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And now abides faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina



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November 2021

Issue 11

Volume 134



Christmas is about children

By Jim Edminson, Editor

Christmas can be such a joyful time, and it is even more so when celebrated through the eyes of a child. Children hear the story of the birth of Jesus, their eyes open wide, and they eagerly step forward with open arms to be a shepherd or an angel in the church's Nativity play. Christmas is about children.

When the disciples asked who would be the greatest, Jesus placed a child among them: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

The angelic chorus declared: "Glory to God in the highest!" Jesus, God's Son, came as a child. Later, when children were brought to Jesus, He stopped everything and made time for them, placing His hands on them and blessing them.

Jesus went on to tell the disciples, "And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me." This Christmas, welcome Jesus like a child, with eyes wide open and with open arms, and then welcome and bless the children around you.

See page 5 to learn how you can help a child.

every
child deserves a family.

On mission together! Baptist Children's Homes and the Baptist State Convention announce a joint Foster Care & Adoption ministry.

See pages 6 & 7 | every-child.org



Learn how Baptist Children's Homes helps you and your church with **FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION** at

ANNUAL MEETING

BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA
NOVEMBER 8-9 / KOURY CENTER, GREENSBORO

Come to our booth and attend our two breakout sessions:

- Training & licensing church couples for foster care
- Teaching churches to help traumatized children

INFO AT NCANNUALMEETING.ORG

Remembering Paul Broyhill, a true friend of children

By Michael C. Blackwell, President/CEO

Paul Broyhill, 97, died October 5, 2021. His legacy of leadership, compassion, generosity, and kindness is spread world-wide where the name “Broyhill” is synonymous with quality and style.

We first met over a late-night dinner at a French restaurant in Reynolda Village in Winston-Salem. It was a Friday night in July ‘83 and what was supposed to be a get-acquainted visit turned into a three-hour time of introduction, reminiscing, and looking ahead.

Paul Broyhill was a man of action and he urged me to be that same way as the new president of Baptist Children’s Homes. I called him often and visited when I could.

The Broyhill Family Foundation was the vehicle through which grants were made to BCH (the first was for a swimming pool at Mills Home in 1955). But, the work of the Foundation was felt in powerful ways throughout Caldwell County, homebase for Broyhill Furniture Industries.

For decades, Paul was an active—and influential—member of First Baptist Church, Lenoir. It was here—and especially through the guidance of his parents J. E. and Satie Broyhill—that Paul became convinced of “the need to give back.” And, give back he did! We at BCH have been the grateful recipients of Paul’s gener-

osity and that of his parents before him.

The crowning touch of Broyhill generosity to BCH is the Broyhill Children’s Home, located in the hill country of Clyde, North Carolina in Haywood County. As recently as the week I am writing these words, we received a substantial grant from the Foundation to fund one of our projects.

I dedicated my book, *Above the Clouds...9 Essentials for Thriving at the Peak* to Mr. Broyhill with these words: “Paul Broyhill has been a friend, mentor, and confidant since 1983. His words—PUSH AHEAD—are words I repeatedly lean on when making decisions or casting new visions. I draw strength from his entrepreneurial spirit and relentless pursuit of excellence. Thank you, Paul Broyhill, for your shining example of leadership and true friendship.”

Thank you, indeed, Paul Hunt Broyhill. Your legacy is firmly established—a legacy of love and changed lives. My commitment to the memory of Mr. Broyhill is to continue that legacy to the best of my ability.



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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BCH University grads affirmed for excellence

By Jim Edminson, Editor

The fourth class of Baptist Children's Homes University (BCHU) graduated October 13 at Mills Home in Thomasville.

The graduation ceremony was kicked off with comments by BCH COO Keith Henry as he welcomed this year's graduates: Emily Adler, Jada Cable, Matt Chilson, Crystal Killian, Rebekah Reagan, and Drew Scott. The fourth cohort represents both wilderness camps, family foster care, Kennedy Home, and Broyhill Home.

BCH's Bond Kiser shared a devotion focusing on the "Parable of the Talents," emphasizing the necessity to be equipped and the importance of service.

BCHU is a leadership and talent management program covering eight core areas that challenge participants to reach their "next best." Cohorts are made up of staff members who not only do their jobs, but look for ways to improve BCH's overall "culture of excellence" in their areas and departments.

"Leadership is marked by persistence, patience, timing, and a great attitude," BCH



The fourth class of Baptist Children's Homes University graduated on October 13 at Mills Home in Thomasville. BCHU is a leadership and talent management program that challenges participants to reach their "next best." Pictured left to right: Rebekah Reagan, Matt Chilson, BCH VP Staff Engagement and Compliance Bond Kiser, BCH COO Keith Henry, Crystal Killian, BCH president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell, Drew Scott, Emily Adler, and Jada Cable.

president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell said as he began his commencement address. "Your commitment to these ideas shines brightly."

