



Food Roundup Begins!

Pickup points set. Bring collected food and dry goods to the closest pickup location. **Call in advance to schedule delivery!** (See page 12)

Charity & Children

The historic publication of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina—first to tell the story since 1887.

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CAMERON BOYS CAMP FEATURE

Family testifies to God "doing this thing in our life"

By Jim Edminson, Editor

Sam is graduating. He is nervous about going home, but he has worked hard to get to this day. Camp life has become the center of his life. It's been more than two years since he came to Cameron Boys Camp and he has learned a lot. He makes better decisions. He treats people with respect. He is self-aware and takes a breath before reacting. There will be an adjustment going home, but Sam and his family are ready.

"I would see other boys graduate and leave Camp," Sam recalls. "I would wonder if they were ready. It becomes a step of faith for us all."

His family has worked hard to get to this day, too. They sit up front around one of the Chuckwagon tables. Sam locks eyes with mom, Courtney. Dad Josh and brother Charlie are there. Courtney sits with tears running down her cheeks. There are tears in Sam's eyes.

"I could see she was proud of me," Sam says. "My family was

proud of me. I had done something worthwhile. I had finished. I was proud of me."

Camp not only changed Sam's life, it changed his family's life. Courtney and Josh saw hardship at home turn to a bright future. They learned to process issues and problem-solve proactively with Sam.

"Josh and I decided early to commit to the Camp process," Courtney says. "Our ways weren't working. We had done everything we knew to do, and we were losing Sam..."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



Charlie, Sam, Courtney, and Josh

Volunteers bless others with brush and can of paint

By Kristyn Butts, BCH Director of Volunteer Engagement

During a recent sermon, my pastor was preaching on Ephesians 4:7-16 and he shared this quote by Richard J. Foster, “Service is not a list of things we do, though in it we discover things to do. It is not a code of ethics, but a way of living.” I whole heartedly believe these words and would take it one step further and say, “It’s a way of living out of the overflow of our love and obedience to the Lord.”

The women of First Baptist Church Welcome live in just this way which is evident in their service with the Baptist Children’s Homes. During my first few months of service as the director of volunteer engagement, I was invited to share during a FBC Welcome WMU meeting. I immediately knew that these were women on mission for the Lord. While the church congregation has blessed BCH in a multitude of facets through gifts, service, and love, the ladies have consistently been an instrumental part of Fancy Finds at Mills Homes in Thomasville. Fancy Finds is so much more than a resale store. It’s a service that takes timeworn furniture and décor, and breathes new life and purpose into it. DIY classes, estate sale services, and consignment services are also offered with all proceeds going



Above, First Baptist Church Welcome member Judy Yarbrough refinishes the drawers of a dresser donated and to be sold at Fancy Finds in Thomasville. Below, Betsy Rains, a longtime volunteer from FBC Welcome, paints dining room chairs for the store. Proceeds made from the resale store benefit the ministries of BCH.



to support the ministries and programs of BCH. The group of ladies, led by Judy Yarbrough, serve at Fancy Finds twice a month. Judy shared that during a Baptist Aging event, she was connected with

the previous manager of the store, and the rest is history. Some of the ladies who come to serve, have been faithfully serving for months and years. Others are new to serving, but it is a multi-generational group who love Jesus and want to serve Him

with their talents and time. When asked what made serving at Fancy Finds so special, Judy shared, “Because I love children so much (a retired school teacher) I feel like we are giving something back to the children in a simple way that we can do. The camaraderie of working and serving together is so special. We have become like sisters.”

Charlotte Edwards, who has served as the manager of Fancy Finds for the last seven years, recalled how in 2020 when everything shut-down for COVID, the ladies of FBC Welcome still wanted to serve. So, they came monthly to Fancy Finds wearing their masks and social distancing. “We painted. We laughed. We worshiped, and we built a family bond which continues today.”

With gratitude and affection, Charlotte said, “We could not do it without them. They get all of our painting done which is such a blessing.”

FBC Welcome has served with excellence as the hands and feet of Jesus, sharing hope and changing lives one brush stroke at a time.

Throughout this past year, BCH has had more than 1,800 volunteers serve across the state in some capacity from raking, cleaning, sorting, stocking, hosting cookouts, throwing parties, and so much more. April is national volunteer appreciation and we believe that BCH has the very BEST volunteers who serve sacrificially out of their love for Jesus and the ministry. Thank you volunteers for generously sharing your time, talents, and treasures and finding your spot to serve with Baptist Children’s Homes. It has truly been a joy to serve with each of you during my first year. If you would like to learn how you too can find your spot to serve, please visit www.bch-family.org/volunteer or contact Kristyn Butts at kbutts@bchfamily.org.

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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Sew those seeds and watch the Kingdom grow!

By David Melber, Chief Executive Officer

One of my favorite memories from the time living in Kentucky involves the creation of food plots. Now, if you're not into hunting, especially deer hunting, you might find the term "food plot" a bit puzzling. Let me share a bit about it. Our family had access to a sprawling piece of land, complete with a creek winding through it. It was once a 100-acre lake, and over the years, the silt from that lake enriched the surrounding lands, making them incredibly fertile. After the dam was removed, the area transformed; lush trees and a variety of plants began sprouting, covering the landscape.

To prepare this land for our family's food plots for deer and turkey, we brought in heavy excavating equipment. Can you imagine the sight? Acres of trees coming down, making way for something new! Once we cleared the land, we would sow seeds—primarily clover seeds, along with other blends designed to attract wildlife. The fertility of the soil worked in our favor, and the crops grew quickly. It was fascinating to see how the seeds took root and thrived. Technically, we "sewed" them into the ground, but the seed did all the hard work of growing!

This personal experience brings me to one of my favorite parables in the Gospels: the Parable of the Soils. If you're not familiar, it's recounted in Matthew, Mark, and Luke and presents a vivid picture of the Kingdom of God. Did you know that Jesus mentioned the Kingdom of God a staggering 126 times throughout the Gospels? Clearly, it's an important concept, but what does it genuinely mean?

I appreciate the definition that describes the Kingdom as God's people living in God's place

under God's rule and blessing. Simple yet profound, right? As we move forward, you'll often hear discussions about us striving to become a Kingdom-focused community at Baptist Children's Homes. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus tells us to pray for "Your Kingdom come." This mindset can radically reshape our approach—both personally and corporately—so that we actively pursue the manifestation of God's Kingdom among ourselves and the people we serve. This focus naturally aligns us with supporting local churches, which are central to God's plan for expanding His Kingdom on Earth. When we adopt this Kingdom-focused



David Melber

perspective, something remarkable happens. God starts to move in ways we might not have anticipated. I often think of a quote from Hudson Taylor, a missionary in China for more than fifty years: "God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supplies." Now that's a principle worth living by, isn't it?

Luke 8:18, states, "Take care then how you hear, for the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks he has will be taken away." Many people reference this passage when discussing money, but if we examine the context, especially in verses 4 through 16, it becomes evident that it relates more closely to the seeds being sewn.

So, here's a thought: What does it mean to be "given more"? Looking at verses 5-8 of this chapter, we see that the seeds fall onto four types of soil. When we view verse 18 through this lens, it's clear that the fertile soil—much like the land where we cultivated the food plots—is where the real growth happens. The other soil types may receive seeds, but they fail to thrive due

to obstacles like distractions.

Think about it: just as birds, rocks, and thorns hinder seed growth, we also face distractions that prevent us from fully embracing biblical truths. Often, we hear God's Word, but we might let our focus drift away. We might be preoccupied, leading us to miss out on what God is specifically trying to teach us or how He's directing us.

To be that fertile soil, we must truly engage with God's Word. When we hear it, read it, and let it take root in our hearts, transformation starts to happen. It influences our behavior, reshaping our actions and thoughts. The more we apply God's truths practically, the more they multiply in our lives and within our community. It's a beautiful cycle!

