

Charity & Children

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



@bchfamily

April 2021

Issue 3

Volume 134

Camper returns to become Chief

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

Twenty-five-year-old Travis Yoder is the first Cameron Boys Camp chief who was once a camper. His journey to this historic time began when he was a withdrawn boy who helplessly witnessed his parents' marriage implode.

"I internalized everything," Yoder remembers. "My mom and I didn't talk and, as most children do, I thought they would get back together and it would be okay."

When it didn't, and things became worse, his mom loaded Yoder and his younger brothers in the family car, left their home in Wisconsin, and fled to Colorado and the safety of her brother.

"I was angry. I thought how could she do this."

I didn't understand then all she had gone through and the courage it took to drive away," he confesses.

Yoder says he turned more inward. The occasional bursts of anger scared his mom. With all the broken, fragile family was dealing with, she knew she needed help. She began searching for someone and discovered online a wilderness camp for boys, a place that helped boys and families—a place in North Carolina, six states away.

"When I think now of all my mom did for us, I'm humbled," Yoder says. "She was so determined. She believed Cameron Boys



Chief Travis Yoder

Camp could help me. She borrowed my uncle's truck and box trailer, we loaded all we had, crowded into the cab, and began the more than 1,500 mile drive to Mt. Airy so we could be North Carolina residents and I could be admitted into Camp."

In August 2009, the 14-year-old Yoder unpacked his clothes in his tent locker, laced up his boots, and joined the other Rangers.

"I could never have imagined then that God would bring me back to Camp," Yoder says. "I remember thinking that I would like to be a Chief one day, but life kept getting in the way."

In the fall of 2019, Yoder attended the first Camp homecoming. As he traveled from Mt. Airy, he says he felt a tug at his spirit. He was at a place of transition. He graduated college, he had no more excuses, and he began to think on the drive, "Why not now?"

"It was amazing how quickly everything happened," he muses. "Interviews, job offer, training, it took a few months, but it felt like it was only days before I stood with the campers again, but this time as one of their Chiefs."

Continued on page 6.



HOPE

BCH will always Build Continuous Hope.

From the mountains to the sea, from birth to death, from babies to aging adults, BCH is a strong force for good against all manner of negativity and evil.

The common thread throughout its history is the idea of HOPE. It began with a “scratch at the skull” of founder John Mills until “it bore a hole in it.”

It was HOPE for families who lost hope, orphans who lost one or both parents, mothers who were poor and destitute and could not raise their child.

From that blustery Wednesday afternoon, November 11, 1885, when Mary Presson arrived to the child arriving this very day, HOPE is the common thread that weaves this tapestry together.

To the thousands raised on these sacred grounds—scattered throughout the world—doctors, educators, day laborers, homemakers, and many good citizens, it was HOPE that made the difference.

So, how does BCH build HOPE? Is it Staff who love and care? YES! Is it Christian principles taught, modeled, and shared? YES! Is it relationships built on love, trust, respect, and honesty? YES!

It is a Commitment to Excellence that does not allow for the Status Quo. For the Status Quo is just a step away from the Stagnant Quo. And that's not acceptable when building HOPE.

Undergirding all is God. Isaiah 40:31 declares the Power of Hope: “Those who HOPE in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not be weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

On this day, I boldly affirm BCH will always Build Continuous Hope.

Michael C. Blackwell

President/CEO

Easter, 2021



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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New Care Village outreach launches in Kinston area

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

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) is currently converting the annex of the Kennedy Home Baptist Church in Kinston to serve as the hub for its new Care Village outreach. Meanwhile, the ministry within the Kinston community is flourishing as NCBAM Care Coordinator Charity Johnson makes connections in the community to further help meet the needs of seniors.

Village Members 65+ receive geriatric care management services such as: an NCBAM Care Plan, home visits, meal deliveries, spiritual support, coordinated medical services, and grocery pick-up. Volunteers from local churches assist village members with hot meals, grocery delivery, and prayer support.

Johnson enjoys connecting well-aging Village members with those who are frail and need services to remain in their homes. “So many senior saints feel isolated and lonely, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic that has impacted us all.”

NCBAM Care Village frail- and well-aging members are resilient and have come together despite the pandemic. Many well-aging members are volunteering themselves.

Johnson was able to connect a few of these well-aging members with Mr. H, an 86-year-old retired pastor who now uses a wheelchair. The five pecan trees in his yard have supplemented his income, but this year he needed help harvesting pecans. Johnson coordinated two well-aging Care Village members and local youth to help with the harvest. They gathered five buckets full. Mr. H was thrilled, “I didn’t know who to call and I am so thankful for the help from the Village members.”

Retired Pastor L and his wife are new to the Kinston area. He was recently diagnosed with dementia and is undergoing treatment for cancer. They needed support and called Johnson. She visited with them and shared the services of the Care Village. An NCBAM Care plan was written and goals were set for Pastor L and his wife and their needs are being met. They feel blessed to have what Pastor L calls the “Village of God” in their lives.

Ms. M is 84, and needed someone to pick up weekly groceries and had no one to help. She contacted Johnson who picked up the first delivery. Johnson says, “From the first delivery of groceries, we established a relationship and now we spend time together studying God’s Word. Later, Ms. M had extra groceries and wanted to bless another Village member and she asked me if I could pass them along. Even though she was homebound and with limited means, she still



Charity Johnson, Care Coordinator for the NCBAM Care Village, shares Bible verses during a visit with a Village member. NCBAM is currently operating Care Village from the Kennedy Home campus in Kinston. Care Village members receive geriatric care management services and are often teamed up with volunteers to have needs met.

wanted to bless someone else. Those are the kinds of relationships being built through the Care Village.”

Ms. E is 92. She contacted the Care Village for help finding a reliable company to clean her home. After working with Johnson, Ms. E asked her, “Why do you care so much about me?” Johnson was able to tell her that God calls us all

to “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Now, Ms. E has a reliable cleaning service, and is a frail-aging member of the Village, forming new relationships with other Village members.

