

Podcast marks 50th episode.

Join Dr. Blackwell and guest **Bishop Dr. George B. Jackson** for this May 10 history-making episode. Visit www.bchblog.org/podcast.

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

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Friendship key to five seniors' future

By **Blake Ragsdale**, Managing Editor

Joseph walks along the roadway that weaves through the Odum Home campus in Pembroke. The high school senior passes cottages and colorful flower beds as friends catch up with him.

"I applied to three colleges this week," Samantha, another Odum Home resident, declares from behind.

"Have you applied to any?" she asks.

"No, not yet," Joseph responds.

"You better come on!" she playfully prods. "If you don't start soon you're going to run out of time to

apply for financial aid."

Joseph takes Samantha's remarks in stride. He and fellow cottage resident Maleki are used to the goading they receive from Samantha, Joann, and Rachel, all seniors living at Odum Home.

Odum Home provides services to children and families in southeastern North Carolina. Located in the "Land of the Lumbee," the Baptist Children's Homes facility serves a tri-racial community.

Continued on page 6.

Negative balance? Deposit into one's emotional account.

By Michael C. Blackwell, President/CEO

Author Willard Harley popularized the concept of emotional “bank accounts” in his excellent book for understanding relationships, *His Needs, Her Needs*.

His notion related the emotional give and take in marriage between a man and a woman to “fund balances” in a checking account. If you withdraw more than you put in, your fund will “bounce.” Each positive comment, compliment, supportive act, and surprise “just because I love you” gift, is a “deposit” in his or her emotional bank account.

When you do something stupid, lose your temper, forget a birthday or anniversary, or come home late without calling, you make a withdrawal from that emotional account. If you withdraw more than you deposit, you are in an emotional deficit with your spouse, and trouble is on the horizon!

It's the same for children. Your child and all the children you influence have a unconscious emotional account balance. When they have been flooded with positive deposits, they react to life from a perspective that says they are on top of things, they are winners, they can achieve.

When all they feel is the constant drain of emotional withdrawals, their perspective becomes dark and they begin to wonder how much more they can give; how much more will be required of them.

Children react according to these emotional account balances. If more withdrawals are taken than deposits made, their words and actions will scream “insufficient emotional funds!”

Since people cannot operate for long with a negative emotional balance, children and adults alike will seek positive deposits—wherever they can find them.

You also need to be aware that withdrawals have a higher amount, they account for more, and it takes a multitude of positive deposits to equal that withdrawal that inevitably comes from time to time.

You think your daughter's clothing selection is atrocious? You withdrew emotional funds as she walks out the door and you say, “Don't you have something better to wear?” At school, she'll find somebody to restore her fund balance by telling her she's beautiful, her outfit is lovely, and, by the way, what are she doing Friday night?

You make a big, negative deal over your son's bout with pimples or his wimpy mustache? There's

a drug dealer on the corner who doesn't even *see* his rough skin and who flatters him saying, “I wish I could grow a such a great mustache.”

Pick up toys. Do homework. Do this. Do that. These words are emotional “withdrawal” slips. Like withdrawing money to pay bills, some of the withdrawal words are necessary, although they can be phrased softer.

But if you do not make enough deposits, your child will operate at an emotional deficit and that is never good. Hugs and sincere praise are huge deposits. On the other hand, it takes only a few harsh words and a deaf ear to drain the account quickly.

How do you make deposits? Here are three solid deposit slips to use as you communicate with your children:

1. Look your child in the eyes when speaking to her.

Put the newspaper down, the cell phone away, and the television off. Turn and look at him when he speaks to you.

Have you ever had people looking over your shoulder at someone else while they talked to you? It tells you their interest level in your conversation is zero. Eye-to-eye contact shows you are genuinely interested in the person with whom you're speaking and tells her what she is saying is important.

2. Use the child's name when speaking to him.

Names are important. Names affirm one's unique identity and recognizes their importance to you and are an important part of our self-worth.

Family life minister Walker Moore says he will list all the seminar attendee's names on the wall before his meetings begin, then remove one name when participants are gone on break. On their return to the room, he notices that person invariably looks all over the wall to find his or her name.