As we consider our work throughout Baptist Children's Homes, our primary goal is to cultivate fertile soil in the hearts of everyone involved—staff, trustees, ministry partners, and those we serve. Isn't it exciting to think about living on mission together? We have this incredible opportunity to reach out to our communities, mobilizing church members for kingdom work across North Carolina.

Jesus prayed for all of us, the future believers, in John 17:21, saying, "That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." The essence of unity is pivotal as we work towards making Jesus known. The Gospel is at stake, and it's in our collective efforts where we truly shine as "one." So, let's reflect on how we can contribute to this Kingdom-focused vision. In doing so, we'll not only make a difference in our lives but also in the lives of those we encounter. Embracing this journey together is where the real impact lies—let's sew those seeds and watch the Kingdom grow!

You are there when a child walks through the door

Not everyone can be a cottage parent—but some can. *Maybe that someone is you!* Not everyone can be a Chief/Counselor at Cameron Boys Camp or Duncan Girl's Camp in Aberdeen, but some can. *Maybe that someone is you!* Not everyone can be a foster parent, but some can. *Maybe that someone is you!*

You may not be called to be a direct care giver but there are many ways you can hold God's children. *There is always another child to hold.*

Pray! Your prayers are a lifeline for our staff

and those we serve. Agreeing with BCH and praying is glorifying to God.

Give! Give for today and tomorrow. Your ongoing financial support helps make it possible for us to be there to wrap our arms around those God has entrusted to us.

Consider including BCH in your Will. One of our long-time friends shared that he had completed his Will and that each of his three children would receive equal amounts. The man was reminded that he only had two children. He smiled and shared that BCH was his third child.

There is always another child to hold.

Thank you for helping sustain BCH throughout these turbulent times. You have seen the plight of North Carolina's children and responded. You have opened your hearts to yet another child—actually thousands of children.

Last year we cared for more than 170,000. Yes, you read that right—170,000. We could not do what we do with you!

Thank you for helping BCH be there when there is another child who walks through the doors and needs to be held—*today and tomorrow.*

There was hopelessness...then there was Easter

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

Hallelujah, He is risen! He is risen indeed! Maybe it is just my aging memory, but it seems to me that the disciple Thomas was the subject of more than his fair share of Easter sermons. Thomas was just the right kind of disciple with just the right kind of problem to make a good Easter sermon. You know the story of Thomas and his doubt. Thomas who must have been terribly hurt by Jesus' death, could not bring himself to believe that Jesus had returned to life and pledged not to believe until he saw for himself the risen Christ. When he did come face to face with Jesus, he chose to have confidence in his faith instead of his doubt.

"But Thomas, one of the Twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, we have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God" (John 20:20-28).

For Thomas, there was hopelessness...then there was Easter!

Now I find myself here, in the midst of children, families, individuals fighting so many battles. Each one has had more than their share of life experiences that have led them to doubt whether they will ever trust anybody else again.

There was hopelessness...and then there was Easter.

Each day hopelessness walks through our doors and we are given another child to hold. It can be a

tiny baby or a bruised and battered teen. Other times it is an aging adult, alone and longing for someone to care.

She is frightened. She never expected to be pregnant—not now anyway. She knew she cared for the life growing inside her, but she also knew that she wasn't prepared to care for a child. She was overwhelmed by the situation. A caring counselor listened and prayed: "Help me point this young girl to You."

She received counseling, guidance regarding pre-natal care, and the support she needed. She chose adoption and was able to participate in all phases of the adoption process. During this time, she came to know Jesus as her personal Savior.

There was hopelessness...then there was Easter!

Sheryl Naylor, BCH's Senior Director of Domestic Adoptions, recently shared with me that we had five adoptions within two weeks. That is five birth moms making very courageous decisions. They each must have felt doubt and a sense of hopelessness at some time during their journey, but their doubt gave way to love—love for their precious child.

On the international side of adoption, we have one family traveling to the Philippines to take placement of two children this month and two families who recently accepted placement proposals—bringing them one step closer to placement. Pray for hope and healing as they continue their journey to Easter!

She picks up the very tiny baby in her loving arms, sits in the rocker and begins to feed him.

The little one is one of our precious babies abandoned to die. The tiny precious baby is now safe in the arms of cottage parents in our orphanage in Guatemala. She

prays: "God help this little one heal and grow strong."

There was hopelessness...then there was Easter!

She was angry. She was angry at her father for abusing her and her Mom. She was angry at her mom for abandoning her and leaving her and her brother. She was angry that her family did not step in and care for her. She was angry that she was now living in yet another group home. But things seemed different at Mills Home. People did care! As she thought about these things, she began to cry. The arms of her cottage parents were soon around her. As she cried out in anger and pain, they prayed. That night she asked Jesus into her heart. Healing began.

There was hopelessness...then there was Easter!

It's early in the morning at Cameron Boys Camp. Eric's chief listens as he pours out his heart. "Why?" he asked! "Why did my Dad die?" "Why does my Mom stay high?" "Why does she love drugs more than me?" "Why does no one in my family care about me?"

His Chief is all in as he listens to Eric share his pain and gut-wrenching sorrow. Each day the chief prays: "God help me to help Eric and the other boys in my group to heal. God help me point them to you."

There was hopelessness...then there was Easter!

They walk through our doors with heavy stones (hopelessness) rolled across the future of their lives, and it is a big deal when one of them is rolled away. When a part of that life that was closed off is set free. They move from doubting to believing.

There was hopelessness...then there was Easter!

Easter is a wonderful life changing experience, one that we celebrate here with great joy. The experience of seeing those who walk into our lives filled with hopelessness—"dead"—and then come back to life in a newness of hope in Jesus is transformative!

I hope Easter is a special time in your life. I hope it reminds you of the newness of life we believe is possible because of what God did through Jesus. I hope you remember the children and families you enable us to minister to and pray that they along with each of us, will experience the newness of life, hope and possibilities that are the heart of the Easter story.

Note: A special envelope is enclosed in this issue of *Charity & Children* for your special Easter gift. I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for being a part of turning doubt into belief. In the words of Thomas: "My Lord and my God."

Hallelujah, He is Risen! He is risen indeed!

There was hopelessness...then there was Easter!



322 SOULS

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Contact me with information on how to prepare a Christian Will. I have included Baptist Children's Homes in my estate plans.

Sam comes "against himself" to tackle big problems

By Jim Edminson, Editor

(Continued from page 1)

Their home was in turmoil. Sam's behavior was over the top, mostly negative and combative. Any conversation with Sam usually ended in strife.

"I was a wreck," Sam recalls. "I didn't know how to cope with the world. I thought everyone else was the problem and it was getting worse."

Thirteen-year-old Sam was isolating himself from friends and family. There was more and more unpredictable behavior. He was angry. He never laughed, unless it was at the expense of someone else.

"I was living in a dark place," he confesses. "It was all about me. Nobody else."

Sam's parents, Courtney and Josh, tried everything—counseling and therapy, switching schools three times, changing churches. Instead of it helping, feelings of hopelessness settled over their home and in their lives. They needed help.

"We all reached a point," Courtney remembers, "where we were exhausted and felt like we had failed. We felt there was nowhere else to turn, and then there was Cameron Boys Camp."

Courtney called and spoke with Camp's Case Manager Supervisor Kristin Johnson. She was encouraging. Kristin assured her that Sam was like other boys who came to Camp. She and Josh felt a twinge of hope.

"The second we drove on the property, I could feel the Holy Spirit," Courtney says. "There was a peace. You could see it in Sam's face. He loves the outdoors and the wilderness. He was excited about the possibility. We all were."

After the newness of living at Camp wore off, Courtney received a letter from Sam. He was unsure Camp was where he needed to be after all.

"Sam wrote that he didn't belong at Camp," she recalled.

"He wrote that the boys come 'from some tough situations' and had 'real problems.' Josh and I laughed. Sam was coming against himself. He was clueless to the depth of his problems."