Blackwell affirmed graduates personally offering gifts to each one in the class.

All these months later, and through the challenges of a pandemic, I add these important words: live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly, and leave the rest up to God."

To Drew Scott, he gave the gift of consistency; to Emily Adler, the gift of trustworthiness; to Crystal Killian, the gift of compassion; to Rebekah Reagan, the gift of humility; to Matt Chilson, the gift of integrity; and to Jada Cable, the gift of positivity.

"When I first met each of you at the beginning of this session," Dr. Blackwell said, "I charged you with three things: be open to learn, be willing to participate, and be excited to implement. Look around, you have done just that, reaching this high point today.

Smith's "Bike for Hope" exceeds \$100,000 goal

By Blake Ragsdale, Managing Editor

Lewis Smith has met and exceeded his goal for "Bike for Hope." His plan was to raise \$100,000 to help meet the needs of Baptist Children's Homes' (BCH) boys and girls but supporters responded to his bicycling efforts by giving more than \$105,000.00.

"God is good and our donors are faithful!" Smith proclaimed. He serves as BCH Director of Development in Western North Carolina. "I want to thank every person across the state for not only giving but praying for a safe event. It's been an honor for me to ride these miles."

In all, Smith pedaled 600 miles. "Bike for Hope" took place throughout the month of September riding the mileage in a series of 12, 50-mile stages. He chose that distance because it is the equivalent of riding the length of the state of North Carolina.

The distance Lewis biked is a reminder of the hurting boys and girls BCH is ready to serve no matter where they are in the state.

In order to bike safely, Smith rode on a perimeter road at Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord. The venue, known for hosting NASCAR racing events, donated the use of the road for "Bike for Hope."

"Part of the blessing for me was not only



BCH's Lewis Smith completed his effort to pedal 600 miles for "Bike for Hope." He exceeded the goal by \$5,000.

meeting the goal but spending time with so many people as I shared about 'Bike for Hope,'" explains Smith.

This is not the first time Smith has used his passion for bicycling to raise funds for BCH. In 2008, he took part in

"Ride the West" pedaling approximately 500 miles and exceeding the goal of \$50,000.

Giving thanks for your generous year-end giving

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

For me, I hope I see everyday as a day of thanksgiving. However, I must say I do love turkey and dressing, sweet potato pie and time with family every November. As I prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving this year with family, there are messages all around me that say prepare for Christmas. Don't delay! Shop now! Mail now! We are told we need to be shopping early and mailing early if we want our gifts to arrive in time for Christmas. So now is a great time to decide on your "make a difference gifts." You know, the gift that changes lives, the gift that offers hope in the midst of what seems a hopeless time, the gift you give to Baptist Children's Homes.

Ms. Lou, one of our dear houseparents, recently made her journey to heaven. As I sat down to write my column this month, my mind immediately remembered a story she shared with me. It was and is a story that to this day cuts to my core and dramatically reminds me of why we are here.

It was Christmas day. There were a few boys in the cottage, not many, because several had gone to visit grandparents or other extended family members. Ms. Lou prepared for weeks to serve a Christmas feast. She invited one of the boys that would be with them that day to call his mother and invite her to join them. The child was so excited knowing he would be with his mom on Christmas.

She was scheduled to arrive just before lunch. Lunch time came and passed. When he was finally able to reach her, he realized her addiction to alcohol had once again taken his mom to a very bad place. He was devastated. His heart was broken.

In that moment, hope was given. The peace, hope, and joy made manifest in the birth of a baby became real through Ms. Lou and the other boys in his cottage as they immediately began to care for him. They shared their Christmas feast and opened presents you made possible. In that moment, your "make a difference gift" had a life-changing impact. Over the next several months, he found hope and healing through a relationship with our Lord and Savior. Your "make a difference" gifts offer so many possibilities that point our children toward transformation.

Giving now is crucial to our being here throughout the coming year. There are many ways to give and impact the lives of hurting children—**and your gifts through the end of January will be doubled. Starting now, gifts are matched dollar for dollar up to \$250,000.**

Give a gift of \$50 to be a Christmas sponsor for a child. A gift of \$600 sponsors a cottage.

What better gift to give a friend or business associate than to honor them with a gift that blesses a child. BCH notifies honorees with a card and sends a gift acknowledgement receipt to you.

Consider a gift of cash or a gift of appreciated stock or other property. When you give stock or property, we sell it. By donating the stock or property directly to BCH, you eliminate the capital gains tax you would pay if you sold it. If you have held the stock for more than a year, your gift will be deductible at its full market value on the date it is received.

Be sure to call our office if you plan to make a stock gift. Often the broker will not inform us of the donor who is making the gift. For questions about stock gifts or to expedite your stock gift, call Sam Barefoot at 336-474-1224.

An IRA Charitable Rollover gift is a great way for you to change the life of a child. Be sure you contact your advisor soon to make this happen before the end of the year.