3. One final note, use the deposit word “because” often.

I appreciate you because. . .
I love you because. . .
I admire you because. . .

Don't simply give your children generic compliments or tell them “you're wonderful” without a basis for that observation.

Because a child may be going through a rough patch and have a low opinion of themselves at the time, if your compliment is ungrounded, they may think “you don't know me very well.”

A specific compliment sends a child away thinking, “You know what? I am good at that!” And you can take this to the bank, he will work even harder to be better at it—and other things as well.

Remember, when a child only has withdrawals and no deposits in their emotional bank accounts, rebellion is inevitable, and they will find someone else to make a deposit!

Take time today to make a deposit in your spouses or child's account. It costs you nothing, but will pay millions in dividends.



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 named one of the best nonprofits to work for in USA

By John Adamcik, Director, Human Resources

True to its vision statement, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina's commitment to a "caring culture of measurable excellence," was recognized by *The NonProfit Times*, who selected BCH as one of the "2021 Best Nonprofits To Work For."

This national award presented by *The NonProfit Times*, the leading publication for nonprofit managers, along with the Best Companies Group, identifies 50 organizations throughout the country whose leaders have "excelled in creating quality workplaces."



Bond Kiser

Part one accounted for a quarter of the total evaluation and involved a detailed analysis of nominated organizations' "workplace policies, practices, philosophy, systems, and demographics." Three-quarters of the evaluation was based on results from each organization's employee survey to "measure the employee experience." Best Companies Group managed the overall registration and survey process, analyzed the data, and determined winners.

BCH placed 30th out of this nationwide competition, and was one of only six large nonprofits to receive this award. Such recognition aligns well with BCH's leadership approach.

"This *NonProfit Times* award is a much appreciated endorsement of our organizational philosophy and culture," said Bond Kiser, BCH vice president for staff engagement

and compliance. "This is thanks to our amazing, committed people serving in front-line and support roles throughout BCH's ministries."

Kiser, who has developed her role over the past two years, has recently taken on additional responsibilities following the retirement of Nancy McNeill, the former vice president for human resources (HR) and compliance who helped create the HR team. Kiser, along with her husband Kevin, joined BCH as a houseparent in 2007. She also served in BCH's IDD (Intellectual and Developmentally Disabled) ministry before bringing her business education, healthcare analytics, and reporting experience to BCH's Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI) initiatives.



Amanda Doty

"PQI is the continuous review of our processes," said Kiser, "so that while we enjoy celebrating our achievements, we are always striving to improve."

To that end, in addition to Kiser's collection and compilation of regular organization-wide PQI reports, she also conducts extensive annual anonymous employee engagement and satisfaction surveys. After analyzing the results, Kiser provides useful summaries and excerpts to leadership, supervisors, and all

BCH staff.

The HR and Compliance team's growth over the past few years has included the addition of Amanda Doty, a former BCH houseparent who brought her healthcare and education technology experience to the new role of manager of recruiting and staff development. In addition to serving as lead on BCH's learning management system implementation in 2019, she served as point person for the *NonProfit Times* staff commu-

nications and logistics.

"It has been one of my greatest honors, not only to serve alongside the most compassionate people I've ever met, but also to help shine the bright light (or spotlight) of this prestigious award on daily efforts to 'share hope and change lives'; an idea that each employee of Baptist Children's Homes fully grasps and lives out loud and clear for others to see," said Doty.

While BCH's HR and Compliance Team led the organizational effort, it was fully endorsed, encouraged, and supported by senior leadership, including Dr. Michael C. Blackwell, president and CEO.

"We are deeply honored to receive this recognition," said Blackwell. "It is a reflection of the professional excellence exhibited by our 350 employees across the Carolinas. Excellence permeates our culture."



NCBAM staff member receives lifetime achievement award

By Carol Layton, NCBAM Director of Communications and Administration

Angie Gregg, NCBAM west regional director, was awarded the B.T. Fowler Lifetime Achievement Award by the NC Fire & Life Safety Education Council. The award recognizes an individual who has made a difference in preventing the devastating effect of fire, burn injuries, and deaths in North Carolina.