There was no place now for fourteen-year-old Sam to hide in the woods, living outside with



Sam came to Cameron Boys Camp in October 2021. Now seventeen, living at home, and a junior in high school, Sam uses the skills he learned at Camp every day: working three part-time jobs, being on a row team at the North Carolina Rowing Center in Greensboro, and pursuing an online associate degree in finance and accounting.

the boys in his group and his Chiefs twenty-four seven. A camper quickly learns their problems are not special. There are other boys who have big problems and the Chiefs have pretty much seen and heard it all.

"When you think your problem is different than anyone else's, it slows down your progress," Sam asserts. "You have to realize the problem is a heart problem. You have to stop looking at everyone else's problems and start dealing with your problem. You have to want to change."

Sam began seeing that change. He was using his hands. Focusing on his tasks and not waiting for others to do for him. He had experienced nothing else like it. It was helping him in ways he didn't even know he needed.

"Every action at Camp is for a purpose," Josh says. "From their group work to the more simple task of making their beds each morning, routine

and success is created from the moment the boys wake up."

Sam could feel he was turning a corner when he stepped forward and provided leadership in his group. The boys began to look up to him and talk with him. They began to trust him. It was no

longer about him. He began to care about them.

"When Sam was home for visits, there was laughter again," Courtney says. "The family had lived so uptight and angry before and now everyone could breathe. The Lord was doing this thing in our life."

Josh felt the change in his own life. He no longer was focused on the family's heartache. He felt his heart soften toward his son and he remembered Sam as the son he "loved and adored."

Graduation was December 21, 2023. More than a year later, Sam can still taste Mom Lisa's "best thing on the planet," Saturday morning biscuits and sausage gravy. He remembers his fellow campers, but it is what he learned from the Chiefs that he carries with him everyday.

"My Chiefs meant so much," Sam says. "I struggled with authority and they helped. There were times when I was a handful. Terrible even. They stuck with me. That's what it is all about. They are the best men on earth."

Josh and Courtney are "missional" about Cameron Boys Camp. Courtney is an ambassador sharing their family's story. She is dedicated to helping recruit Chiefs. The couple believe in the importance of dedicated, God-called Chiefs.

To learn more about becoming a Chief, visit online at www.campcareers.org.



Sam and Chief Matthew

Canoeing the Suwannee River helps change lives

By **Danielle Brown**, Camp Duncan Group Work Supervisor; **Hannah Tepes**, Camp Duncan Group Chief

It all starts with an idea. Then every plan made begins to feed the dream. The excitement grows as the time draws near to the long-awaited excursion—canoeing the Suwannee.

The girls at Camp Duncan chose to paddle 225 miles down the Suwannee River. Trips present amazing opportunities for Chiefs and campers alike. Of course, there are some doubts such as: “Can I handle being so far away from my family?” “Will I be able to paddle all those miles?” “How can I trust God to help us stay sane or help me treat my group well?” What we often don’t ask ourselves is: “How will I grow on this trip?” “Who will I be when it is completed?”

One never thinks about planning ways to grow in life, especially when life is hard and uncomfortable. At Camp, tears are shed, laughs are shared, and hard conversations undertaken while humbly surrendering to growth. It is about character building.

How much time goes into being ready for such an excursion? For some, it has been months, some several weeks, and for a few it will take actually living out the experience on the river. God gracefully puts us in certain situations only when we are ready to endure the challenge. When His time is right, even when we are not always excited about the possibilities, we face the transformation He desires for us.

The first thing the campers and Chiefs do when planning a trip such as this is write good goals. It can be hard. The goals take shape and the trip is driven by purpose: “To take initiative to learn about the trees around us, to become more united as a group, and to learn how to put ourselves under our authorities.”

The Suwannee River is “The River” at Camp. It is a river that many campers and chiefs have paddled and all love to share stories about.

It is probably due to all the springs on the river. While the river starts in the Okefenokee Swamp in Georgia, there are many springs. The stories of clear springs draw many groups back to the



Six teenage girls ages 14-16 recently canoed 225 miles of the Suwannee River. Along with two Chiefs, the group began their excursion in south Georgia, canoeing down the “blackwater” river through the Florida Panhandle until reaching the gulf waters and swimming with the manatees.

Suwannee every few years. This year, the Pioneer Group decided they would take their paddles to the task in February and early March, an outlier to the norm of paddling it in the summer.

By the time a group begins the journey, they are ready. They have practiced skills and taken shorter river trips. They have researched about the river, planned meals, made lists for gear to pack. They are ready to begin paddling. The group isn’t just doing this trip for fun, it has taken hard work and they have purpose and goals.

The Suwannee is not just popular at Camp. Some say it is Florida’s best-known river. Even with its popularity, it is still a wild river. While houses are along the banks at points, you are in your own world floating along the river. There are a few river camps along the river that have showers and restrooms. The rest of the trip is camping on sandbars and public land along its banks.

“Wow!” “That’s amazing!” “What an adventure!” People we meet along the way are always amazed at the distance our group paddles.

Paddling more than two hundred miles in 21 days with six teenage girls ages 14-16 is a large undertaking. The trip is a great time to be an ambassador for Camp Duncan. There are ques-

tions as the group meets people along the trip. They are curious about the goals and the extent of the trip. Sometime it is a quick response of “cool” and “great job.” Other times, there are deeper conversations. One of those interactions was with Mr. Rob. He first complimented how we tied in the group’s gear. The gear is very important and it takes hard work to tie it in well so we will not lose any of it along the river. To have a seasoned river man notice the gear was high praise. The group bumped into him again and were able to share a little about the trip and the goal

to paddle it all. He shared a copy of his personal notes on the river. Unlike our information, his map was a list of landmarks with mileage markers. His knowledge of the history of the river added to the group’s excitement as we continued paddling. His knowledge of sandbars and safe places for the group to camp became vital. Without his instructions and help, the group could have easily passed good camping spots.

The trip creates great memories while everyone involved grows. Trips highlight areas of weakness in everyone and provide opportunities for change in those areas. The trip reminds us just how much we need each other—short term, long term, and throughout life. Even Chiefs use the trip as an opportunity to continue growing alongside the campers.

The experience also reminds us that God’s people find comfort with Him. We read in the Bible how He was with the Hebrews—and we learned on the trip He was with us. We are dependent on God every day. But on a trip, you can’t forget that He is your provider.

“If you feel stuck,” Chief Paul would say, “The solution is to move.” If you want to sprinkle some miracle grow on your life, I think a trip could be just what you need. If you don’t have the ability or opportunity for a trip, get out of your comfort zone and dive into what God has for your life wherever you are. Trips are one way the girls and Chiefs do it at Camp Duncan.



"I think I made the most growth by being honest in my words and through my behaviors." — Makenzie

SUWANNEE RIVER TRIP

Pioneers learn to do hard things

By Camp Duncan Girls

The Pioneer Group from Camp Duncan for Girls set out to navigate the Suwannee River in 19 days. The six teenage girls and two Chiefs paddled four canoes with supplies and food more than 200 miles down river on their successful trip. As part of their journey, the girls journaled about their trip.

The Beginning

On the first day of our trip, we drove to Fargo, Georgia. We woke up at 3:45 am and left Camp Duncan at about 5:30am. The trip takes eight hours and during that time, we ate breakfast, slept, listened to music, did academics, and listened to a tree podcast. We stopped at a rest stop in Florida for lunch. It was a beautiful spot, with really pretty birds.



Campers tackle academics while on their canoe trip down the Suwannee River.

So far on the trip, we've seen nineteen alligators. We've seen a lot of them on land. The rest are usually swimming in the water. I love seeing alligators, they're really cool reptiles. — Makayla

We are the Pioneers!

We are studying dendrology, which is

the scientific study of trees. While paddling down the Suwannee, we see palm



Six teenage girls and two Chiefs paddle four canoes laddered with the supplies and food needed for the 19-day long river trip.

trees, live oaks, cypress, and pine trees. The cypress trees are my favorite because of the cypress knees.