The Cares Act created several incentives for individual giving in 2020, which carried over into 2021. These include :

- A new deduction for charitable donors who do not itemize when filing their tax returns. If you do not itemize but make a gift to charity, you will be able to take a special tax deduction, up to \$300 to reduce your tax liability. If filing single you can claim a \$300 deduction. If filing married/jointly you can claim a \$600 deduction.

An example of this above the line deduction is a taxpayer who takes the standard deduction and makes a \$300 cash gift

to a public charity (BCH) may claim the \$300 deduction in computing their AGI. The gift deduction is in addition to their standard deduction.

- The Cares Act lifted the cap on annual contributions to public charities (BCH for individuals who itemize. The provision in the Cares Act provided an increase in the deduction limit up to 100% of a donor's AGI for cash gifts to qualified charities (BCH). Prior to the Cares act the deduction was capped at 60%. Any excess contributions available can be carried over to the next five years. Note: For corporations, the new law raised the annual limit from 10% to 25% of taxable income.

This information is not intended as legal advice. Consult with your accountant, tax advisor or attorney to determine the best strategy for your particular situation.

Thank you in advance for your investment in the life of a child. There are those who wish they could give at this time, but can't. Will you pray about giving a little extra on their behalf. And remember, your gift will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$250,000 until January 31st 2022. For more information, call me at **336-689-4442**.



Sometimes, we need a hero.

Six-year-old Caleb and his little brother Colby were rescued from traumatic circumstances. It was late November when the two boys, scared and confused, arrived at a BCH cottage. Cottage parents Adam and Sian Saunders greeted them with clean pajamas and Adam's famous grilled-cheese sandwiches. The Saunders were real-life heroes to the boys who were not used to adults being loving and kind.

With Christmas just around the corner, the cottage was decorated from top to bottom and a big, brightly-lit Christmas tree in the living room. The brothers had never experienced a "Merry" Christmas before and were thrilled when they filled out their wish lists. On Christmas Eve, the Saunders took their cottage children for a van ride to see Christmas lights.



"What presents are you hoping to receive tomorrow morning?" Sian asked as they rode around the neighborhood. When it was Colby's turn, the four year old said, "I want a Batman bike!" (This was not an item on his wish list.) Sian didn't blink, God had already granted the young boy's desire—they had an extra bicycle—it was a Batman bike. On Christmas morning, Colby sped up and down the cottage driveway on his new Batman bike proclaiming, "This is the best Christmas ever!"

As a Christmas sponsor, you become a child's hero. Your faithful Christmas gift demonstrates to children like Colby and Caleb that they are valued so much that all their needs are met and they can experience a joyous holiday season.

Know that your Christmas sponsorship will be matched dollar for dollar through our \$250,000 challenge gift. During this critical time when uncertainty is swirling in the world around us, your gift in the life of a hurting child will have double the impact. Thank you!



I want every child to experience Colby's joy!

- ☐ \$50 Christmas for one child ☐ \$100 Christmas for two siblings ☐ \$300 A cottage holiday outing
☐ \$600 Christmas for a cottage ☐ \$1,000 A large gift for a cottage ☐ \$_____ Any size gift

There are two ways you can make your gift:

- 1) By Check: Please use the enclosed envelope and mail this completed form with your check.
2) By Credit Card: Give online at www.bchfamily.org/givenow or call Faith Frazier at 336-474-1312.

Receive life-changing stories, ministry updates and more. Email: _____

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

BCH, Convention partner for EVERY CHILD Foster & Adopt

By Blake Ragsdale, Managing Editor

The problem is evident, there are approximately 16,000 children in North Carolina's foster care system. The solution to providing homes to these boys and girls who have been removed from their families, for their safety and well-being, has been elusive—until now.

Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina (BCH) and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSC) are launching *EVERY CHILD Foster & Adoption Ministry*, a partnership to offer every child the caring home that he or she deserves through the direct involvement of North Carolina Baptists.

"God in His omniscience has been preparing us for this moment," says Michael C. Blackwell, BCH President/CEO. "Throughout the past several years, we have seen BCH's family foster care ministry grow beyond our expectations. We also added the ability to provide adoption services through the merger with Christian Adoption Services.

"Today, the Lord is strengthening an already firm foundation between Baptist Children's Homes and the Baptist State Convention as we step into this new chapter of missions and ministry together so that we can share hope with every vulnerable child."

Todd Unzicker, who was elected as Executive Director-Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in May, brought a vision of impacting child homelessness into his new role. Through discussion and prayer,

BSC and BCH forged the partnership to carry out their shared vision.

"The Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina is a vital ministry partner and we are excited about the launch of the 'Every Child' initiative," says Unzicker. "There is a tremendous need for foster care and adoption across our state and North Carolina Baptists can be part of the solution."