Gregg began her career as a firefighter with the Blowing Rock Fire Department before serving with NC's Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) as an Injury Prevention Specialist. Prior to retiring from OSFM, she worked closely with NCBAM

assisting the ministry with its fall- and fire-prevention programs.

NCBAM Director Dr. Sandy Gregory, was thrilled when Gregg joined NCBAM, "We focus on fire prevention because of its impact on seniors. Angie's expertise has strengthened our programs."

Since joining NCBAM, Angie created NCBAM's Home Safety and Fire Prevention checklists and the workshops: "Home Invasion Prevention" and "Staying Safe and Helping Others



Gregg

During COVID-19." The latter provides information regarding the use of personal protective equipment and other practices that increase the safety of volunteers and those being served. Most recently, Gregg wrote a FEMA Fire Prevention Safety grant that awarded \$40,000 to NCBAM for its smoke alarm program.

NC Commissioner Mike Causey and Leigh Kish, chair of the Fire and Life Safety Council presented the award to Angie Gregg in February.

God can turn a child's mess into a message of hope

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

Recently while listening to a Christian talk show, I heard this: *God can turn a mess into a message, a test into a testimony, a trial into a triumph, a victim into a victor.*

For more than 20 years, I have seen these words lived out over and over again at Baptist Children's Homes (BCH). Children and families who come through our doors have endured so much trauma, so much mess, and so many trials. And yes, so many have been victims—victims of every form of abuse. Their lives have been filled with mess after mess, test after test, trial after trial, and abuse after abuse.

A beautiful baby boy was born to an alcoholic mother who was a child herself, abandoned and left to die. The baby was rescued and delivered to our orphanage in Guatemala. There, he was nurtured, fed, loved, and treated as the precious gift God made him to be. Today, he is a happy, thriving child. God used you to turn this child's story into a message of hope.

A mom fled in fear of her safety and the safety of her four children. She was befriended by ladies in a local church who directed her to us. At BCH, she and her children found an environment where they were safe. In the Family Care program, she found loving mentors who helped her lift her head and believe in herself. More importantly, they pointed her to a loving Savior. God used you to help change this mom from victim to victor.

On page 6 and 7, you will read about five resilient young people who live at Odum Home in Pembroke. Before coming to live at BCH, they each had a story of trauma that God turned from a mess to a message, a test into a testimony, a trial into a triumph, a victim into a victor. They graduate from high school in only weeks and in the fall will be entering University of North Carolina at Pembroke. God used you to help turn their lives of trauma and trials to triumph.

Easter Sunday morning, children throughout BCH's network of care woke to a new day. They rose to the smell of a good breakfast and knew they would not be hungry. They dressed in new, clean clothes and wore shoes that fit. And to their surprise, there were beautiful Easter baskets at the door of their room, gifts provided by you, our lov-

ing, caring church family.

Dressed for the occasion, the children and cottage parents made their way to church. It was the first Sunday since COVID that they had traveled to church in more than a year.

I attended Mills Home Baptist Church Easter morning. As I entered the church, two little girls ran up to twirl and show off their new dresses. Their younger brother stood behind them shy and quiet. He was handsome in new suit complete with vest. They all carried stuffed animals they were given that morning.

Pastor Randy Stewart signaled for us to take our seats, all appropriately distanced. Everyone lifted voices in song and the youth shared scripture telling the Resurrection Story. As always there was commentary from a number of our children and youth who spontaneously added their own versions. It is obvious the children are being disciplined and are growing in their knowledge of the Lord.

And then came time for prayer. Little hands shot up across the congregation: "Grammy is sick." "Pray for my family." "I want my mommy." "My uncle was in a wreck." "My mom is homeless." "My dad is in prison." "Pray for my friend." "Pray for my cottage parents." "My grandma has cancer." "Pray for my baby." "Pray for me."

