.com](mailto:sharondstiles51@yahoo.com), or 704-685-2443. Remember that contributions toward the upkeep of the Columbarium at God's Acre are always welcomed and should be sent to **Flora Hicks Patton** at 6428 Sisk Carter Rd., Rockwell, NC, 28138.



Lib Johnson was a resident of Mills Home from 1946 to 1957. Johnson began writing the Mills Home alumni column in 1992.





## Making News Every Day Around the State



**Biker Community at Mills Home, Thomasville**  
**More than 1,200 Motorcycles Arrive**  
 Between two Biker Toy Runs that took place at Baptist Children's Homes' (BCH) Mills Home and Kennedy Home, a total of approximately 1,200 motorcycles roared onto the campuses.



**Hillcrest Baptist Church in Raleigh**  
**Group Crochets Blankets and Hats**  
 Members of the "Slip Stitch Sisterhood" ministry of Hillcrest Baptist delivered 100 hats and 70 blankets crocheted by the group. Since 2015, they've donated 9,000 handmade items.



**Joy Cove Ministries in Zionville**  
**Canipe Family Delivers Christmas Joy**  
 Jeremy and Robin Canipe brought presents given by several friends to Joy Cove Ministries, homes for intellectually/developmentally disabled adults.



**Biker Community at Kennedy Home, Kinston**  
**Bikers Kick Off the Christmas Season**  
 Bikers brought gifts to the children, single mothers, teen moms and foster care families for the event. The toy runs are two of the first and largest Christmas events at BCH each year.



**Mills Home in Thomasville**  
**Regular Training Equips Caregivers**  
 Dr. Blackwell greeted BCH statewide staff members in Thomasville for training. Caregivers and case managers receive ongoing training to provide the best possible care.



**Good Shepherd Ministries in Xela, Guatemala**  
**Guatemala Children Choose a Tree**  
 Missionary Roger Grossman and children who live at Mae Home and Westmoreland Home are cutting their Christmas tree. Frazier Furs were planted near the property years ago.



**Odum Home in Pembroke**  
**Company Hosts Christmas Party**  
 Woodmen of the World insurance provider faithfully organizes a Christmas party each year for the children living at Odum Home. They shared food, gifts, and most of all—love.



**Sunset Forest Baptist in Gastonia**  
**Church Members Deliver Gifts**  
 Members from Sunset Forest Baptist Church traveled from Gastonia to Mills Home in Thomasville. There, they delivered presents plus a \$1,000 check to bless BCH's children.



**First Baptist Church in Wadesboro**  
**Donor Crochets Scarves for BCH**  
 Longtime friend Elaine Scarborough is with an anonymous donor who has crocheted scarves and packaged them with Christmas cards and Bibles. They are for BCH's special needs men.

## Can we help? Many ministries beating with one heart.

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Linda Morgan, Lead Dir., 828-627-9254
- Central Area Family Services**  
Regina Keener, Dir., 336-474-1200
- Eastern Area Family Services**  
Christopher Allabaugh, Dir., 252-522-0811  
www.kennedyhome.org
- Odum Home**  
Kathy Locklear, Res. Mgr., 910-521-3433  
www.odumhome.org
- Cameron Boys Camp**  
Drew Scott, Dir., 910-245-4034  
www.cameronboyscamp.org
- Camp Duncan for Girls**  
Brad Gearhart, Dir., 910-944-3077  
www.campduncanNC.org
- Family Foster Care**  
Bob McCleary, 828-627-9254  
www.bchfostercare.org
- Christian Adoption Services**  
Kevin Qualls, Dir., 704-847-0038  
www.christianadopt.org
- Weekday Education**  
Brooke Child, Dir., 336-474-1201
- Tucker Greater Vision Ministry**  
Sara Becker, Mgr., 336-687-6384
- HOMEbase** at W. Carolina University  
Jim Dean, Dir., 828-293-4660
- Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities**  
Tara Sessoms, Dir., 336-474-1259  
www.hereismyhome.org
- NC Baptist Aging Ministry**  
Sandy Gregory, Dir., 336-474-1221  
www.ncbam.org
- Good Shepherd Children's Home**  
in Guatemala Keith Henry, COO,  
336-474-1215




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 and it becomes a part of the ministry.  
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Contact Sam Barefoot  
 at [svbarefoot@bchfamily.org](mailto:svbarefoot@bchfamily.org)  
 or call him at 336-474-1224



**#3641**



# Horace Hawes remembered fondly by alumni— Dr. Blackwell slated as 2023 Homecoming preacher

By **John Thompson**, 104 Village Court, Havelock, NC 28532 (252) 671-3515 jthompson117@ec.rr.com

**W**e were saddened to hear that **Horace Livingston Hawes, Jr.** passed. He served as Social Work Administrator at Kennedy Home (KH) from 1972-1977. Mr. Hawes met his lovely wife **Mary** when she came to KH to bring a child to live there. They fell in love and were married for 49 years. They had a lovely daughter and three grandchildren. Mr. Hawes was born April 1, 1938. His relationship with Jesus caused him to focus his life on loving and serving others. He was a pastor, social worker, nursing home administrator, friend. He is a husband, father, and a "Opa" to his grandchildren. Mr. Hawes graduated from New Hanover High School, Mars Hill College, UNC at Chapel Hill, and Southeastern Seminary. He was also a social worker at Connie Maxwell Children's Home in Greenwood, SC and was Director of Missions for the Wilmington Baptist Association and was a beloved pulpit supply all over the greater Wilmington area. We were honored to have him and Mary at Homecoming this past summer to be our "preacher." He loved to travel and everywhere he went he told others about the Lord. His funeral service was held at Crosswinds Church in Leland, NC. He went straight to heaven on November 26, 2022.