To volunteer or learn more about the NCBAM Care Village, contact Charity Johnson at cnjohnson@bchfamily.org.

*Names concealed to protect privacy.

REMEMBER

Mom and Dad

To use bank card, call Faith Frazier at 336-474-1312. To give online, go to www.bchfamily.org/momanddad.

Make an honor or memorial gift and yours and your parent’s name(s) will appear in the August **Charity & Children’s** “Remember Mom and Dad” special commemorative section.

Check the appropriate box: ☐ Honor ☐ Memorial

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

By check, mail to: Baptist Children’s Homes, Attn: Mothers/Fathers Day, P.O. Box 338, Thomasville, NC 27361 or use the enclosed postage-paid envelope

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

Deadline is July 1.

Help raise awareness of Child Abuse Prevention Month

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

The nationwide campaign to raise awareness of child abuse began in Chesapeake, Virginia by a grandmother whose grandson was murdered by his mother's boyfriend. Bonnie Finney explains why she decided to tie a blue ribbon on her van. "Why blue? I intend to never forget the bruised body of my grandchild. Blue serves as a constant reminder to me to fight for the protection of our children."

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. It is a time when we are reminded to stand and speak up for those who are alone and cannot speak for themselves.

All children deserve to feel safe and secure. They deserve the opportunity to be all that God intends for them to be. Unfortunately, not all children grow up in a nurturing, loving, caring, safe environment. In fact, an increasing number of children face the harsh realities of poverty, abuse, and discouragement. This past year, COVID-19 has exacerbated the plight of some children and families as domestic violence and child abuse rises. The pandemic has ramped up stress for couples and families creating an even

greater crisis for children around the world.

Abuse impacts a child's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. A child who is ignored stops talking. A child robbed of attention won't hug or allow themselves to be hugged. A child who never plays with toys won't learn as quickly. A child betrayed will find it difficult to trust. A child denied biblical instruction fails to grow in their knowledge of God.

Imagine being a child and feeling alone, hopeless and frightened. One in four children in North Carolina go hungry. Children all around us are in crisis and struggling with daily trauma. Hunger, neglect, abuse, and crisis are as close as the child next door.

Please stand with us and speak out for those who cannot stand and speak for themselves.

Here are three ways you can help:

1. Teach preventive measures to children.

- Teach them they have a right to feel safe all the time. Role play with them ways of saying no to inappropriate or threatening behavior.
- Teach them that someone must always know where they are, who they are with and when they will be home.
- Tell them nothing is so awful they can't talk with someone about it. Help them identify safe people with whom they can share.
- Teach them that secrets are not to be harmful. Help them to understand the difference between secrets and threats.
- Teach them how to use social media and how not to use social media. Help keep them safe by monitoring their social media interaction.

2. Assist struggling parents you know.

- Surprise a single parent and deliver pizza, popcorn, and a movie to her home.
- Make a care call to offer encouragement.
- Take dinner over to a stressed parent in

paper containers and include paper plates and utensils so they will not have to clean up.

- Deliver board games and snacks.
- Become a prayer partner with a young mother or father with a first child.
- Make sure they are aware of Baptist Children's Homes and that we stand ready to help.

3. Help children you don't know.

- Help us help them. Last year, BCH ministered to more than 195,000 children, families and individuals who needed help.
- Participate in our annual food roundup which takes place throughout April.
- Become a bed sponsor.
- Lead your church and family in making a gift to BCH.
- Include BCH in your Will.
- Pray for BCH's children and staff daily.

It is my prayer that the light of Christ shining through us will flood the darkness. It is my hope the children and families entrusted to BCH's care will be changed forever. Will you make this your prayer?

When you support BCH, you provide children and residents with warm beds to sleep in, good food to eat, and loving, and caring people to share the love of Christ. When you give, you stand with BCH staff members who wait with outstretched arms proclaiming God's love.

And remember, always be kinder than necessary for everybody is fighting some kind of battle, be the light in the darkness! Thank you for standing and speaking for those who cannot stand and speak for themselves. For more information on how to make a difference,

call me at 1-800-336-476-3669 ext. 1230 or 336-689-4442.



Brenda Gray serves BCH as the executive vice president, development & communications and directs fund-raising/friend-raising activities for the ministry.

There were **725**
decisions for Christ
made in the past
five years!

When you give, your
support helps provide
a safe home, daily provi-
sions, and the loving
care of Christian
cottage parents.

In these challenging
days, your support
is needed more than
ever. Please remember
the children.

725
Souls



Mail your gift using
the coupon or by
giving online at
bchfamily.org/easter.

I want to make an *eternal investment* in a child's life!

☐ \$100 ☐ \$300 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$ _____ Any size gift!

To make a gift by check, please print your information below and mail this form with your check.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

To make a gift by credit card: 1) Go online at www.bchfamily.org/easter 2) Or make your gift by calling Faith Frazier at 336-474-1312

☐ Yes, I would like to receive email updates from Baptist Children's Homes.

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

Chief says most rewarding work ever

By Jim Edminson, Editor



As a teen, Travis Yoder, above far right, was part of the Rangers group at Cameron Boys Camp. Today, 25-year-old Yoder serves as one of the Trailblazers chiefs. The Trailblazers, left photo, recently spent two weeks at Lake Jocassee in South Carolina camping, paddling, rambling the woods, and working on goals.

Continued from page 1.

As a chief, Travis Yoder brings something to the task that no other chief has before him. Yoder understands what it is like to face big challenges and heartbreak as a boy. He understands what it is to come to Camp not knowing what to expect and in a little more than a year’s time have your life turned around, broken relationships with a parent put right. Yoder was a camper at Cameron Boys Camp for 18 months, completed the program, reached his goals, and graduated.

“I have experiences that other chiefs do not, Camp made sense day one,” Yoder asserts, “but I’m no different than any other chief when it comes to caring for the boys. Each chief wakes up every day giving it his

all, learning with every camper. It’s the relational part that takes work. You learn quickly, it’s all about the relationships.”

Cameron Boys Camp is for boys ages 13-15. The year-round residential wilderness camp program helps campers overcome personal and family struggles.