EVERY CHILD Foster & Adoption Ministry is an outgrowth of the family foster care service that has allowed BCH to establish nearly 120 family foster homes throughout North Carolina. The majority of the foster couples were identified when BCH staff, in cooperation with pastors and leaders at the couples' churches, shared the opportunity for them to be trained and licensed through BCH.

It is this model of working directly with churches that is the heart of the new *EVERY CHILD Foster & Adoption Ministry*.

"Imagine if North Carolina were a state where no child experiences homelessness and every child in need had a safe, loving home where they could learn of Jesus' great love," shares Unzicker. "With God's help, I believe such a vision can become a reality as our family of NC Baptist churches work toward this goal with BCH."

As liaison to 77 local Baptist Associations, the BSC is able to help cast the vision for *EVERY CHILD* throughout its statewide network of almost 4,400 churches and connect them with BCH's foster/adopt staff.

Through *EVERY CHILD*, BCH's statewide foster and adopt staff provide the following:

- Training and licensing for couples in churches who desire to foster or foster-to-adopt—training takes place at the time and place convenient for the participating church
- Working with couples and individuals to adopt or foster-to-adopt domestically or adopt internationally
- Equipping churches to provide ongoing ministry and support for foster and adoptive parents and their children in their congregation
- Providing ongoing support to participating churches and families
- Offering trauma-informed training to help with boys and girls who come from traumatic circumstances

"The church is the answer, and 16,000 children await," proclaims Unzicker. "I believe NC Baptists can help every child in our state."

Blackwell agrees. "When you look at this number it seems overwhelming, but we serve a God in Whom all things are possible," he says. "If you divide 16,000 by 4,400 churches, that equates to four children per church. If every NC Baptist

church stepped forward to care for four children, the number of NC foster children becomes zero."

To learn more, watch testimonial videos or to set up an information meeting at your church, visit everychild.org or call at 1-800-476-3669.

NOTE: Stop by the EVERY CHILD booth at the Annual Meeting of the Baptist State Convention on November 8 & 9. Learn more at ncannualmeeting.org.

LEARN MORE: Churches and couples interested in foster/adoption: Attend our breakout sessions at the Annual Meeting on Nov. 8 & 9. Info at ncannualmeeting.org.

Every Child: Connecting Vulnerable Children With Christian Families

- Mon., Nov 8 at 3:30-4:30 p.m.
- Tues., Nov 9 at 11 a.m. to noon

Helping Children Succeed:

Be a Trauma-Informed Church

- Tues., Nov 9 at 3:30-4:30 p.m.



FOSTER AND ADOPTION

Why forever matters

By David Powell, Sr. Pastor, Salem Baptist Church, Dobson

The little girl asked, "Which one is my mommy now?" I never imagined a child asking someone to point out who their mother was. However, little blonde-haired Ally, who I was holding that day, had already lived with three different families in the span of 15 months since she and her sister Laylin entered foster care.

As I pointed to my wife, Lindsey, Ally asked another question that she and her sister, Laylin, would be asking many more times: "Forever?"



David Powell

In the months that followed, Lindsey and I would hear our girls ask, "We'll always have food in the house—forever?" "These clothes are mine to keep—forever?" "We get to stay here—forever?"

Forever mattered to our girls. They longed for the assurance that the future could hold something good that would last beyond a moment.

Forever was a word that also had a place in our hearts. What was God's plan for our "forever family?" Since the birth of our son, Noah, our family had experienced multiple losses before entering the world of foster care and adoption.

By the goodness and mercy of God, we can meet the present needs of these children and point them to the God who wants them to be part of His family and home—forever.

As a result, one of the fears we harbored was would we be able to handle it if a child placed with us was not able to be with us forever? But the gospel compelled us to open our home and our hearts, whether it be for a moment or forever.

The journey that followed was not the storybook tale that we sometimes imagined. There were difficult times when we had to say goodbye to the first children we fostered. We found that foster care and adoption is ministry, but it is messy at times because it is happening in the midst of great brokenness.

There are challenges, disappointments, long waits, and questions. However, all of these difficulties are eclipsed by moments of joy, love, and spiritual growth brought by the God who holds forever in His hands.

On February 28, 2020, our family let out the collective breath we held for almost two years from the day Ally and Laylin entered our home. That was the day Ally and Laylin's adoption was finalized, making them legally part of our "forever family."

And the goodness and mercy of God has continued. Two weeks later, we prayed with Laylin as she trusted in Jesus and received assurance that she has a place "forever" in God's home, too.

Today, there are more than 16,000 children in North Carolina who need a home. Because their forever matters, the time for families of North Carolina Baptist churches to act is now.

By the goodness and mercy of God, we can meet the present needs of these children and point them to the God who wants them to be part of His family and home—forever.