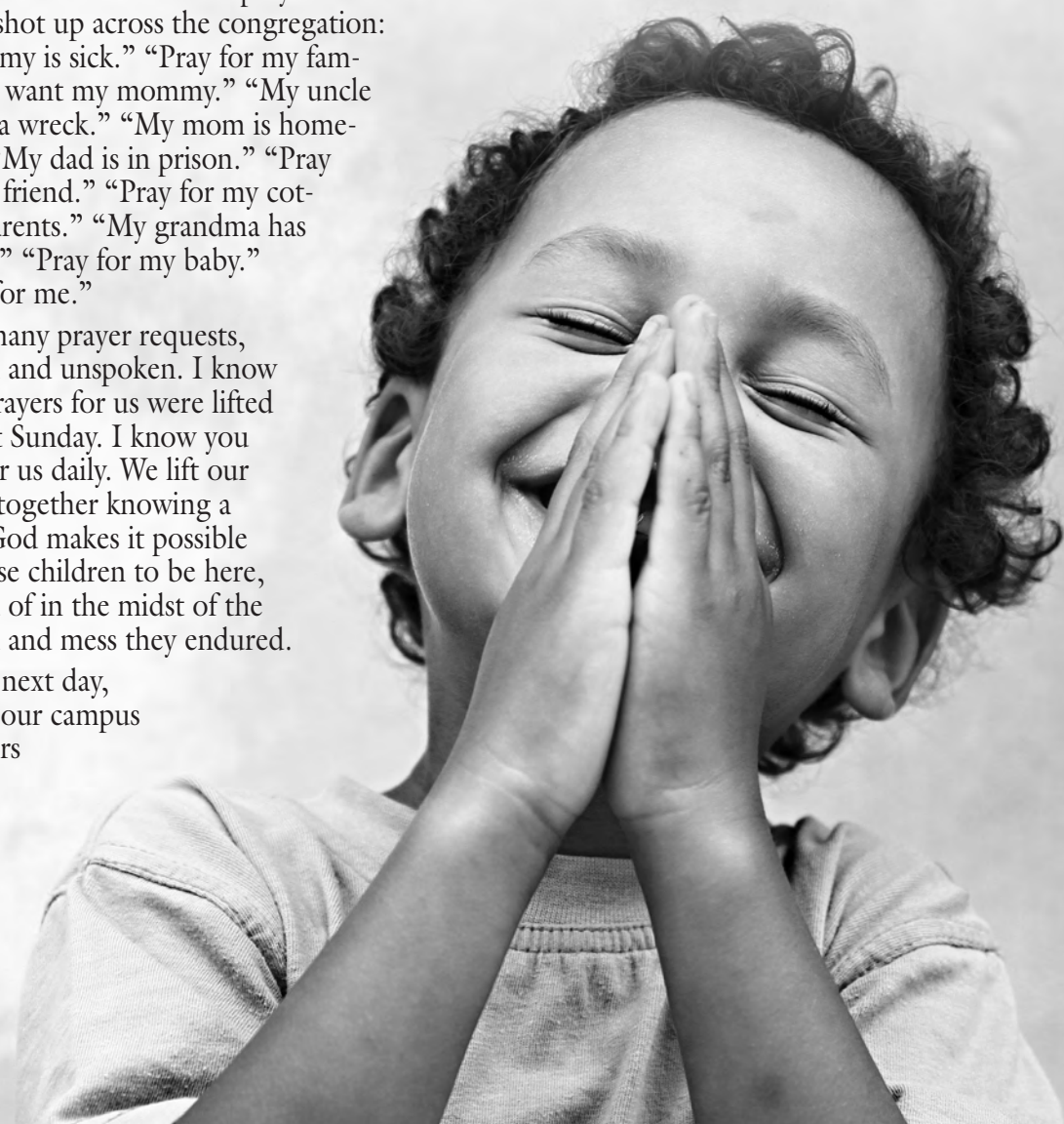
So many prayer requests, spoken and unspoken. I know your prayers for us were lifted up that Sunday. I know you pray for us daily. We lift our hearts together knowing a great God makes it possible for these children to be here, instead of in the midst of the trauma and mess they endured.

The next day, one of our campus directors

called to share the wonderful news that six of our children made professions of faith!