Boys live in groups of ten with three counselors, called “Chiefs.” With the help of their peers and chiefs, campers learn discipline, establish positive behavior patterns, and grow self-worth. Camp is an accredited, non-public school licensed by the state of North Carolina educating boys through an experiential curriculum.

Camp is Christ centered where boys are shown the love of God and the example of Jesus as demonstrated in Scriptures.

Yoder was raised in church and a “practicing” Christian when he came to Camp as a boy. He says he realized early that being a Christian at Camp was more than words, “it was more than just saying you are a Christian.” He watched his chiefs and saw their lives were different.

“When I was a camper, I decided I was going to follow Jesus,” he recalls. “It’s the biggest decision a camper can make.”

Yoder says being a chief is the hardest work he has ever done, but also the most rewarding. “Knowing where the boys are now, where they came from, it’s something special. When I see a camper have success, big or small, I’m amazed.”

Cameron Boys Camp and Camp Duncan for Girls are looking for young men and women to be Chiefs. Call 910-245-4034 to learn more.

BCHU assignment sparks dream to serve special needs children

By Blake Ragsdale, Managing Editor

Zoe and younger sister Lily thrived in their Weekday Education classes while parents Brad and Cheraton worked. The Baptist Children’s Homes’ (BCH) program in Thomasville was perfect for the preschool-age siblings, however, it was not an option for the girls’ infant sister, Rosie.

Rosie was born with cerebral palsy. There was no place around the family’s hometown that provided the care and attention Brad and Cheraton’s youngest daughter needed.

“When you have a child with cerebral palsy, she can often get sick,” explains Brooke Child, the director of Weekday Education and childhood friend of Brad. “Being in a class with another child who comes down with something as simple as a runny nose could really hurt her.”

For the first couple of years, Brad stayed home with Rosie while Cheraton continued her career. Then in 2017, when she turned two and a half

and was stronger, Weekday Education worked with the family so Rosie could begin attending their toddler program. It was a need met and the precursor to a bigger dream—an inclusion class customized to meet the specific needs of each intellectually and/or developmentally disabled child.

“Little did we know that meeting Rosie’s need would become the stepping stone,” shares Child.

At this time, Child was Weekday Education’s assistant director and was participating in BCH University (BCHU). The internal leadership and talent development program, whose participants come from BCH’s varied, statewide programs, covers the core areas related to the overall ministry. The experience helped prepare Child for the role of director when she was tapped in March 2019.

“I thought the whole concept of BCHU was

wonderful because it was the first time I was involved with BCH’s other ministries,” she shares. “It was eye opening to see how it takes all of us to make the organization run well.”

One specific BCHU assignment, focusing on the topic of strategic planning, saw the curriculum intersect with the dream of beginning an inclusion class. Keith Henry, BCH’s chief operating officer and class instructor, directed participants to partner and conceptualize a new BCH service. Child partnered with Blake Ragsdale, BCH director of communications, and the team developed the plan for a Weekday Education special needs class.

“As soon as we finished presenting the idea to the group, Keith started asking questions,” Child recalls. It was clear he was interested. By the end of class, Henry gave Child the green light to further develop the idea.

She began her research by reaching out to another childhood friend, Jamie Nance with

the Children’s Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) in Winston-Salem. Nance and other CDSA therapists regularly work with children attending BCH’s Weekday Education program.

CDSA in Winston-Salem is one of sixteen statewide early childhood intervention agencies that are a part of the North Carolina Division of Public Health. The agencies work alongside providers, such as Weekday Education, to serve children with special needs.

Through Nance’s expertise and an expanded relationship with the CDSA, the model for Weekday Education’s first inclusion class began to take shape. It would involve creating a classroom structure comprised of one lead teacher, an assistant teacher, and no more than five children. However, not all five students would be intellectually and/or developmentally disabled. Three of the



Brad and Cheraton’s three children attended Weekday Education. Youngest daughter Rosie was born with cerebral palsy and was inspirational in helping start the program’s inclusion classes.



Children attending Baptist Children’s Homes’ Weekday Education classes in Thomasville spend a few special moments with Director Brooke Child. The program offers developmentally-appropriate classes for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children including three inclusion classes for special needs boys and girls.

students are “typically developing” students or, very simply, children who do not have a special needs diagnosis. According to Child, this is vital to the mission of helping the students advance in their development and achieve goals.

“Children are sponges and learn from their environment and friends,” Child explains. “A teacher can show a child how to do something, but if a child sees a peer doing the task, they understand much easier.”

The inaugural inclusion class began in August 2019. Child called on Stephanie Stewart to be the lead teacher. Stewart has served for 11 years and is the parent of a special needs daughter. Child and Stewart had dreamt of an inclusion class for years and Stewart’s desire was to be the teacher.

“This is a class where we can adapt to meet the child’s needs, and our partnership with CDSA helps meet those needs,” Stewart says. “Through the equipment and resources they provide, we’ve been able to help a child who needed a feeding tube, and the CDSA provided a special chair for another child.”

The CDSA develops an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for each child and his or her family. The group shares the plan with Weekday Education staff to see exactly what will be required to meet that child’s specific needs. The plan is used to determine the goals for each child and how best to accomplish them.

“I had a little boy who wasn’t mobile or playing with things,” Stewart says. “Now he’s taking steps by himself and feeding himself with a spoon. He learned to put things together and take them apart by watching a more developmentally advanced classmate modeling how to do it. In some ways, the other children are teachers, too.”

The three typically developing children are selected for the inclusion class with the support of their families.

“It’s amazing to see the empathy our typically developing children have for their classmates,” Child says smiling. “They see one of their

friends having a bad day and they do what they can to make it better.”

Today, Weekday Education’s efforts in providing instruction and care for special needs children have grown—there are now three inclusion classes. Even in the midst of the pandemic, the need has been great, and Child asserts the rewards have been even greater.