Fire safety tips and guidelines help older adults

By **Angie Gryder Gregg**, West Regional Director, North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry

These words can be haunting: “I never thought it would happen to me!” But these are the words of the visibly shaken, frail 78-year-old lady as she watched the firefighters rush into her burning home. Although this was one of the worst days of her life, she had escaped the fire with no injuries. As a firefighter and serving in the fire service for 30 years, I would hear this phrase many times while serving the community. Hearing this phrase and seeing the destruction of home fires created a passion for preventing home fires and resulting deaths and injuries. Knowing what to do in the event of a fire is particularly important for older adults. At age 65, people are twice as likely to be killed or injured by fires compared to the population at large. And with numbers growing every year (adults age 65 and older make up about 12 percent of the population), it’s essential to take the necessary steps to stay safe and prevent fires from happening.

To increase fire safety for older adults, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) offers the following safety tips and guidelines:



Angie Gregg

Keep it Low If you don’t live in an apartment building, consider sleeping in a room on the ground floor in order to make emergency escape easier. Make sure that smoke alarms are installed in every sleeping room and outside any sleeping areas. When looking for an apartment or high-rise home, look for one with an automatic sprinkler system. Sprinklers can extinguish a home fire in less time than it takes for the fire department to arrive.

Sound the Alarm Your ability to get out of your home during a fire depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and advance planning. The majority of fatal fires occur when people are sleeping, and because smoke can put you into a deeper sleep rather than waking you, it’s important to have early warning of a fire to ensure that you wake up.

Do the Drill Conduct regular fire drills to make sure you know what to do in the event of a home fire. Fire drills are also a good opportunity to make sure that everyone is able to hear and respond to smoke alarms.

Open Up Make sure you are able to open all doors and windows in your home. Locks



NCBAM West Regional Director Angie Gregg trains NC Baptist volunteers in proper smoke alarm installation as well as fire prevention strategies to share with aging adults. For anyone interested in learning about fire safety, Gregg will host a virtual training on Oct. 25 sharing how churches can establish a smoke alarm ministry to aid aging adults and how to obtain free alarms. Register at ncbam.org/events.

should open easily from inside. (Some apartment and high-rise buildings have windows designed not to open.) If you have security bars on doors or windows, they should have emergency release devices inside so that they can be opened easily. Check to be sure that windows haven’t been sealed shut with paint or nailed shut; if they have, arrange for someone to break the seals all around your home or remove the nails.

Stay Connected Keep a telephone nearby, along with emergency phone numbers so that you can communicate with emergency personnel if you’re trapped in your room by fire or smoke.

The mission of North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) is to provide “help for the journey” to individuals 65+ in ways that help them maintain their independence and enjoy quality of life. As part of our Priority #1: Prevention initiative, NCBAM offers smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to adults 65+ through a FEMA grant, Fire and Fall Prevention workshops, and Disaster Preparedness workshops.

Contact the NCBAM Call Center 877-506-2226 to schedule a workshop, fire prevention resources, or to request smoke alarms. With FEMA-funded alarms, NCBAM is available to help your church develop a smoke alarm min-

istry to your community.

Angie Gryder Gregg serves as far west regional director for North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry. She joined NCBAM after serving 30 years in the fire service with Blowing Rock Fire Department and the NC Office of State Fire Marshal and recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

There are approximately
16,000
children in North Carolina's
foster care system.

Your church is the answer for ensuring every child receives the caring home he or she deserves.
Learn more at every-child.org.

Alumni remember the lives of Diane Stewart and Bill Byerly—columbarium project proceeding

By Lib Johnson

(336) 299-7412

libsjohnson@triad.rr.com

We are deeply saddened to report the death of **Diane S. Stewart**, the wife of Mills Home Baptist Church pastor **Rev. Dr. Randy Stewart**. Diane died on September 7. She had worked side by side with Randy since their marriage in 1977, a large part of that time serving the youngsters at Mills Home (MH) and the students of Brown Middle School in Thomasville. She was extremely active at Mills Home Baptist Church and served on the Mills Home Alumni Council as well. She approached all endeavors with care, concern, joy, and happiness. Many describe her as a selfless person and one who was blessed with marvelous piano playing skills. She had an especially cute and friendly personality that made everyone feel special and loved. So many alumni felt she was their special partner in getting into mischief as well as enjoying a loving friendship.

In addition to her parents, Diane was preceded in death by her brother, **Gary Dwight Sides**.

Besides her husband Randy, she is survived by their offspring and their spouses, **Meredith (Robbie), Matthew (Stephanie), and Mark (Kelly)**, and grandchildren, **Kate, Lyla, Makenzie, and Alice**. Her sister **Alice** also survives.

A memorial service for Diane was held on September 11 in the sanctuary of Mills Home Baptist Church with **Jane Baity and Regina Keener** officiating.

Memorials may be directed to TSC Alliance for Tuberous Sclerosis, 8737 Colesville Rd. Suite 400, Silver Springs, Maryland 20910-4487.