We are paddling around 225 miles and that itself teaches us a lot, like teamwork. You can't canoe all those miles by yourself. It helps us communicate and work well together. That's only the first week and we have already had an adventure. I've learned a lot just being on the Suwannee. The ways we grow just from paddling really encourages me to keep going! "We are the Pioneers and we do hard things!" — Ranen

Trees and Reptiles

A yucca differs from a palmetto by its leaves. Yuccas have long, narrow leaves



While on canoe trips, the girls and their chiefs setup campsites along the riverbank where they cook and sleep.



The 2025 Duncan Girls Camp Suwannee River Pioneer Group

with a pointy end and Palmettos have huge fan-like leaves. I have seen only one Aloe Yucca. In summer, the Aloe Yucca's flowers bloom and in the fall it produces fruit.

So far, we have enjoyed all the trees and reptiles around here. There's still lots more to look forward to. When we see something we've never seen before or maybe just to make sure, we look it up in an Audubon and it's pretty helpful. We're learning a lot and there's more to learn as we make our way down to the Gulf. See ya later, alligator! — Kylie

Stronger as a Group

I'm glad we had positive attitudes when we had rain that was heavy, and found a campsite. Having good spirits helped us most get the things done that needed to get done. Working as a group got us through it way better than it could've been. Even when we weren't sure we were going to find a campsite, we prayed to God to let us find one. Having a group you can get through anything even when you think you can't. — Keagan

Big Shoals

We heard waves in the distance, so we paddled to the left side so we could portage Big Shoals. It was late in the day

and we had to find a place to camp for the night because it was too late to portage.



Group planning is essential to the success of a river trip. The girls depend on each other and their Chiefs.

We could portage our gear the next day. The next day, we carried our cargo and canoe over land to avoid Big Shoals, an unsafe place of whitewater in the river. — Makenzie

Sunday Chapel

Every Sunday we have Chapel, so we found a good spot, set up a tarp to keep us dry from the rain, and we turned to 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, which is about love. Our situation wasn't very comfortable but the Chapel definitely helped. The



Campers are there for each other. The girls have opportunities to become lifelong friends.

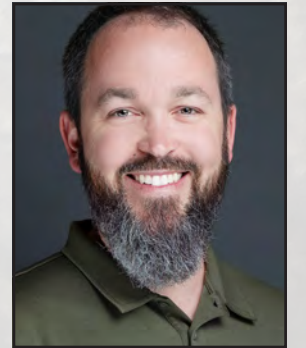
rain stopped and we enjoyed our lunch of meat, cheese, and crackers. We played a game and then set off again.

We experienced reaching our destination, portaging three fourths of a mile, and had Chapel in the rain. I'm so glad to say our group had made impressive improvements. — Harleigh

Chiefs bring hope and healing to girls

Jane grew up with pain and neglect. Her parents were separated and she lived with her mother who struggled with drugs and alcohol. In her addictions, she allowed men into the home who would sexually abuse her daughter. The darkness that consumed Jane's young life only grew worse as her own family members began abusing her.

One day, Jane's mother chose to leave her with nearby strangers and disappeared for days. After it was apparent mom was not returning, the neighbors contacted Jane's father and he took his daughter into his home. He provided the caring, stable home Jane needed but the abuse had taken its toll in her life. She struggled with hurt and anger. He reached out to Camp Duncan for help.



Chief Bradley Gearhart

Within the first month of camp, Jane was able to feel comfortable enough to share some of her traumatic past with Chief Hannah—the strong, Christian young woman who serves as a mentor and caregiver to the campers seeking help and hope at this 24/7 wilderness program. Jane had never opened up about her pain to anyone like this before, not until she confided in her chief. God used that conversation so that Camp's case managers and staff could help her work through the trauma and start on a path of healing.

I share Jane's story because it highlights the essential role our chiefs play in the lives of every girl we have the privilege to serve. Without our chiefs, these conversations and relationships would not happen. Being a chief isn't for everyone, but if you had a chance to help a young woman heal from something so terrible, wouldn't you want to try? Please partner with us, committing to pray and fast for more chiefs so we can continue to share hope and help change these young ladies' lives for the glory of God.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a Chief, visit www.campcareers.org.

Caregiver's Guidebook—a new NCBAM resource

By **Anita Davie**, former NCBAM Far West Regional Director

Perhaps the most demanding and stressful work is that of a family caregiver. Caregiving does not happen in a vacuum. Caregivers have other commitments: work, household chores, and perhaps caring for children or grandchildren. A caregiver may also have their own health or relationship issues.

Thus, the juggling act begins as a caregiver struggles to meet the demands of both their loved one's needs and their own. These additional responsibilities come with no extra time – not even for rest.

Moreover, caregiving demands many new challenges. There are new skills to learn; such as understanding medical terms and conditions, talking to healthcare providers, consulting with an attorney about legal steps and forms to be considered. All the while the relationship with the loved one is changing and grieving has begun. And it seems like all of



Anita Davie

these new responsibilities will never end.

The majority of caregivers provide care without help from anyone else. As a result, most caregivers report experiencing high levels of stress. At some point, most ask themselves, "What did I do to deserve this?" or "How can I get everything done? Why won't someone help me?" or "Who cares about me?" and "Does God even care about me?"

It was out of deep concern and appreciation for caregivers that NCBAM developed *The Caregiver's Guidebook: A Practical and Spiritual Companion for Caregivers*.

Topics covered in *The Caregiver's Guidebook* include:

- Caregiver stress
- Dementia-related situations
- Self-care
- How family, friends, and the church can help
- Finding strength
- Trusting that God is with you
- Other resources available from NCBAM

The *Caregiver's Guidebook* is also a helpful resource for churches to understand how to support family caregivers.

Churches may also want to order copies in order to share with caregivers in their congregations or community.

The *Caregiver's Guidebook* is available as a free PDF download at ncbam.org/#caregiver. Physical copies are also available for a suggested donation of \$10 per book (includes shipping).

NCBAM has other printed materials available to support caregivers, such as Caregiver Contact Cards, and encouraging Christ the Cornerstone brochures. Email NCBAM

at ncbam@bchfamily.org or call 877.506.2226 to request these materials.



CAMP BAM set to help Hurricane Helene recovery

By **Carol Layton**, Director of Communications and Administration, NCBAM

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) will host its fifth annual Camp BAM this summer. The camp will be held June 18-22 at the Truett Conference Center & Camp in Hayesville. Campers will focus on meeting Hurricane Helene recovery needs in western North Carolina. Construction experience is not necessary; each crew will have an experienced leader. As always, campers will be provided some time for fun and fellowship—this year in the beautiful Blue Ridge!

Camp BAM is an intergenerational camp that offers volunteer campers the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus and to serve the needs of aging adults. Campers build wheelchair ramps, rebuild porches, install smoke alarms, clear overgrowth, and meet other safety needs of older adults.

Cost for the all-inclusive camp is \$200 per overnight camper or \$125 per day camper. Registration and payment is due by May 1, 2025. Visit ncbam.org/#intergenerational to learn more.

While camp fees provide food and lodging for campers, funds for building supplies come from sponsorships. You can help these campers serve

aging adults who are still experiencing hardships due to Hurricane Helene by becoming a Camp BAM Sponsor!

The following sponsorship tiers are available. In order to receive the recognitions noted below, sponsorships must be received by May 15, 2025.

Camp BAM Legend: \$3,000

Will receive name engraved on a plaque and attached to a ramp built during Camp BAM. Will receive an invitation to speak or preach to campers in person, virtually, or by recording. Will receive opportunity to serve as a Camp BAM planning committee member. Will receive name printed in the Camp BAM program guide for Campers and posted on social media. Will receive name printed on Camp BAM T-shirts.