“It’s incredible hearing therapists talk to other therapists about the program and the feedback we receive from them,” Child says. “Most of all, it’s about seeing a child walk who nobody thought could. To see a one-year-old with severe social anxiety come running into the center because she’s happy to be here—that’s what it’s all about.”



Stephanie Stewart

Needs List



For more information and digital resources:

Visit www.bchfoodroundup.org or contact BCH's Alan Williams at awilliams@bchfamily.org or 336-474-1277

The Food Roundup is vital in the best of circumstances. With COVID-19 still creating issues, the participation of associations and churches is vital. The collection list with the most-needed items has been updated. Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ—especially during this challenging time.

MOST NEEDED ITEMS:

- Paper Products (paper towels, toilet paper, Kleenex, napkins)
- Hand Sanitizer
- Clorox & Lysol wipes
- Household cleaning products (i.e. bleach, Comet, Lysol spray, Clorox spray, Windex, Pinesol, Pledge, Tilex, etc.)
- Canned Fruits
- Fruit Juice (Apple, Orange, Grape, Cranberry)
- Laundry Detergent
- Copy/Printer Paper
- Baked Beans
- Bottled Water
- Dry Cereal
- 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.)
- Health Snacks (Dried Fruit, Nuts, Raisins, Cranraisins, Trail Mix)
- Individual Cookie Packs
- Jello
- PopTarts
- Rice
- Instant Potatoes (scaloped, au gratin, mashed, julienne)
- Muffin Mixes
- Bisquick Mix
- Kidney Beans
- Pickle Relish
- Cranberry Sauce
- Mac & Cheese
- Corn Meal
- Jiffy Mixes, Corn Muffin Mix
- Potatoes
- Hush Puppy Mix
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly, Jams, Preserves (Strawberry is their 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

OTHER NEEDED ITEMS:

- Brownie & Cookie Mix
- Canned Vegetables
- Individual Chef Boyardee cups
- Clif brand nutrition bars
- Hot Dog Chili
- Coffee (Regular & Decaf)
- Coffee Creamer
- Sweetened Condensed Milk
- Evaporated Milk
- Dehydrated Food (powdered milk & eggs, dehydrated meals)
- 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

Additional info:

Gift Cards are greatly appreciated to buy perishables and items not received. (i.e. Walmart, Sams Clubs, Food Lion, Lowes, Ingles, Piggly Wiggly, etc.)

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

Please check for expired dates on food -- we can't accept expired items.

Please help our volunteer truck drivers by packing your church's donations in small, sturdy boxes. Please do not pack chemicals with food.

For more information contact Alan Williams at awilliams@bchfamily.org or 1-800-476-3669 ext. 1277

Statewide pick-up points ready for food donations

CALL FIRST

Delivery hours vary at each location. Please call in advance to schedule your delivery.

Alexander Association

Becky Parker
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
Brent Snider
828-733-6674
Beulah Association
Teresa Wilkins/Wendy Oliver
984-364-0977/336-559-6117
Bladen Association
Connie Holland
910-862-3496
Blue Ridge Association
Sharon Blanton
828-559-0224

Brier Creek Association

Sherry Mesimer
336-468-8000
Brunswick Association
Elyse Brown/Jeff Gibby
910-754-7979
Brushy Mountain Assoc.
Gloria Kilby/Linda Holland
336-838-4407
Buncombe Association
Della Brindley
828-252-1864
Burnt Swamp Assoc.
Odum Home - Kathy Locklear
910-521-3433/910-318-3981
Cabarrus Association
Marvin Tyson
704-786-9171
Caldwell Association
Darlene Townsend/Dale Fisher
828-758-4081
Cape Fear Network of Baptist Churches
Pine Valley BC
910-791-1949
Carolina Association
Paula James
828-693-4274
Catawba River Assoc.
Ashleigh Thompson
828-437-0137
Catawba Valley Assoc.
Rev. Jerry Anderson
828-464-6921

Cheoah Association

New Hope BC, Robbinsville
Gerald & Nellie Phillips
828-479-8279
Chowan Association
Annie Weir
252-426-9621
Columbus Association
Teresa Powell
910-642-2155
Dan Valley Association
1. First Baptist, Reidsville
2. Grace Baptist, Madison
336-427-3494
3. Hamptons Hights, Eden
Pastor Nate Wood
336-623-3226
Dock Association
Participating churches mail gift cards to BCH
Eastern Association
1. Charity Baptist Men on Missions, Rose Hill
Sandra Winstead
910-289-2019
2. Grove Park BC
Cameron Dunn
910-592-3937
Elkin Association
Lisa Green
336-835-8433

Flat River Association

Becky Curran/Myra Klein
910-690-5120/919-693-5215
French Broad Association
Dru Moore
828-689-2845
Graham Association
New Hope BC, Robbinsville
Gerald & Nellie Philips
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
Johnston Association
Note: Collecting May 17-18
Johnston Comm. College
Carolyn Tharrington
919-934-3749
Liberty Association
Mills Home
336-474-1200
Little River Association
Cameron Boys Camp
Sandy Snyder
910-245-4034

Macon Association

Gary Holland
828-524-3215
Metrolina Association
Beth Rose
704-375-1197 ext. 103
Mitchell Association
828-765-9412
Mount Zion Association
Sandy King
336-226-0249
Neuse Association
Kennedy Home - Chris Allabaugh
252-522-0811
New River Association
Jeanette Palmero
910-347-3146
New South River Assoc.
Robert Ivey/Regina Hammonds
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
Pilot Mountain Assoc.
Craig Clayton
336-830-8189 ext. 104

Polk Association

Phil Bailey/Inez Jackson
828-894-3787
Raleigh Association
Iris Woodard
919-231-3995
Randolph Association
Jill Murray/Jeff Joyce
336-625-4175
Robeson Association
Odum Home - Kathy Locklear
910-521-3433
910-318-3981
Rocky Face Association
Tony Daniels
828-850-2267
828-632-4726
Rowan Association
Darcell Mangan/Jonas Perez
704-637-3407
Sandhills Association
Cameron Boys Camp
Sandy Snyder
910-245-4034
Sandy Creek Association
1. Hickory Mountain BC
919-742-3928
2. East Baptist Church
919-776-3241
3. Moons Chapel BC
919-742-4569
Sandy Run Association
Evelyn Lane
828-245-2613