Because of your commitment to this ministry, you are a part of all that we do. Just last night, you shared the gospel through a cottage parent's devotion. Just last night, you wrapped a precious baby in a blanket and rocked her to asleep. Just last night, you listened as one of our children shared their story of fear and anguish. Just last night, you wiped away the tears of one of our little ones missing her mommy. Just last night, you placed your hand on the shoulder of one of our staff as they knelt to pray. Just last night, you helped put hundreds of children to bed with full tummies and bedtime prayers. *Just last night, you turned a mess into a message, a test into a testimony, a trial into a triumph, a victim into a victor!*

Thank YOU! For more information on how God can use you in and through this ministry, call me at 336-689-4442 or email me at bbgray@bchfamily.org.



Join us in giving thanks for moms and dads.

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

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In memory of Jane W. Smith

Given by Her Children

FATHER

In memory of Edward R. Morrison

Given by Edith Morrison

In honor of William F. Hughes

Given by Jennifer Phillips

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Given by Daughters Beth and Sarah

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

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State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

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

Odum Home first BCH location to see five seniors attend same college

By Blake Ragsdale, Managing Editor

Continued from page 1.

Students Rachel, Joseph, Joann, Maleki, and Samantha never imagined a senior year with COVID-19 restrictions. However, despite the challenges, the teenagers have achieved extraordinary success. The five seniors will not only graduate this spring, but they will all be attending the University of North Carolina at Pembroke together this fall.

“This group is so special,” says Odum Home Campus Manager Kathy Locklear. “They have been there for each other and encouraged one another. I have watched as each one stepped up.”

The teens’ challenges before Odum Home ranged from homelessness to family dysfunction to failed foster care placements. This past year, they faced a different challenge. The pandemic made attending in-person classes impossible and they spent a lot of time at Odum Home to reduce risks of exposure.

“The social aspect of school was completely gone. There’s



Rachel

no Spring formal or prom—we didn’t do any of that,” Rachel explains. “Samantha, Joann, and I did a lot of activities together like baking, watching movies, and having a picnic.”

One thing the seniors have enjoyed is walking Odum Home’s private roadway—known as “the track.” It has given them an opportunity to talk about school, encourage one another, and laugh together. Throughout time, their bond grew.

“I’m thinking to myself, Samantha’s applied to three colleges this week, and I haven’t applied to one,” Joseph says.

“The girls gave me a hard time, too,” Maleki says with a smile. “It got me to turn in my application.”

Like the others, Joanne and Rachel were turning in applications and the group has benefitted from the ongoing guidance from Keely Khriho, their college advisor at Purnell Swett High School.

Heavenly Silva, the Odum Home case manager for all five teenagers, conducts transitional living sessions with the group teaching life skills needed to be successful, independent adults. In the past year, much of their time together has focused on the process of pursuing higher education goals as well as exploring financial aid options.

“The children already had the dream of going to college, but what we don’t want is for them to get trapped by debt,” Silva explains. “It’s about helping them make informed choices and understand that their time at college is an investment.”

“Her classes really helped to lay out college options and the steps to get us going,” Joann says of Silva’s training.

Looking back, it would have been difficult for the children to imagine receiving this kind of support by coming to Odum Home. Their concern, based on misinformation, was that Odum Home

would be anything but a positive place to live.

“Movies portray group homes badly, and I was worried I wasn’t going to be fed,” Joseph says. “I arrived late at night and everyone was very nice. It’s been really good.”

Rachel agrees. “Hollywood doesn’t really know. I think the media needs to understand how this can really benefit a lot of kids.”

In addition to Silva and Locklear, the teens’ cottage parents, who live with them around the clock, provide daily care and counsel.

“Ms. Hailey has been the greatest influence,” Rachel says about Pam Hailey, the cottage parent at Elmore Cottage. “She takes time to build a relationship with the kids. She’s giving me the emotional support I need.”

“They really help you,” Maleki adds about his and Joseph’s cottage parents, Tim and Karen Worthington and Keith and Harlene Hill at Latta Harnett Cottage. “They have devotions every night to help you get closer to God.”

Whether it has been overcoming challenges resulting from the pandemic or hurts lingering from past circumstances, Odum Home’s Christ-centered environment has been a source of strength.

“There are people that aren’t blood that have been there for me and shared God’s word with me,” Samantha says. “I don’t feel like I would’ve gotten saved if not for Odum.”