Camp BAM Visionary: \$1,000

Will receive an invitation to speak or preach to campers in person, virtually, or by recording. Will receive opportunity to serve as a Camp BAM planning committee member. Will receive name printed in the Camp BAM program guide for Campers and posted on social media. Will receive name printed on Camp BAM T-shirts.

Camp BAM Champ: \$500

Will receive opportunity to serve as a Camp BAM planning committee member. Will receive name printed in the Camp BAM program guide for Campers and posted on social media. Will receive name printed on Camp BAM T-shirts.

Camp BAM Supporter: \$200

Will receive name printed in the Camp BAM program guide for Campers and posted on social media. Will receive name printed on Camp BAM T-shirts.

Camp BAM Friend: \$100

Will receive name printed in the Camp BAM program guide for Campers and posted on social media.

Another way to help fund Camp BAM in perpetuity is to donate to the "Live Out Luke Endowment Fund" which was established by the McDowell and Haynes families in memory of William Luke McDowell, the son of Rev. C.F. McDowell, III and Rev. Martha McDowell. Luke passed away suddenly in 2016 at age 20. Contributions to the Live Out Luke Endowment Fund are tax-deductible and may be made payable to the NC Baptist Foundation and mailed to 201 Convention Drive, Cary, NC 27511.

Remember Mom and Dad

"Honor your father and mother."

We are given the gift to recall the days of childhood, to relive the times when a loving parent's embrace sustained us as a young adult during times of heartache, to remember conversations with our mom or dad in the silence of sweet friendship as we have grown older, too. Keeping those we love in our thoughts and daily intentions strengthens families, teaching our children about the sacredness of life. The simple act of remembering Mom and Dad is glorifying to God.

Join us in giving thanks for moms and dads.

Using the coupon below, make a gift that offers hope to a needy child in honor or memory of your parent(s). In the August issue of **Charity & Children**, yours and your parent's name(s) will be published in a commemorative insert celebrating moms and dads.



Example of inside name listings:

MOTHER

In honor of Mrs. Edith G. Banks
Given by Joseph and Mary Banks
In memory of Jane W. Smith
Given by Her Children

FATHER

In memory of Edward R. Morrison
Given by Edith Morrison
In honor of William F. Hughes
Given by Jennifer Phillips

MOTHER & FATHER

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. R. Jones
Given by Daughters Beth and Sarah

**Hurry!
Deadline is
July 1.**

**Questions?
For more information,
call 336-474-1209.**

Remember Mom and Dad! Make an honor or memorial gift.

Please check the appropriate box: Honor Memorial

In Honor or Memory of _____

Send Notice of Gift to _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

To give by check, please print your information below and mail this form with your check.

To: BCH, PO Box 338, Thomasville, NC 27361 Attn: Mothers/Fathers Day Gift. You can use the enclosed, postage-paid envelope.

Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Give by credit card online at www.bchfamily.org/momanddad or call Faith Frazier at 336-474-1312.

Churches fill plates & hearts

When churches and friends unite for the Food Roundup, hundreds and hundreds of boys and girls living at Baptist Children's Homes are fed. You are not only caring for their physical needs but children see the love of Christ through your efforts.

MOST NEEDED (in bold):

- **Canned Fruits**
- **Fruit Juice (Apple, Orange, Grape, Cranberry)**
- **Laundry Detergent**
- **Paper Products (paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, Kleenex)**
- **Bottled Water**
- **Canned Vegetables (green beans, corn, etc.)**
- **Dry Cereal**
- **Bake Beans**
- **Spaghetti Sauce**
- **Pasta (Spaghetti, Lasagna, Macaroni)**
- **Canned Tomatoes (diced, sauce, paste)**
- **Pancake Mix and Syrup**
- **Soups (All types & condensed)**
- **Sugar (Granulated & Brown)**
- **Flour**
- **Splenda**
- **Popcorn, Kettle Corn**
- **Apple Sauce**
- **Fruit Pie Filling (Cherry and Peach)**
- **Beverage Mixes (Tea, Tang, Kool-Aid, Lemonade, Cider Mix - All Sugar Free)**
- **Vegetable Oil, Shortening, Olive Oil, Pam Cooking Spray, Bakers Choice**
- **Canned Sweet Potatoes**

- **Canned Yams**
- **Canned Meats (pink salmon, tuna, roast beef, chicken - packed in water)**
- **Stuffing Mix**
- **Gravy Mixes**
- **Hamburger, Chicken, and Tuna Helper (all types)**
- **Pickles (Sweet & Dill)**
- **Refried Beans**
- **Hot Chocolate Mix**
- **Snack Foods with & without sugar (Fruit Rollups, Fruit Cups, Beef Jerky, Slim Jims, Pepperoni Sticks, Cheese Nips, Pretzels, etc.)**
- **Healthy Snacks (Dried Fruit, Nuts, Raisins, Cranraisins, Trail Mix)**
- **Individual Cookie Packs**
- **Jello**
- **PopTarts**
- **Rice**
- **Instant Potatoes (scalloped, au gratin, mashed, julienne)**
- **Muffin Mixes**
- **Bisquick Mix**
- **Kidney Beans**
- **Pickle Relish**
- **Cranberry Sauce**
- **Mac & Cheese**
- **Corn Meal**
- **Jiffy Mixes, Corn Muffin Mix, Hush Puppy Mix**
- **Peanut Butter**
- **Jelly, Jams, Preserves (Strawberry is the favorite)**
- **Pizza & Pizza Dough Mix**
- **Saltine Crackers, Ritz Crackers, Graham Crackers**
- **Sauces (A-1, Steak, BBQ, Texas Pete, Cheese, Worcestershire, Soy, Teriyaki, Sweet & Sour)**
- **Spices and Seasonings (including Salt & Pepper)**
- **Dishwashing detergents**
- **Laundry pre-treating products (i.e. Shout, Spray and Wash)**
- **Brooms, Mops, Scrub Brushes, Dust Pans**
- **Foil and Plastic Wrap**
- **SOS Pads**
- **Fabric Softener**
- **Dryer Sheets**
- **Sanitary Pads & Tampons**
- **Hand Lotion**
- **Shampoo**
- **Body Wash**
- **Soap**
- **Household cleaning products (i.e. bleach, Comet, Lysol spray and wipes, Clorox spray, Windex, Pinesol, Pledge, Tilex, etc.)**

OTHER NEEDED ITEMS:

- Brownie & Cookie Mix
- Individual Chef Boyardee cups
- Clif brand nutrition bars
- Hot Dog Chili
- Coffee (Regular & Decaf)
- Coffee Creamer
- Sweetened Condensed Milk
- Evaporated Milk
- Powdered Milk
- Flavorings (Vanilla, etc.)
- French Fried Onions
- Honey
- Ketchup
- Mustard
- Oatmeal
- Parmesan Cheese
- Puddings, Pudding Cups
- Salsa
- Vinegar
- Paper Products (Cups, Plates, Bowls, Plastic Ware, Dixie Cups)
- Trash Bags (large & small)
- Zip-Loc bags (Sandwich, Snack, Quart & Gallon Sizes)
- Band Aids
- Rubbing Alcohol/Peroxide
- Anti-bacterial ointment
- Razors
- Shaving Cream/Shaving Gel
- Dental Floss

- Hair brushes
- Deodorant
- Conditioner
- Tooth Paste
- Tooth Brushes
- Diapers (all sizes)
- Baby Wipes
- Bug Repellent
- Wasp/Hornet Spray
- Sunblock 30+
- Batteries (AA , AAA and D)
- Disposable Gloves (Latex & Non-Latex)

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Gift Cards are appreciated for buying perishables and items not received. (i.e. Wal-Mart, Sams Clubs, Food Lion, Lowes, Ingles, Piggly Wiggly).

We can use all size cans. Some locations prefer #10 cans (family size).

IMPORTANT: Please check for expired dates on food –we cannot accept expired items.

Please help our volunteer truck drivers by packing your church's donations in small, sturdy boxes.

Pack like items together.