South Fork Association

Faith Ingle
704-735-1642
South Mountain Assoc.
Mary Van Dyke
704-462-4472
South Roanoke Assoc.
Linda Franks
252-756-4332
South Yadkin Association
Micah Lee
704-314-5291
Stanly-Montgomery Assoc.
Albermale Assoc. Office
Jennifer Snellings/Judy Hart-sell - 704-982-1033
Stone Mountain
KenWood
336-452-1976
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
Judy Hensley
828-488-2679

Three Forks Association

Jennifer Waldorf
828-264-4482
Transylvania Association
Nancy Kirkpatrick
828-877-3203
Truett Association
Duronda Hood
828-837-5401
Tuckaseegee Association
Gracella Morris
828-586-6011
Union Association
Bessie Benson
704-283-8383
United Association
(Drop at Metrolina Assoc.)
Beth Rose/704-375-1197
West Chowan Assoc.
Rebecca Adams
252-332-3235
Yadkin Association
Brenda Garner/Dennis Shaw
336-679-8731
Yancey Association
Joe Miller
828-682-2388
Yates Association
Teresa Dotson/Michael Bond
919-489-3396

Alumni share prayer concerns, grieve loss of friends – Stories of work and play highlight growing up at MH

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

Alumni President **Jane Helms Brown** asks that you send additions and corrections for the alumni address directory to **Jim Rochelle** at jimmylinda71@aol.com or 105 Jasmine Pl., Durham, NC 27712 or call him at 919-479-3032.

We were all saddened to hear that **Bennie K. Christman Phillips** passed away on February 8. She entered Mills Home (MH) in 1957 and graduated in 1962. Bennie was popular and much loved on campus. She was president of the Alumni Association from 1991 to 1992 and organized outstanding homecomings both years. Bennie was preceded in death by siblings **Butch, Ed and Glenda**. Survivors include her beloved husband of 58 years, **Tony Phillips**; daughter **Sonya P. Morris**; granddaughter **Paula**; siblings **Joan Ferrante and Phil Christman**.

Because of COVID-19 concerns, the family will announce and celebrate Bennie's life at a later date. Memorial donations may be made in Bennie's memory to AuthoraCare Hospice, 2500 Summit Ave. Greensboro, NC 27405. Condolences may be sent to Tony at 4344 Rocky Brooke Ct., Greensboro, NC 27409; to Joan at 190 Princess Ave., Ponte Vedra, FL 32081; and Phil at Facebook-Phil Christman.

Another loss that we are sad to share is that of **Nicolas T. (Nick) Martinez Jr.** who died on December 13, 2020. Nick was part the Martinez family that entered MH in 1956 from Montgomery County. Siblings who entered with him were **Clem, Terri, Nancy, Geneva, and Felix**. After leaving MH in 1958, Nick served his country for four years in the Marine Corps and then settled in Greensboro to rear his family. He retired from Mateers Storage Trailer Co. Nick always had time for family and that included attending Homecomings to visit his orphan brothers and sisters.

Nick was predeceased by his parents and sister **Clem**. He is survived by **Chris**, his wife of 40 years; his step-daughters **Melissa and Tammy**; his children **Nicolas Mar-**

tinez III and Nicollette Martinez; three grandsons; and his siblings **Nancy Powell, Teresa Mintz, Geneva Bourgeois and Felix Martinez**. A memorial service was held for Nick on December 17 at George Brothers Funeral Service. Friends visited with the family afterwards. Memorial donations for Nick should be made to the American Cancer Society. Condolences may be sent to Nancy Powell at 2609 Pincroft Rd., Greensboro, NC 27407; to Felix at 2 Bittersweet Ct., Greensboro, NC 27405, and to Geneva Bourgeois at 2358 Cypress St. Litcher, LA 70071.

On Jan. 16, 2020, Julie Maiden Long reported on FB the sad news of the death of **Mike Armstrong**. We will report more on Mike later.

We have requests for prayers for the following alumni: **Rebecca Jacobs Malone, Julie Maiden Long, and Donnie Beck**. Rebecca was hospitalized for several days suffering from cholangiocarcinoma, a type of cancer. She is back home and under hospice care. Her beautiful daughter **Cari Michelle** is helping tend to her, cooking great meals, and assisting in other ways. Cari says Rebecca is enjoying cards and FB messages but is not talking a lot at present. Send good wishes to Rebecca at 804 Caldwell St., Piqua, OH 45356.

In sharing information on Facebook, Cari also gave us the sad news that Rebecca's brother **Sidney** died unexpectedly on February 25. We will share more on Sidney in next month's issue. Please send condolences to Rebecca at the address in previous paragraph.

Rich Lewis asked that we remember **Julie Maiden Long** in prayer, also. She spent a couple of days in the hospital two different times in a two week period for exploration of the causes of a major headache, breathing, BP problems, and negative reactions to new medicines. She is back home now with clearer diagnoses and different medicines. She sends her love to her MH family and her appreciation for all your prayers. With hubby **Ron** at her side, she expects to "bounce back" quickly.

Send cards to Julie at 3195 W. Lexington Ave. EXT, High Point, NC 27262.

Facebook friends were sorry to learn of the death of **Donnie Beck**, the son of **Mr. Beck** who ran the print shop for years. He had just requested prayers for himself on his Facebook page. He also said he felt one step closer to 'going home' and very quickly thereafter, we learned of his death. Although he had been in declining health in recent years, Donnie always demonstrated a strong Christian ministry. Friends can send condolences to Donnie's wife **Patsy** at 910 Houston Dr., Westley Chapel, NC 28110.