“It’s great all five are going to college,” Silva says. “It’s even greater that while they have been at Odum Home they’ve heard the gospel hundreds of times.”

Odum Home is not alone in offering spiritual encouragement. As always, many North Carolina Baptist churches regularly provide assistance, but two in particular have formed a close, personal bond with the group: Clement Missionary Baptist Church in Autryville and Village Baptist Church in Fayetteville.

“These churches have been teaching the children how to have God be in the center of their journey and the difference He can make,” Locklear explains.

Members of Village Baptist’s “Saved to Serve”



Joseph

Sunday School class have formed lasting relationships with the group of seniors. They not only celebrate their birthdays, organize activities, and drop off items they need, but members encourage the teens through phone calls and include them in their virtual Sunday School classes conducted via computer and smartphone devices.

“They have definitely made an effort to connect with us,” Rachel shares. “Sundays and Wednesdays have been great times to work on my relationship with the Lord. It’s very powerful the way they speak about Him.”

“Seeing people like them wanting us to get good grades and go to college has pushed me,” Joann says. “It makes me happy.”

The seniors’ efforts, with the support of friends, educators, and Odum Home caregivers, have brought their college goals within reach. In all, the group received a total of 10 acceptances. The one college they all had in common was the University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP). All five came to the conclusion that UNCP gives them the best opportunity to succeed.

“UNCP has a good nursing program,” Joann says. “In my high school nursing classes, I’ve learned more about the human body and how nurses help others. I have a good heart and love helping people.”

Between them, studies being considered include nursing, teaching, and cybersecurity.

“I’m focused on becoming a registered nurse, but I wouldn’t mind coming back and working with kids in the foster care system,” Rachel shares. “I think it would help them to work with someone who has already been through it.”

There is another important reason that factored into choosing UNCP—the university is located across the street from Odum Home. With some of the residents having minimal to no family support, the teens know they can always depend on their Odum Home caregivers.

“Our commitment is to be there for them no matter what they need,” Locklear assures.

“It’s a big benefit being close to Odum Home,” Joann says. “They will reserve a room for us during the holidays or be there for us in an emergency.



Samantha



I consider Odum Home family.”

The sense of family forged between caregivers and children, relationships that extend well beyond a child’s time living in care, is vitally important to BCH president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell. With their goals in sight, the accomplishments of the Odum Home seniors have not gone unnoticed.

“This is a monumental and historic occasion to have five Odum Home graduates going quite literally across the street to the University of North Carolina at Pembroke,” Blackwell says. “Each of these students has shown remarkable ability in character and scholarship. I look forward to following their successes in the future.”

BCH podcast “It’s a family matter” marks 50th episode

By Jim Edminson, Editor

In the summer of 2019, BCH president/CEO Michael C. Blackwell launched his podcast “*It’s a family matter*.” He determined then to release a new episode every two weeks, and despite the challenges of COVID-19, he accomplished that goal. On May 10, the award-winning podcast will stream its 50th episode.

“It thrills me to be behind the microphone again as I interview the most interesting and informative guests,” Blackwell said. “Every episode is designed to touch hearts and to encourage listeners, listeners who can be anywhere in the world.”

Blackwell’s broadcast experience began as a 14-year-old disc jockey for WGNC-AM/FM in Gastonia hosting “Mickey’s Record Shop.”

The May 10 episode will culminate a three-part series with guest Bishop Dr. George B. Jackson, the founding pastor of the Citadel of Faith Christian Fellowship and founder and chair of the Martin Luther King Social Action Committee (MLK-SAC) in Thomasville.



The Rowan County native was consecrated by the United Cornerstone Churches International and is the author of four books.

“I could not be more pleased to have Bishop Dr. Jackson as my guest and have our third podcast in this series to be our 50th episode is over the top,” Blackwell said.

Blackwell was the recipient of the 2018 Martin Luther King Community Service Award presented by the MLK-SAC.

“The MLK-SAC uses the ‘King’ concept of social action for social change by focusing on enhancement, empowerment, enrichment, enlightenment, and encouragement,” Jackson said in the first podcast. “The ‘Five Es’ are at the center of all the work we do as



It’s a family matter podcast launched June 27, 2019. On May 10, the 50th episode will stream featuring the third show in the series with guest Bishop Dr. George B. Jackson. On April 21, the national Baptist Communicators Association awarded *It’s a family matter* 2nd place for best podcast show overall and 3rd place for best single episode featuring guest Betsy Bolick.

a community.”