Statewide pick-up points

Please Call First. Delivery hours vary at each collection location. Call in advance to schedule your delivery please. Thank you!



FOOD ROUNDUP
BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES

- Alexander Association**
Mikaylie Hughes
828-632-6546
- Anson Association**
Kim Glenn
704-694-2790
- Ashe Association**
Debbie Miller
336-846-5631
- Atlantic Association**
Rachel Dupree
252-447-4593
- Avery Association**
Bob Gorbett
828-733-6674
- Beulah Association**
Wendy Oliver
336-599-6117
- Bladen Association**
Kelly Self
910-862-3496
- Blue Ridge Association**
Dennis Love
828-559-0224
- Brier Creek Association**
Clay Leonard
336-780-8551
- Brunswick Association**
Elyse Brown
910-754-7979
- Brushy Mountain Assoc.**
Gloria Kilby
336-838-4407

- Buncombe Association**
Della Brindley
828-632-1864
- Burnt Swamp Assoc.**
Odum Home - Kathy Locklear
910-521-3433 ext. 6005
- Cabarrus Association**
Marvin Tyson
704-786-9171
- Caldwell Association**
Amanda Beane
828-758-4081
- Cape Fear Network of Baptist Churches**
Pine Valley Baptist Church
910-791-1949
- Catawba River Assoc.**
Veronica Klapp
828-437-0137
- Catawba Valley Assoc.**
Woodlawn Baptist Church
Charity Travis
828-464-6921
- Cheoah Association**
New Hope Baptist Church
Gerald & Nellie Phillips
828-479-8279

- Chowan Association**
Annie Weir
252-426-9621
- Columbus Association**
Teresa Powell
910-642-2155
- Dan Valley Association**
Clay Leonard
336-780-8551
- Dock Association**
Participating churches mail gift cards to BCH
- Eastern Association**
Charity Missions Center, Rose Hill
- Elkin Association**
Clay Leonard
336-780-8551
- Flat River Association**
Myra Klein
919-693-5215
- French Broad Association**
Robin Jackson
828-689-2845
- Graham Association**
New Hope Baptist Church
Gerald & Nellie Phillips
828-479-8279
- Greater Cleveland Assoc.**
Katie Harris
704-482-3472

- Greater Gaston Assoc.**
Karen Weaver
704-867-7257
- Green River Association**
Teresa Sams
828-286-9278
- Haywood Association**
Broyhill Home - Linda Morgan
828-627-9254
- Liberty Association**
Brian Alexander
336-475-0432
- Little River Association**
Cameron Boys Camp
Sandy Snyder
910-245-5001
- Macon Association**
Gary Holland
828-524-3215
- Metrolina Association**
Brian Hollifield
704-375-1197
- Mitchell Association**
Jennifer Beck
828-765-9412
- Mount Zion Association**
Sandi King
336-226-0249

- Neuse Association**
Kennedy Home
252-522-0811
- New River Association**
Jeanette Palmero
910-347-3146
- New South River Assoc.**
Cynthia Johnson
910-485-8791
- North Roanoke Assoc.**
Regina Balasoto
252-443-3883
- Pee Dee Association**
Janie Frye
910-895-5282
- Piedmont Association**
Rebecca Newlin
336-275-7651
- Polk Association**
Inez Jackson
828-894-3787
- Raleigh Association**
Iris Woodard
919-231-3995
- Randolph Association**
Erica Smith
336-625-4175
- Robeson Association**
Odum Home - Kathy Locklear
910-521-3433
910-318-3981

- Rocky Face Association**
Rocky Face Baptist Church
828-632-8561
- Rowan Association**
Darrell Mangan
704-637-3407
- Sandhills Association**
Cameron Boys Camp
Sandy Snyder
910-245-5001
- Sandy Creek Association**
1. Hickory Mountain BC
919-742-3928
2. East Sanford Baptist Ch.
919-776-3241
3. Moons Chapel BC
919-742-4569
4. Cool Springs BC
919-776-4633
- Sandy Run Association**
Evelyn Lane
828-245-2613
- South Fork Association**
Faith Ingle
704-735-1642
- South Mountain Assoc.**
Nancy Anderson
704-462-4472
- South Roanoke Assoc.**
Linda Franks
252-756-4332

- South Yadkin Association**
Jaime Tang
704-873-4372
- Stanly-Montgomery Assoc.**
Luanne Williams
704-982-1033
- Stone Mountain Assoc.**
Sherry Hicks
336-696-4210
- Stony Fork Association**
Roy Gryder
828-295-3410
- Surry Association**
Susan White
336-789-5701
- Tar River Association**
Louisburg Baptist Church
919-496-4195
- Tennessee River Assoc.**
FBC, Bryson City
Rita Maddox
828-488-2679
- Three Forks Association**
Suzanne Randall
828-264-4482
- Transylvania Association**
Nancy Kirkpatrick
828-877-3203
- Triad Church Network**
Clay Leonard
336-780-8551

- Triangle East Association**
Johnston Comm. College
Angie Daniels
919-961-4696
- Triwest Baptist Network**
Rose of Sharon Baptist Ch.
919-477-3993
- Truett Association**
Duronda Hood
828-837-5401
- Tuckasegee Association**
Gracella Morris
828-586-6011
- Union Association**
Bessie Benson
704-283-8383
- United Association**
(Drop at Metrolina Assoc.)
Brian Hollifield
704-375-1197
- West Chowan Assoc.**
Rebeccah Adams
252-332-3235
- Yadkin Association**
Brenda Chandler/Dennis Shaw
336-679-8731
- Yancey Association**
Joe Miller
828-682-2388

Plan to attend Homecoming on August 1, 2, & 3 – Square dance is slated for Saturday evening in gym

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

It will be as easy as 1-2-3 for us to remember this year's dates for Homecoming! August 1, 2 and 3. Only the very hardest working alumni come on Friday of the homecoming weekend to finish setting up for Saturday and Sunday. Our theme this year is "Do Si Do on Home," so they will be setting up a "country setting." To match that country setting, we are asking "homecomers", men and women, to find a good country shirt to go with the country setting. The ladies also might want to wear a twirly kind of skirt. With many folks dressing "country," they will be helping others to get into the right mood for our "Do Si Do on Home" for Saturday. Because, guess what! We will be in the gym square dancing. It will be so easy because we will have a "caller" telling us every move to make. He will give us easy "steps," nothing too difficult! He will simply have us hooking arms at the elbow with our partners and walking in circles, and walking around our partners for sure. We will probably be giggling. The caller who will help us is a professional country dancer named **Steve Anderson** and he is sending this word to you: "If you can walk and hug the ladies, you can do what I 'call out.'" So y'all start your planning to be back home that weekend to "Do Si Do on Home" and get into other good parts of Homecoming. When you receive your schedule of homecoming events in June, check carefully for the time we will "Do Se Do on Home" on Saturday. More on Homecoming next month.

We are saddened to have received sad news about two of our alumni families. **Rick Smoot** lost his wife **Gayle Fleshood Smoot** on February 8. Friends can send condolences to Rick at this address: 906 E. Lexington Ave., High Point, NC 27262

or SmootRchrd@aol.com. **Chuck Knight (Marty)** also lost his wife **Joan Webster Knight**, on March 4, 2025. Friends can send condolences to Chuck at this address: 2717 Sloan's Mill Rd. Hamptonville, NC 27020.