**Peggy Hensley Massey** wrote saying that her parents really loved Mr. Hawes and he was so special to them. "Papa's face always lit up when he spoke of Mr. Hawes."

**Cyn Neddham** said that Mr. Hawes was the catalyst of her parents becoming houseparents at KH.

**Donna Duty** wrote to say he will be missed terribly, but everyone would hold wonderful memories of him in their hearts. She said he was one that God definitely called to come to work at KH.

**Richard and Judy Poteat** wrote to express how much they enjoyed working with Mr. Hawes and how they truly appreciated all the work

he did in helping the children in care.

Many others wrote little notes expressing their fondness for Mr. Hawes.

KH Alumni had a great gathering of 47 attendees at King's Restaurant in Kinston for the Annual Christmas Party. We want to thank King's Restaurant again for letting many, many of the KH children have jobs there during their senior years. Seniors could work off campus to better prepare them for the "outside world."

The King's buffet was delicious as usual with so many good desserts, lots and lots of vegetables, and many different kinds of meat to enjoy. Their service was great, setting up the room and providing beverages for us all. **President Katy Parker** and her sister **Avon**, along with her daughter and son, did a wonderful job buying all the gifts for everyone and planning the banquet. We had a great time singing Christmas songs, fellowshiping, loving on each other, and just having a great time of fellowship together. I am already looking forward to the next Christmas party.

It's not too early to begin planning to come to KH Homecoming on June 3 and 4. I'm hoping it will be the best homecoming ever. We will be singing a lot of children's songs, giving our pledges to the flags, hearing reports, and remembering those who were at KH 50 years ago. A special treat is going to be **Dr. Michael Blackwell** serving as our Homecoming pastor. This will be a very special time for him. He celebrates his 40th year serving as president/CEO of Baptist Children's Homes. He is looking forward to being with us. The ministry of helping children has really grown and prospered during his tenure. We thank you Dr. Blackwell. Keep on serving the Lord. We really thank you for all you have done.

The KH Toy Run marked its 30th anniversary. Over the years, many

friends have driven their motorcycles, cars, and trucks onto campus. For 2022, it was on Saturday, November 26. They met at Temple Baptist Church of New Bern and police escorted them west on Highway 70 to KH. There were between 800 and 1,000 bikes this year. Each one paid a fee of \$20 to be in the run and delivered many toys and donations. The Toy Run is very close to the heart of **Kevin Helmick** and all those who participate. **Donna Duty** wrote to say my friends **Regina and AJ** who live in New Bern participated this year. Donna goes on to write that she is so proud to know that her friends participate in this yearly event. Some of the alumni also participated. **David Bradley and Graham Jackson** were two. **Gary Caulder** took his camera and took pictures. It took about ten minutes for them all to go down the main road at KH. A great and meaningful time was shared by all and our hats go off to all who participated. The staff and children are already looking forward to this special event next year.

Alum **Edgar Warren** went to be with the Lord recently. Remember his family in your prayers. I remember that his family lived over in Bridgeton and had an old bus that they made into a great camper. I went over there to see it one time when Edgar invited me to visit their home.

**James Clayton Pate** (1958-1972) gave me a report about Homecoming 2022. He was in charge of the car show and the delicious food outside.

There was a \$120 registration fee for each vehicle. A gift of \$50 came from Broken Spoke Bike Church of Maysville and \$50 was given by Christian Soldiers for hot dogs and hamburgers for 25 KH youngins, staff members as well as some of the alumni. Six dirt bike trophies were donated by **Darrell and Vicky Bell** of Bell's Corner, Pollocksville. There was an \$80

donation by the **Pate family** of Trenton for remodeling of trophies and purchase of another trophy. Thirty dollars was donated from Calvary Memorial of Trenton, N.C. and \$200 donated to KH Alumni funds. Ed states that all these donations did his heart good and was reminiscent to the picnics in the early 1960s. Thank you, Ed, for providing this report for all to see. Looking forward to June 3 to do it again.