We grieve also for **Bill J. Byerly** who died September

19. Bill entered MH in 1951 and graduated in 1961. He was well known on campus and at Thomasville High School as a fantastic basketball and football player. He worked well on campus with several maintenance men and picked up many construction skills. At one time, he was the youngest electrician in North Carolina and over the years he owned several types of construction businesses, the most recent being his pool construction company. **Jay Wood** described him as having innate construction understanding. But more than what he owned or what he could do, people were impressed with Bill as a person and how he treated other people. Always an humble and friendly man, Bill so often helped people in ways like buying their groceries, paying their rent, or in some cases even giving them a job. And when **Bill and Verna** held their annual October picnic, he wanted each alumnus to know he/she was welcome in the little western town he built on their Byerly farm in Archdale.

Bobby Mitchell, head of maintenance at Mills Home, wrote "Bill would often show up at the campus maintenance shop and say, 'Okay, now what do I need to do over here?' Sometimes we had pool work for him, sometimes an equipment problem, or sometimes an electrical problem. He was always ready to help us. I feel it was fitting that his last work at MH was doing something to benefit the children on campus. He built two sets of plaster steps to help small children enter the pool safely. I really appreciate the times he helped us with problems and at the

same time taught us many things. He was a great personal friend and when he visited at my home, he always took time to let my children see he was interested in them as well."

Bill is survived by his wife, **Verna Olson Harris** of the home, and his son, **William James Byerly, Jr.**, of Thomasville. No services are planned at this time.

Shirley Highfill Frye entered MH in 1960 with her sister **Ruth Ann** and left in 1968. She had some fear of her new life upon entering, but she was lucky to quickly make a new friend at the Little Cottage. Shirley will never forget that friend, **Jeanie Helms**, because Jeanie held her hand all night long her first night there. Shirley accepted life at MH and entered enthusiastically into many things. She enjoyed singing in the choir, working in the kitchens, working in the small children's cottages, working at the gym, and working in the sewing room where she made her own clothes. When asked who her favorite worker was at MH, she kindly responded, "**all of them.**"

Shirley and her husband **Sidney Ray Frye** live in Conover. Her life's work has included hair styling, sewing and inspecting for furniture companies, and taking care of her husband and others. Shirley wants her friends to know that she has not been able to come to Homecoming for several years because of people who need her attention. She sends her love to all and looks forward to the time when she will see them again.

We were pleased to learn from **Wallace Maultsby** that his classmate **Milton C. Bliss** is

doing well. Milton and his brother **Robert** entered MH in 1937 and he graduated in 1944. Milton was quite active on campus in "cultural arts" events. He excelled in school and music. He was very fond of **Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Lord** who produced outstanding music programs with the band, choir, and glee club. They were both very influential in guiding Milton toward a career in music. As he was in college training, he would come to the campus and perform in special concerts just for the campus kids. His life's career was as a professor at North Carolina State University where he earned Professor Emeritus status. For many years he directed an alumni choir for performances at Homecoming. Often, the special music was his own arrangement of a familiar hymn.

Sharon DeHart Stiles, the 2021 Chairperson of the Columbarium Committee, reports that \$16,600 has already been donated toward the columbarium to be erected at God's Acre. We invite all alumni and friends to be a part of this fund raising since its main purpose is to serve former alumni. Checks should be mailed to Alumni Council treasurer **Flora Hicks Patton** at 2864 Sisk Carter Rd., Rockwell, NC 28138. Make your check payable to the Mills Home alumni Association with a notation that it is for the columbarium. Look for other details later.



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



Christian Adoption Services

Birth mother chooses adoption

Justin and Stephanie welcomed the newborn boy into their family. His mother, whose pregnancy was unplanned, chose adoption for her baby to give him the best possible life.



The Restore Walk for Emmanuel Home

Hiker walks the state to raise funds

Win McCullough, a hiker and friend of BCH's Christian Adoption Services (CAS), is hiking across North Carolina for five weeks to raise funds for the forthcoming Emmanuel Home. The new ministry in Thomasville will be a place of restoration for birth mothers who have chosen adoption for their children. McCullough began his 600-mile trek on October 1 and is stopping at BCH locations along the way. He arrived at Kennedy Home in Kinston on October 13 (see above). He reached the halfway point at CAS Rocky Mount several days later.



Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

Pardue family tours Mills Home

Michael Pardue, Pastor of First Baptist Icard in Connelly Springs and President of the Baptist State Convention of NC, and his family toured Mills Home in Thomasville recently.



Barberville Baptist Church in Waynesville

Church donates to Broyhill Home

Members from Barberville Baptist in Waynesville brought deliveries to Broyhill Home in the mountains of Clyde. The church collected food and water for the campus' boys and girls.



Pine Grove Baptist Church in Franklin

Keeners' passion fuels efforts

Each year, Debbie and Ervin Keener lead the effort to encourage church members to give to BCH. The couple started it in 2000 and the church has given \$150,005.08 to date counting this year's \$11,000 offering. BCH's Lewis Smith spoke at the church in October where he was presented the check.