A phone call and a request elicited this response from a guy you might have called "Are." You'll enjoy this "slice of life" from **Larry Phillips**: "My three brothers (**Paul, Ray, and Cecil**) and I arrived at the Mills Home campus March 11, 1955. Upon entering, I didn't know if it was a Godsend or the devil's ploy as the church beckoned in the distance while those huge pillars of the Grand Archway seemed like prison guards to an almost nine-year-old. I soon understood they were embracing arms to nurture us through graduation. I met my lifelong best friend, **Gilbert Lipscomb**, early on, though we didn't immediately hit it off because I won all his marbles. To this day, we get together several times a year for travel, golf, and karaoke. (Of course, he just silently endures my karaoke.) At MH, we had a special small group, (both male and female were we,) which gathered in The Valley to play games and tell stories. We called ourselves "The Insanes." (It seemed appropriate). Years later, I was able to search the MH archives and found a letter to a social worker from the preacher man who helped get us into MH; he called us prison fodder and morons. Well, we all succeeded in our chosen field. As for me, after graduating UNC-CH and a stint in the army, I made a good living in the bottled water business; so, I reckon we showed the preacher man. While still owning my business, I tried retirement at age thirty-five (on my bucket list) but found it didn't suit me. Since selling my business, I have worked for Habitat for Humanity for the past 14 years. I've writ-

ten a book, to date unpublished, about my time at MH which captures the raucous adventures and fond memories of many colorful characters as well as young love. I changed the names to protect both the innocent and the questionable. I married my wife, **Libby**, in 1979, producing one daughter and one granddaughter. We also reared two nieces along the way. No home is perfect, and MH was no exception, but it gave us all a second chance. We all needed it." - **Larry "Are" Phillips**

Another person I called and asked specifically for a "write up" was **Lynn Gant Guritz**. She had recently given a day-by-day account to our Mills Home Facebook page of a trip she and her husband **Van** had made to one of the major Helene devastation scenes of North Carolina. The idea for the trip came to her after a discussion with a high school girlfriend about the severe damage. She recalled life at Mills Home where she had slept under quilts homemade by devout Southern Baptists to "warm the hearts and bodies of the children in the NC Baptist children's homes," a happening which had influenced her interest in sewing and becoming a master quilter. So she told her husband Van, "I need to send my quilts (15) to those poor people in Western NC who will need warmth through the coming winter!" Then racing thoughts of really exorbitantly huge postage costs led her to change her mind to transporting the quilts. She set out to collect as much as she could from local friends and acquaintances. At the same time she asked God for abundance! Soon, she had to smile at God's sense of humor: an abundance it was indeed. Five quilt guilds, personal friends, and their buddies loaded her home with vast supplies—quilts, pillows, sheets, jeans, coats, shoes,

toothbrushes, toothpaste, and even food. They filled their two trucks and 2 U-Haul trailers, (more than 500 cubic feet of supplies) and hauled them from California to Asheville.

Lynn's closing remarks were, "My husband and I were shocked but so thankful God provided such abundance, but I still prayed and asked for gas money. Again He delivered! Gas money came to us at a gas stop from a good Samaritan who engaged my husband in discussion about our loaded vehicles. I left with tears for God's gift and thankfulness to Him for continuing to bless us in our trip East. After a joyful reception of the goods by the Skyland United Methodist Church of Asheville, we knew all the quilts and supplies given so generously by our friends would be wonderfully distributed to those in need."

We still remind you that we need additions and corrections for the Mills Home Alumni Address Directory. Please send that information to **Flora Hicks Patton** by one of these methods: florapatton@ctc.net, 704-791-7866, or 6428 Sisk Carter Rd. Rockwell, NC, 28138. The directory will go to the printer around June 15. If you let her know, Flora will gladly give those corrections to the **Charity & Children** circulation staff.

Folks wishing to learn more about having your ashes placed in the Columbarium at God's Acre can get the information from **Sharon DeHart Stiles**. She knows all the details and can inform you well. Contact her at sharondstiles51@yahoo.com, 704-685-2443, or 1588 Elkhart Circle, Gastonia, NC, 28054.



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



Sibling boys welcome into Lallo family
 Brothers Zachariah and Zaylend arrived at the Lallo family's home in November 2022. Vincent and Jessica Lallo were trained and licensed as a Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) foster family along with other couples from Grace Bible Church in Whittier. On February 18, Zachariah and Zaylend were adopted by the Lallos. They have found their forever family along with the Lallo's biological children Lia and Vinny.

International adoption celebrated
 The "G-M" family finalized the adoption of their Filipino son through the help of BCH's Christian Adoption Services.

Fifth graders help out at Mills Home
 Students from High Point Christian Academy spent a day serving at BCH's Thomasville location.



Melbers meet staff serving in Shelby
 BCH CEO David Melber and wife Tera visited with staff and families at the ministry's locations in Shelby, NC.

Families participate in cooking classes
 With help from Kitchenology and Piedmont Fresh, Greater Vision Thomasville offered families healthy cooking classes.



Churches host discipleship event
 Rock Spring Baptist teamed with churches in Franklin County to host a DNow event for the children living at Kennedy Home.

Mud Creek steps up food collecting
 Mud Creek Baptist started their "Food Roundup" collecting early with amazing response from its members.

Ty always shares the love of Jesus
 Ty, a resident at Joy Cove Ministries in Zionville, bought flowers for his favorite worker at Walmart to share Christ's love.

every
CHILD
 foster & adoption ministry

We equip your church to be a part of foster care & adoption so that every child receives the caring home he or she deserves.

Get connected at every-child.org

TURN YOUR CALLING INTO A CAREER

Statewide positions for serving children, families and special needs adults

BCHCAREERS.ORG

Giving your vehicle puts the ministry in

Motion!

Your donated vehicle helps with school, church activities, student drivers, doctor visits, family care mothers and more.

Call Sam Barefoot at 336.474.1224

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out our Events Calendar for opportunities to serve and registration information. Visit bchfamily.org/events

APRIL

- 4: Camp Duncan Open House - Aberdeen, NC
- 24: CAS Upstate Golf Tournament - Travelers Rest, SC

MAY

- 2: Christian Adoption Services (CAS) Rocky Mount, NC Golf Tournament
- 6: North Carolina Baptist Aging (NCBAM) - AAIM State Leadership Conference Thomasville, NC
- 7-10: Ride to Clyde motorcycle ride - ridetoclyde.com

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN

Spring Saturday one-day missions for all ages--

- April 5: Cameron Boys Camp, Cameron
- April 12: Camp Duncan, Aberdeen
- May 10: Kennedy Home, Kinston
- May 17: Odum Home, Pembroke

For more info and registration, go to bchfamily.org/foc

How can we help you? Contact 1.800.476.3669 or bchfamily.org/referral >>>

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SECC
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David Melber to deliver Homecoming message — The Moores and the Maredys remembered

By **John Thompson**, 102 Maritime Court, Havelock, NC 28532 (252) 671-3515 jbthompson43@gmail.com

HOMECOMING is always a very important time at Kennedy Home (KH). We get to visit with those who lived there when we were there plus meet a lot of other Kennedy Home “youngins.” This year is going to be extra special because we will have the opportunity to meet and talk with our new CEO **David Melber** and his lovely wife. They will be staying in one of the duplexes on campus for Saturday and Sunday. This year we need to put forth every effort to have the largest crowd we have had in many years. Let’s pack the choir loft and all the pews in the sanctuary. Choir practice is Sunday morning right after Sunday school at 10:30.

I hope all of you celebrated Valentine’s Day with someone special. Through the years, it has been so nice a time for me. **Becky**, my one and only love, was my girlfriend in the seventh grade. We knew each other from five years of age. She was my special love for so many years. We started playing the organ and piano together for worship at the National Avenue Baptist Church of New Bern where we both lived. I became the choir director when I was in the eleventh grade. I didn’t want to get married until after I had my college degree from East Carolina and had a full-time job and a place to live. The Lord helped us with all that.

We got married in 1965, the summer after my graduation. We moved to Little Washington and I taught public school music for grades 1-8. I also was choir director for First Baptist Church. The Lord let my Becky live with me until He called her home after 56 years of marriage.