We cannot say thanks often enough to those who send the update sheets. The update sheet for **Judith Buckner Freeny** shows she still resides in Macon, GA. "Judy" came to MH from Asheville in 1946 with her late sister **Frances**. Like Frances, she was active in everything on campus, but she especially loved participating in all the church activities such as GAs, choir and sextet, being on the softball and basketball teams, playing in ping pong competitions, and swimming. After graduating in 1958, she married and began rearing a family. She had two sons and now has six grandchildren. She had a very happy 46 year marriage to **Gostin Freeny**. Now widowed, she is retired from a 30-year career with J.M. Huber Corp. We were sorry to hear that Judy lost her son **W. Foyle Perkins** in 2017. Friends can contact Judy at 141 Covington Place, Macon, GA, 31210 or hbjbf@att.net.

A second update sheet is from **J.D. Combs** from Tacoma WA. In 1950, J.D. entered MH with sisters **Pauline and Shirley**. He fit well in the campus life and he was well thought of by students and workers alike. The swimming and fun times at the gym and the valley were things he remembers well. Like most of the MH guys, J.D. put in time working on the farm and in the maintenance shop learning carpentry, painting, and doing mechanical work. He also drove a school bus. He fondly recalled these folks as favorite work-

ers on campus: **Ray and Buck Bowers, John and Claude Swing, Miss Lucille, Mr. Ball and Bill Sisk**. After graduating in 1960, he began a 24-year career in the U.S. Army. Fifteen years of that time were spent in Germany and seven were spent in Kansas. After his service years, he settled in the state of Washington because of its climate, beaches, mountains, and great camping. There he reared three children and now has six grandkids, seven great-grand kids with one "in the basket." He also took up a second career driving service trucks hauling freight. He "pensioned out" of that career after a bundle of cedar fell on him. Lucky for him, J.D. is the one out of 100 that ever survives such an accident. He returned for Homecoming in 1980 and again in 2010. He plans to be back in 2021 if we are lucky enough to have it.

Charles "Bunny" Carroll is one we see almost every Homecoming and almost every October picnic at **Bill and Verna Byerly's**. Bunny entered MH in 1943 and graduated in 1958. He enjoyed the life on campus. When it was time to go to the valley to see everyone on a summer's evening, Bunny would be there. When the pool opened for swimming or the gym opened for free play, he would be there. Bunny participated in church activities like the RAs and the Scout troop, earning the highly coveted Eagle Scout award. In high school, he was captain of the debate team which won the state debate competition in 1958 and hence was in the finals at Houston. He was co-captain of the MH basketball team, was a member of the National Honor Society, and was an honors graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill. Although he was offered a scholarship to Wake Forest, he chose to pay his own way at Carolina by selling books. Siblings with him at MH were the late **Allen,**



Charlotte, and Marjorie.

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

As a part of his employee-pride initiative on March 4, Michael C. Blackwell, BCH President/CEO, asked staff members to submit photos wearing their favorite BCH shirt. Employees rallied around his request and sent in their best photos. This is a sampling of pictures sent from around the state.



Mills Home in Thomasville
Staff members pose with the *Child of Hope* statue.



North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry
NCBAM Thomasville team gather on the swing.



Odum Home in Pembroke
The Odum team stands by a children's cottage.



Christian Adoption Services
Three employees from BCH's newest ministry.



Greater Vision Outreach Ministry
Employees from the ministry's Thomasville center.



Cameron Boys Camp in Cameron
Every picture at Camp is a great picture.



Asheboro Home in Asheboro
Staff serving special needs women in Asheboro.



BCH Maintenance in Thomasville
Larry Morris has been with BCH for 20 years.



Kennedy Home in Kinston
Staff members break from training for a photo.



Fancy Finds in Thomasville
The customer service team from BCH's resale store.



Broyhill Home in Clyde
Cottage parents and case managers in Western NC.

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2. Central Area Family Services
Regina Keener, Dir., 336-474-1200
3. Eastern Area Family Services
Christopher Allabaugh, Dir., 252-522-0811
www.kennedyhome.org
4. Odum Home
Kathy Locklear, Res. Mgr., 910-521-3433
www.odumhome.org
5. Cameron Boys Camp
Drew Scott, Dir., 910-245-4034
www.cameronboyscamp.org
6. Camp Duncan for Girls
Brad Gearhart, Dir., 910-944-3077
www.campduncanNC.org
7. Family Foster Care
Bob McCleary, 828-627-9254
www.bchfostercare.org
8. Christian Adoption Services
Kevin Qualls, Dir., 704-847-0038
www.christianadopt.org
9. Weekday Education
Brooke Child, Dir., 336-474-1201
10. Tucker Greater Vision Ministry
Sara Becker, Mgr., 336-687.6384
11. HOMEBASE at W. Carolina University
Jim Dean, Dir., 828-293-4660
12. Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
Tara Sessoms, Dir., 336-474-1259
www.hereismyhome.org
13. NC Baptist Aging Ministry
Sandy Gregory, Dir., 336-474-1221
www.ncbam.org
14. Good Shepherd Children's Home in Guatemala
Keith Henry, COO, 336-474-1215

one

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Homecoming suspended due to COVID restrictions – Send news and information to use in column

By **John Thompson**, 110 Lee K. Allen Drive, Havelock, NC 28532 (252)671-3515 jthompson117@ec.rr.com

*Just heard from Alumni President **Katie Parker** and we will NOT be have Homecoming this June. **Katie** is working with the other officers about setting a possible date in the fall if the campus is back open after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. I'll keep you posted.*

Every now and then, someone will ask me how Kennedy Home got it's name? I was doing some research in a very old **C&C** and found something that I think would be of interest to the folks who wonder about the Kennedy Home name.

Kennedy Home, which is located between Kinston and LaGrange, was a "gift of love." It was the home of the Kennedy family, whose main residence, Cedar Dell, still stands on the campus at the end of the main street. It was built in 1832 and was enlarged after the Civil War. It was the residence of **William Lafayette and Emily Hardee Kennedy** who gave the property to then what was known as Thomasville Baptist Orphanage. While still living in the mansion, they were able to see many, many children come to live in the first three big white houses known as Biggs, Hardee and Lenoir cottages. All this is located on 1,245 acres of rich farm land.