**Alumni Fall Beach Retreat news continues:** Our very own **Gary Caulder** is a great person for getting things organized. Two different times while at the Beach Retreat, Gary had a time for karaoke. Everyone had a number and then you had to find another person with the same number and sing with them. This was a crazy time but it was a lot of fun. We had nine groups: **Scott and Donna Wade (1970-1974)**, **Debbie Caulder (72-74)** and **Rusty Wortham (72-75)**, **Hugh Kirkland (75-76)** and **Joyce Conny (68-72)**, **David Lassiter and Dave Weeks**, **David and Donna Bradley (66-74)**, **Donna Weeks (83-89)** with **Mary, John Thompson (72-77)** and **Gary Caulder (64-73)**, and **Billy Smithwick (72-76)** and **Debbie Conny (68-73)**. Let me tell you, there was great singing. Please make plans to attend next year and find out for yourself what great fun is had during the fall retreat at the beach.

Always remember, if you are in the Havelock area drop by to visit with me. You can even spend the night if you want. Just let me know. Love you all and please keep on sending me articles to use in my column. Write me about your children, yourself, your houseparents, your jobs on campus, and your life after you left KH. Have a great and safe winter. Keep well.—jt



John Thompson served at Kennedy Home from 1972-1977. Today, he enjoys an active retirement.



# Waiting is the thread woven in the fabric of faith

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor



**W**aiting is part of our human experience. It fosters patience and, like a thread, weaves together our hopes. Waiting becomes key to expressing faith. It is necessary, working in the heart of every believer. And yet, waiting is tough.

Three-year-old Kyle had his heart set on a He-Man action figure, and this first-time dad was not going to let him down. I made a plan: I shopped all of the toy departments in all the stores in Baton Rouge. Kathy called family members to scour their hometowns. It was only weeks before Christmas and the toy could not be found.

Days passed and all seemed lost until I spied a full-page ad in the Sunday edition of *The Advocate*. D. H. Holmes, the New Orleans-based department store, was one of the largest store chains in the South, infamous for having the “hard-to-find.” The ad featured a number of items not found in other stores. Among the items listed, “He-Man Action Figure” jumped from the page with a disclaimer, “while supplies last.” Doors opened Monday at 10:00 a.m.

He-Man is the key figure in the Mattel “Masters of the Universe” franchise. An animated television series debuted in 1983 introducing an array of characters. He-Man is the hero and “the most powerful man in the universe.” Kyle loved to mimic him, raising the wooden spatula his mom lent him to serve as He-Man’s sword, declaring: “By the power of Grayskull!” He swirled the spatula in the air, defeating Skeletor

and saving Eternia.

With only days to spare, I reasoned it was wise to show up early. When I pulled into the parking lot a few minutes before eight, there was a coiling snake of people outside the store’s

main door. I took my place and waited.

I do not like to wait in line. Waiting is not my strong point. I like to get things done—“plan the work and work the plan.” Finding a solution, getting the answer, and solving the problem is at the core of my being. It is so hard to want something and have to wait.

The doors unlocked exactly at 10:00. People broke from the line, heading to the departments that offered their must-have gifts. I was part of a fierce-looking group of moms, dads, uncles, and grandmas weaving through the aisles to the toy department where the line re-emerged and we waited. Ugh. Nearly 30 minutes later, boxes finally appeared from a storeroom and the treasured He-Man figurines were in sight. There was a push toward the counter as we all went from standing one after another to standing shoulder to shoulder, pressing forward with arms flying upward, exclaiming, “I want one! I need two! Give me three!”

Reaching forward like a running back stretching into the end-zone, I grabbed an action figure, breaking from the pack, tucking the toy close to my body, and darting in and out to the cashier—only to wait again. (Did I mention that I do not like waiting?)

Yes, waiting is part of our human experience. None of us can avoid it, and in fact, it is essential.

The Israelites wait, and God delivers them. All the earth waits upon the coming of the Messiah, and Jesus is born. Today, we wait for our Lord’s glorious return, and we are confident that it will come to pass. Waiting is an expression of faith—believing in what is not seen, what has yet to happen, and what is hoped for in the “fullness of time.” God’s time. God is not defined by the word “if” but “when.” He does not faint or wither. He is infallible and true to His word, driving away fear. Faith is the immovable belief in an infinite, living God who loves beyond our finite understandings.

The writer of Hebrews draws from the stories of Abel, Enoch and Noah and writes: “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him” (Heb 11:6 ESV). God is real. We can rest in His never-changing character, waiting with confidence and a sure faith.

After a total of three hours, I returned to my car with the elusive toy in my hands and thought, “Christmas for Kyle is saved!” I must confess that there would be other times like this, but all these years later, waiting is less an adversary to me. Instead, waiting is a time to cherish. I express faith in my waiting upon the Lord, knowing He cares for me (1 Pet 5:7). Waiting is now a precious, golden thread woven through the fabric of my faith.

Join me. Let us wait for the good our God will bestow in the fullness of time. Let us begin the new year with determined faith.



Edminson encourages others through the Good News of Jesus. Invite him to speak at your church or for your organization. You can email him at [wjedminson@bchfamily.org](mailto:wjedminson@bchfamily.org).

## BECAUSE OF YOUR GIFT TO LAST YEAR’S ANGEL FUND:

8

birth mothers  
accepted Christ

43

children were placed into  
loving, Christian homes

243

expectant mothers  
were counseled

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