Camp Duncan

Girls participate in "A Good Word"

Girls from Camp Duncan performed the camp-style version of "Amazing Grace" for an upcoming episode BCH president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell's "A Good Word" video.



Lindsay Home in Zionville

Volunteer blesses Lindsay ladies

Volunteer Rebecca Sirmon visited the ladies at Lindsay Home recently providing them with soothing facials. Lindsay is a home for intellectually/developmentally disabled adults.



HOMEbase at Western Carolina University

College ministry holds workshop

The ministry to college students recently hosted a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) workshop to educate students on different financial aid opportunities.

Can we help? Many ministries beating with one heart.

- Western Area Family Services**
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 Sessions, 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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Many thanks for kindness after Becky's passing— Alumni share jobs done since leavings KH

By **JOHN THOMPSON**, 110 Lee K. Allen, Havelock, NC 28532 (282) 671-3515

jthompson117@ec.rr.com

Again, I thank everyone who has sent cards and financial gifts, made phone calls, came to **Becky's** funeral service, or dropped by the house to visit in recent days. You know you are always welcome. This house is mighty big without my Becky. I plan to move to a smaller house soon and will update my address. It will still be in the Havelock area where both of our sons live. I have started back work again at the Centerview Baptist Church in Jacksonville as minister of senior adults and church pianist. This is the position I had before we moved to Havelock. The boys wanted us to move here so they could help me with Becky, and they sure did. Their families helped and I will always appreciate it. My son **Johnny** is still the part-time minister of music and I'll be playing for his program. It makes me feel so good to be his pianist.

I asked that some of you send me some of the jobs you have done since you left Kennedy Home (KH).

Donna Wade writes: "My first job after leaving Kennedy Home was 'putting in tobacco.' My foster family owned a tobacco farm and I learned all about it, from suckering and cropping tobacco to stringing it on sticks, hanging the sticks in the barns, taking tobacco off the sticks, packing it for the warehouse, and then selling it at the warehouse. This was by far, the hardest job I ever had. At fifteen, I started working (with a workers' permit) as a waitress to save money to buy a car and got my first car loan at 16. I worked at Winn Dixie in high school and college as a cashier (making about \$3.35/hour) and learned how to "balance" receipts at the end of the day. After getting married, finishing school, and having my first child, I worked part time at

a pharmacy as a cashier/stocker until the job turned into a pharmacy tech position that lasted seven years. After **Scott** and I moved to Sanford, I began working at Carolina Trace Country Club doing accounts receivables for 800 members and learned about membership sales. When we moved to Raleigh for Scott's job, I worked at RDU Airport until the 9/11 terrorist attack. One month later, through the unemployment office, I got a job at State Employees' Credit Union and I have been there ever since. Although I had no banking experience, it did not take me long to figure it out. I have been an administrative assistant, a loan officer, an insurance agent, and an income tax preparer. I am currently a property manager for SECU's real estate company, SECU*RE Inc. SECU*RE renovates SECU's foreclosures and then puts them on a rental program. Currently, we have about 1500 properties across the state. Having been with SECU for 20 years (in October), I have to admit that this is the best job. And if you have to work, it is nice to have a job that you enjoy."

Jerry Carroll writes: "I came to KH at the age of ten in February 1958 from Chatham Co., where I was a member of the Merry Oaks Baptist Church. Upon graduation from North Lenoir High School in 1965, I landed a summer job as an usher at the Ambassador Theater on Fayetteville Street in downtown Raleigh. The **Sound of Music** began it's run at the theater that summer. It seemed, I ushered half of the inhabitants of eastern North Carolina to their seats! That autumn, I enrolled in school at Mars Hill College near Asheville. I graduated with a B.A. in history in 1969 and began my teaching career at Northwest Junior High School in Charlotte that same year. After

teaching three years in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools, I accepted a teaching position with the Raleigh Public Schools in 1972 and taught social studies to eighth graders at Aycock Junior High.

"In 1974, I entered graduate school at East Carolina University in Greenville to pursue a master's degree. My first full-time library position materialized when I accepted a reference librarian position at the Wayne County Public Library in Goldsboro.

"In 1980, I was offered a reference librarian position in the North Carolina Room at the Forsyth County Public Library in downtown Winston-Salem. In 1985, I was made Head Librarian, specializing in local history, state history, and genealogy. I remained in that position until I retired in 2007 with thirty-six years in teaching and librarianship. Since my retirement at the age of sixty in 2007, I have enjoyed pursuing my hobbies, which include reading, researching my genealogy, studying history, antique hunting, travel, and camping in my recreational vehicle."

Hugh Lane Kirkman writes: "The jobs I had include working at a grocery store in Texas, selling shoes, being a janitor, helping build houses and being a brick mason helper. I worked at Maola Ice Cream when they made ice cream in New Bern. Today, I work for Craven County keeping Hope Center and a senior center on George Street clean.