As you go under the archway entrance, the Neuse River is about three miles to the back of the campus. At Kennedy Home, the children find care, Christian guidance, and needed understanding. With God's help, and the special gift of all that land, many children have come to receive a blessing from living there. When I served as music director at KH, I was also in charge of campus tours. I would take the many, many church groups through Cedar Dell and tell them all about KH history. I always told them about the hours that **Mr. Kennedy** would sit on the front porch and watch the children. If they would bring him a mouse, he would give

them a penny. He couldn't see very well, so the children would bring him the same one over and over—as children will do.

Before the third cottage was built, much money was needed. **Mrs. Kennedy** sold some of her fine jewelry to raise money to build it. The Kennedy family is buried in a special graveyard back behind Cedar Dell. There is a statue of an angel in a glass case in the graveyard. I used to tell the campus guests that if you ran around the angel three times, you would see tears running down its face. It's stuff like this that makes an interesting tour.

Throughout the years, many Baptist folks in the state have given money to support and develop the program that is there now. Let me ask you to talk to your home church and encourage them to keep giving to KH and all the work and ministry that goes on there. Since they don't have their own beef cattle and pig parlor any more, they have to buy their meats at the store. A good gift to give is a gift card to one of the Kinston grocery stores and then the houseparents will go over and purchase what they need. I think this is a good suggestion.

Now, let's jump over to 1972. This is the year **Becky** and I started serving the Lord at KH and stayed until 1977. She was church organist and secretary in the main office for **Rev. Roger Williams** along with about six other men and one lady. I was the music teacher for the Kennedy Home Baptist Church. I have always believed that the Lord would let me know when it was time to move to a different place of service. In 1972, I was the minister of music and associate pastor at the First Baptist Church of Washington. I had served there several years earlier as part-time music director while I taught public school music for grades 1-8. During the spring of 1972, the pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Washington called to let me know they were looking for someone at KH. I thought and thought about it but

just couldn't feel it. I told him no.

By the end of the summer, I just couldn't get KH off my mind so I called him back and asked if the position had been filled. He checked on it and called me to say it was open and that he felt the Lord had left it open all summer for me to change my mind. So, I called **Rev. Roger Williams** at the time and set up an appointment with him. I felt like this was something God wanted me to do.

And off we went to KH. We lived in the old clinic building because there was no other place for us to stay. We loved every minute there. Several women stayed in the other apartments in the building. We all became just like family. After a few years, **Rev. Williams** got a brand new home and he moved us into his old home up by the highway—a beautiful brick home. By that time, I had 62 piano students and five choirs. I was also asked to fill in at the pool or the gym when **Mr. Bill Beacham** couldn't be there. I was also the official KH tour guide for visiting churches.

I could write my article on all the fun and meaningful things we had during those years. I am always asking alumni to send me an article about what they remember. My youngest child **Scott** was still in diapers when we moved to KH. **Georgia Roach** was his babysitter. That was the job the campus paid Georgia to do while Becky worked in the campus office.

He remembers his very best friend was **Matthew Poteat**—the son of **Richard and Judy Poteat** who worked at KH for many, many years. Scott recalls all the sandspurs in the field between our home and the Poteat home. He and Matthew would play on the swing set behind the Bunker Cottage. The boys loved to jump on the trampoline, too.

When he was very little, he remembers jumping off the high dive at the pool. He has a great love for swimming to this day. He was in preschool at the time.

He says that one of the best memories was when **Catfish Hunter** came to the Christmas party and gave everyone a signed picture of himself. Scott is now the wellness director at Brokedale Assisted Living facility in New Bern. **Matthew Poteat** is a school professor.

My other son **Johnny** writes: "I remember going to the Skeeter Hut back in the woods many weekends with Dad and the other children. We had a tent that had a big hole in the top and we could look up at the stars. We built bonfires and hiked.

"I remember staying in the cottages when Dad and Mom covered for houseparents. I remember **Ms. Hardison (Ms. Heart Attack)**, **Ms. Garner**, **Ms. Brock (Granny B)**, **the Beachams over at Adlette Davis**, **the McCormicks**, **Mr. and Mrs. Roger Williams**, **Mr. and Mrs. Hawes**, **Mr. and Mrs. Earl Maready**, **Mrs. Cribb**, **the Moores**, and **the Hamiltons**.

"It was great fun riding in the 1968 green pickup truck down the dirt roads and picking vegetables from the big garden. And then there was the shelling of the beans and beans and beans and MORE beans. When we moved to the front of the campus, we had a playhouse and a big backyard. I also had fun at the gym jumping on the trampoline and skating."

Ken Hawley shared about the death of **Joyce Marie Harrison**. She came to KH back in the fifties. Her siblings came with her. They were **Shirley, Jesse, George, and Billy**. **Joyce** was a good friend to many. She graduated with Ken from the LaGrange High in 1959.

It has been my pleasure to write the KH Alumni column and I am very thankful.

As always, remember that **Becky** and I would love to have you come to visit us in Havelock at anytime. We love you very much. Please find the time to write me something and send it to my e-mail. – jt



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

The bright spots remind us of hope

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

A happy child's color palette is bold and beautiful. Grand #3, Emmalie, entered the world early in the morning to general rejoicing, and she has been a bright spot in our family ever since.

I receive a text and photo on a rainy weekday afternoon from daughter Amie. "Our little artist!" pops on the screen. Emmalie, her gorgeous smile echoing the brilliance of her blue eyes, holds up her sketch pad with a rendition of her sunny outside world complete with wished-for tree house. On Wednesday, the kindergartener has her one remote day of the week, and usually she and her mom would be outside looking for caterpillars or topping up the bird feeder before digging in the dirt to plant flower or bean seeds. The rain prevents normal activities, so she busies herself at her art table, imagining the world as it should be and hoping the showers stop before her dad comes home and could join her for a bike ride.