Valentine’s Day is important to a lot of people. **Donald Wetherington** shared this: “On Valentine’s Day, a lot of folks give flowers, candy, love notes, or even an engagement ring to their sweetheart. They all

represent love for someone. To me, the greatest words I love to hear are, “I Love You!” Many years ago, I discovered the greatest love story ever told. I found it in the Holy Bible. It was written in red in today’s most predominant color. I read it in the Book of John, chapter 3, verse 16. This is what it said: ‘For God so loved the world He gave His only Son, that whosoever believed in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.’ There’s no other gift that you could receive today from anyone greater than the gift of Salvation that Jesus gave you. It’s a free gift. If you haven’t received it, why don’t you do it today and really feel the “Love of God!”

Donald will be teaching our Sunday School lesson on Homecoming Sunday this year. Support his class at 10:00 a.m. Thanks, Donald, for always sharing. Keep it up.

Phillip Dupree recently shared some interesting KH facts. I want to share parts of it over the next few months. Phillip was living at KH when I was there. His father was in charge of campus beautification and his mother was the campus nurse. They also were houseparents. I know many of you will remember them. **Mr. and Mrs. Dupree** have gone to live with Jesus in heaven now. Phillip shared: **William Lafayette Kennedy** was born in Lenoir County, NC, November 18, 1845. Mr. Kennedy’s “father” was **Thomas Jefferson Kennedy** of Lenoir County. His mother was **Martha Allen Kennedy** of Green County. William Lafayette Kennedy joined the Confederate State’s Army when he was sixteen years old in the spring of 1862. After the fall of New Bern, he served three years and surrendered April 26, 1865 against **General Joseph E. Johnson’s** army at Greensboro. He came home and went to work on his father’s farm, Cedar Dell and lived in Cedar Dell Mansion which was built in 1832. William and his

wife **Emily** never had any children but gave all they had to the Baptist Orphanage. The mansion still stands at the end of the main road coming onto the campus. Did you know we are allowed to move anything around in the house except the dining room? It has to be kept in place. This was Mrs. Kennedy’s real china, crystal, dining room suit, etc. More history from Phillip next month.

Judy Stallings Murray (1967-1972) writes about her houseparents. I would encourage many Kennedy Home youngins to send me articles about their houseparents. Judy lived in the Canady Cottage with **Mr. and Mrs. Moore**. Mr. Moore loved to tell me about KH. He was the only person who knew where all the underground pipes were on the campus. He was a big influence on my life. Judy states that they taught her so much about getting along with others. They taught her about how to make a bed and how to keep the cottage clean. “They taught us how to do different chores in the cottage so that we all could live and work together in a clean house. After living in the Cannage Cottage, I moved over to Williams Cottage with **Louise and Earl Maredy**. They were great houseparents and had their own children living there with us all. They taught me very much about getting along with others. They also taught us cooking, cleaning, and helping others in the house. I really enjoyed being around so many people and I always called them my brothers and sisters. I also love the Maredy children. They were also easy to get along with. We ate our meals together and cleaned afterwards. We were allowed to go skating and swimming once all of our chores were done. It really taught me so much respect, kindness, happiness, and love for one another. Thanks for the friendship I had and still have with all my friends that I keep in contact with today.

I am doing ok. Anytime anyone wants to stop by my home, please do. I live at 147 Glendale Village Lane, Wallace, NC 28466.”

Earl worked on campus as a mechanic as well as being house father. He fixed my old car many times for me.

Death has come to many of our KH youngins this past year. Someone asked why I didn’t write about those who died. I’m just so afraid that I will leave someone out and that would be awful. From time to time, I will include a list of those who have died in the year. I plan to share with you an article about **Danny Stallings** who recently went to be with the Lord.

Also, I know you get tired of me asking for your help writing this page every month. I want this page to be interesting to all the Baptists in our North Carolina churches. I try to think of a theme every now and then. Right now, I would like for you to take the time to write about a page or a page and a half about your houseparents. I really think all of our churches would like to hear from you. From time to time, I will be asking for articles of different subjects, such as your campus job, your best recreational times, your best field trips. You might want to write about your visiting home families—this would be great to share. Another article to write could be about your off-campus jobs.

Attention to all reading this page, if you receive **Charity & Children** every month, write a note to me about how important it is to receive this information and what it means to you. You might have a special story you want to share, too.

Looking forward to hearing from many people. Love to you and all the KH youngins.—jt



John Thompson served at Kennedy Home from 1972-1977. At age 81, he continues to serve the Lord.

Remembering others is a treasure worth holding onto

By Jim Edminson, Editor

Like most people, Kathy and I stash our memories in boxes, keepsakes of value only to us, and yet among our prized possessions. Besides the photographs of days gone by, greeting cards figure largely in the collection. Births, housewarmings, Christmases, Valentines, Easters, and deaths, all marked by the arrival of cards in the mail with personal, handwritten messages.

Despite the onslaught of digital communications zipping around us, billions of greeting cards are still sold each year in the United States. Just like in days gone by, greeting cards offer a tangible way of connecting—something that emails or texts cannot deliver. It seems that in a world running at breakneck speed, there remains a need to stop and be thoughtful.

Greeting cards are no longer sent only by aging sweethearts, adoring mothers, and grandparents who beautifully write in cursive. Millennials and Generation Z (ages 18 to 33) are embracing the paper cards. People who know nothing about wall-mounted telephones and party lines, living their entire lives with computers, smartphones, and digital media, are driving greeting card companies like Shutterfly who offer personalization—adding family and pet photos. Innovative companies like Lovepops and Freshcut have created a buzz with all generations by offering 3-D pop-up cards, featuring paper floral bouquets and birds—all found by shopping online. Tried-and-true Hallmark, in

stores in almost every community, continues to hold court as the leading greeting card company in the country.

Why the interest? There seems to be a renewed need for the tactile—something physical that can be held as a reminder of care and thoughtfulness. The artwork and messages are personal expressions of one's feelings, from humorous to romantic to well wishes and condolences, given as attentive and kind expressions. Cards become treasured keepsakes tucked into books, desk drawers, displayed on shelves in office cubicles—and in keepsake boxes. They are not lost in the Cloud but are real evidence that someone cares.



Choosing the right card is part of the experience of card giving and drives the variety of cards available. Depending on the personality, it takes only seconds to choose a card or can take longer if one reads every verse of a multi-tier poem, in the hopes of finding the message that suits perfectly the sender and the one receiving the card.

I quickly pass over the cards with paragraphs of words. It's not that I am unsentimental; I am looking for the perfect but short, to-the-point message that encapsulates all my deepest feelings in about ten words. From walking up to the card display to walking out of the store takes me about 15 minutes.

Kathy, on the other hand, is more deliberate. She reads every word as she shops for the perfect card. The choices narrow down to two or three possible selections. One more read through and she sets one aside, glancing at the card rack again just in case she overlooked a

card that didn't make the first cut. Content with her choice, she checks out nearly an hour after she arrives.

There are different styles of choosing—it is personal to the one selecting the card. Different styles of writing a personal message are equally important. Completing the card for me is succinct and to the point. "Love, Dad!"

Kathy, alternatively, takes the opportunity to add personal missives to the already perfect card, just a paragraph or so, before signing and sealing. In that box of keepsakes of ours are several treasures addressed to me, and reading them brings back the warmest feelings. I know many readers have experienced the same.

There are missives, just as dear to reread, in the word of God. The apostle Paul took every opportunity to communicate to people who were important to him. His letters gave counsel, soothed disagreements, were instructive, affirmed beliefs, and called others to his Savior. He too took the time to send very personal messages.

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you," he writes to his beloved flock in Philippi. Isn't that what we say, in essence, to all of those receiving the cards and letters we take time and effort to send?

Jesus-followers know the Lord's mandate: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," the Son admonishes in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, reminding His followers of the Father's same command in Deuteronomy 6:5. And then He adds: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Maybe that is what propels you and me to seek those aisles of greeting cards. To love our neighbors and those we hold dear. The pleasure of receiving a loving remembrance and knowing there is one who is thankful for us is the treasure—a treasure worth holding onto.

With thanksgiving to all of you, dear readers, I send personal greetings. Blessings, Jim.



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