"On a personal note: Ms. Becky's home going was great! My heart was touched. I'm glad you and Ms. Becky and your boys were part of my life when I lived at KH. I remember how much fun we had when you took **Earl**, me, and the other boys camping. Thank you!"

Barbara Branch Smith writes: "I recently had the most wonderful visit with my former social worker **Sharon Terrell Whitesell**. We have

kept up periodically over the years and arranged to visit her and her husband **Sam** in Lynchburg, Virginia on the way to our daughter's wedding in Massachusetts. We laughed because she said she remembers me as an 18-year-old Barbara Branch and I was looking for her as Miss Terrell. Although almost 50 years have passed, neither of us were disappointed.

"When Sharon left KH, she went on to get a master's degree and worked at a Presbyterian children's home as well as a counselor in the mental health field. She and Sam did a lot of traveling in their camper van for years all over the country—she has the refrigerator magnets to prove it! They served us a beautiful southern lunch of baked ham and the fixin's. She also sent us north with her homemade cookies—nice touch to a wonderful visit.

"I wanted her to know what a huge influence she was on me at the time, how I went to college and afterwards became a social worker at a children's home in Georgia. She and I talked and talked, reminiscing about not only the kids on her caseload but a lot of the others that would come to her for guidance or advice. There are too many to mention but she remembers you!

"Sharon subscribes to **C&C** so I want to apologize if I have misreported any details."

Send your memories of your houseparents or other staff that had a profound impact on your life. Write a paragraph or two and email them to me.

Thanks again to all of you for remembering me and my family. Your prayers during this time of loss mean so much. Always



remember that I love you a bunch.—jt

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

Seeing through a child's eyes opens doors to ministry

By Jim Edminson, Editor

I am on a face-to-face call with Texas granddaughter Maggie. "Papa! Watch this!" "I'm watching!" I assure the curly-haired laughing sweetheart. Instantly, I see her screen image embellished with a big red nose and crazy rainbow hair. She loves the video filters and masks on Google Messenger.

A moment later, her eyes and nose appear on a pink pig's face. Then the screen morphs again, and I see an hourglass-looking shape with Maggie's features multiplying. I quickly run out of superlatives and exclamations to react to her shape-shifting shenanigans.

This little one keeps this grandfather up-to-date on all the current trends and fun video tricks. The real plus, I have to admit, is the bubbly laughter I hear nonstop. Giggling, she returns to the screen as herself.

Stuart's and Roger's little sister shares their curiosity and love of learning, and she can climb monkey bars and ride bikes with the best of them. She keeps me up to speed on favorite songs, must-watch shows, and the latest first grade fashion. My favorite weekend treat is her phone call. She usually lets me say hi to her brothers, too. I hear a brief account of their worlds and then Maggie comes back on the line.

I saw the Texas grands in July, but that visit seems so long ago. Since then, Maggie has gone to Six Flags with her dad, multiple state park trips with her family, vacationed in New Mexico and Colorado, celebrated Roger's then Pawpaw's birthdays, and started first grade. I had reports on all of these events via smartphone chats. It is an interesting phenomenon how those micro visits can make me feel close to her and far away from her at the exact same time.

From all accounts, Maggie embraces

change like a pro. Her new school year gives scope for her expanding intellect and need to know; it also provides opportunities to meet lots of people who are different from her and her family. She hears many points of view of lives lived in many different homes. She brings those experiences back into her world and debriefs with her mom, dad, and brothers to put all of the new into context with her family's values and standards. Growing up today is so multi-faceted, and so far she handles it well.

Six-year-old Maggie has a terrific world perspective. She has the ability to see the individual and treat each as a friend. She understands we all have our differences, and she knows she doesn't want to incorporate some of those attributes into her own character; still, she accepts all of us as we are. Watching her, I renew my commitment to treat others as I want to be treated.

We read in Scripture how Jesus embraced the child, acknowledged and valued the women He encountered, drew near to the homeless and the sick, supped with the sinner,

and spoke to those not accepted in proper Hebrew circles. We serve the One who reaches out to the "who-soever" (John 3:16), the One who came into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in Him should stay in darkness (John 12:46). It is in accepting others that we open doors of ministry, proclaiming the saving power of Jesus.

Recently, daughter-in-law Susan shared Maggie's latest writing with me. Her words took up the entire loose

leaf page, the two colors of marker making her words pop. In her own phonetic spelling, she pens: "Pepole are difrente in difrente wasse and I thenck you shod be your selfe... Thoe I like you the way you are... you be how you want to be."

You know, I cannot improve on her message to all of us, so I will just end this article. And hope my phone rings soon. It is the weekend, after all.



Edminson encourages others through the Good News of Jesus. You can email him at wjedminton@bchfamily.org.



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