Emmalie

The world outside our collective windows these days may not show the metaphorical glory of sunshine and blue skies. All of us have experienced the epitome of the gloomy gray days for these past months when our worlds have been tainted by the pandemic. Our worlds have been colored with necessary masks and sanitizers and social distancing as we put others before our own desires for closeness and convenience. Right now, we see neighbors from a distance and parents and grandparents on Facetime, Zoom, or Meets. We are diligent in caring for others and keeping loved ones safe through every means available. These are not the days we wish for but are the reality of what we have, and we pull together as we hope for days to come. Remember, God remains faithful. And we remain His arms and hands, showing kindness rather than selfishness, doing unto others as we would have others do unto us, loving our neighbors as ourselves.

When I need a pick-me-up, I scroll through photos of my four grands. Their perpetual smiles assure me of their happy worlds full of adventure, discovery, and just the slightest bit of mischief, all enfolded in a loving and nurturing family.

At home, I rotate their artwork on the refrigerator, just like I did when their parents were my artists in residence. I notice today that the chosen colors, whether paints, pencils, crayons, or markers, are the happy ones, the clear and energetic ones. Yes, every one of these masterpieces have similar palettes—boldly outlined robots, schoolhouses, cars, landscapes, all filled in with the colors of happy children.

"Papa, did you like my art?" I see Em's face on my phone. She is already smiling, sure of my answer. I do not disappoint: "Wow! It's incredible!" Behind her, I notice strings of colored lights along the ceiling—no gray days for her, whatever the outside world may be.

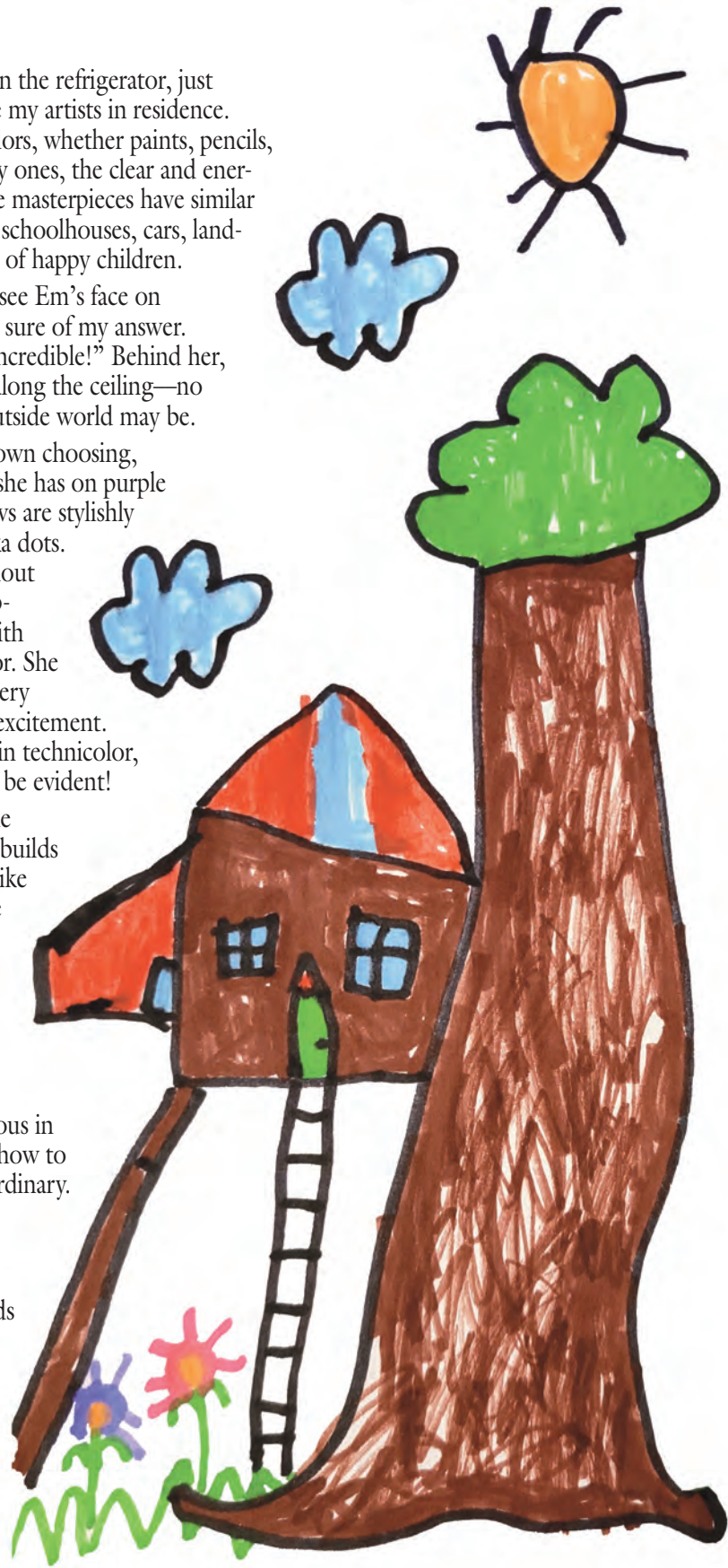
Emmalie wears clothes of her own choosing, as colorful as her art. Most days, she has on purple shoes or blue boots. Her hair bows are stylishly oversized in vivid stripes and polka dots. The music she sings, with or without accompaniment, is upbeat and up-tempo, and she belts out tunes with a sassy spin around the dance floor. She has a can-do attitude and faces every hour of the day with energy and excitement. If I could see her outlook on life in technicolor, I know the entire rainbow would be evident!

The world beaming from inside of Emmalie radiates security. She builds Lego skyscrapers, she dresses up like favorite movie characters, and she bows her head to pray, her family joining, affirming her fledgling faith in her Heavenly Father. There is no wonder her drawings sparkle with happiness.

Emmalie reminds me to be hopeful, to expect life to be glorious in any circumstance. She shows me how to take ordinary and imagine extraordinary.

The lessons she lives out for us each day calls us to be diligent in looking for the bright spots in our day-to-day world. She reminds us they are there, no matter how the outside looks, no matter how long we must endure uncertain days.

And just so I do not forget, I am placing the picture of her artwork on my refrigerator.



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