In episode two, Blackwell and Jackson explored the “beloved” community. Jackson said the beloved community is a place of unity. He said a beloved community is where everyone has access to what is needed to survive and thrive.

“The beloved community says that what blesses one, blesses all,” Jackson said. “So if I live in this community, one of the things I have to do is love my community. If I start to love my community, the community starts to love itself.”

To find the entire archive of “*It’s a family matter*,” search your favorite podcast platforms or visit www.bchblog.org/podcast for a complete listing of past episodes.

Frail aging need safe med equipment

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) is available to help churches or associations begin their own ministries that provide durable medical equipment (DME) to older adults in need. DME includes assistive devices such as canes, rollators, walkers, wheelchairs, shower seats, and bedside toilets. These items can be expensive and are often not fully covered by Medicare. DME often makes a big difference in a person’s life as it allows for greater independence and mobility.

If you desire to start a DME ministry, NCBAM can partner with you by provid-



Many times, frail aging adults cannot afford quality durable medical equipment. NCBAM’s DME ministry is there to help.

ing: guidelines and tips for starting your ministry, initial equipment (as available), waiver and gift-in-kind templates, and referrals of local needs. NCBAM provides printed materials to share with your recipients such as plan of salvation cards to attach to pieces of equipment as well as safety checklists and fall prevention brochures to share with recipients.

Email ncbam@bchfamily.org or call 877.506.2226 to be connected with an NCBAM regional director in your area who can advise you and help you to assist frail elders in your community.

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Would you like to **make a world of difference** to an older adult who hasn’t left home in months or spoken to anyone all week?

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To learn more, visit onehopeNCBAM.org or call 877.506.2226.

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry

Our Mission

To offer the One Hope of the Father, who is above all, and through all, and in all to those experiencing isolation and loneliness. (Ephesians 4:4-6)

Waiting on decision to hold Homecoming — Ninty-two-year-old alumna recovers from fall

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

The Mills Home Alumni Council met for a quarterly meeting on March 28. Adding new ideas to the plans that were begun in early 2020, we are now set to complete them if necessary restrictions are lifted. Keep a prayer in your heart that conditions will enable North Carolina officials to do that so we can have Homecoming this year. In the meantime, you can help us by sending any additions or corrections for our address book to **Jimmy Rochelle** at 106 Jasmine Place, Durham, NC 27712. And please begin urging your friends to return for Homecoming if or when we know 500 or more can gather.

The 2021 Address Directory will include the newly edited by-laws. Last year, the Alumni Council voted and approved making the alumni association a 501-C3 public charity. We did not change our by-laws but we did add all required wording, rules, and regulations required by the IRS. The big advantage of being a 501-C3 is that donations made to our organization will now be tax deductible.

The Mills Home (MH) group on Facebook has enjoyed communication in recent months from **Sidney Jacobs** and **Rebecca Jacobs Malone**. We were shocked when we learned around March 14 that Rebecca had just returned home from the hospital and was being cared for by her daughter **Cari**. Soon after Rebecca's return home, Cari reported that Rebecca's brother Sidney passed away (more on Sidney later). And then sadly, Cari reported that Rebecca passed away Sunday, March 21.

The Jacobs family entered MH in 1955 and included **Rebecca, Sidney, Marie, and Bobby (TR)**. Rebecca left in 1966 and graduated from Troy High School in 1968. She married **Michael D. Malone, Sr.** on December 21, 1969 and they reared sons Scott and Michael and daughter Cari. The rest of their progeny includes eleven grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. Michael preceded Rebecca in death in 2018.

Rebecca enjoyed playing cards

with friends and she and Michael both loved spending time with family and friends and having big cook-outs and holiday parties. She also enjoyed traveling to North Carolina regularly. The family will hold a funeral service for Rebecca at a later date under the supervision of Melcher-Sowers Funeral Home, Piqua, OH. Condolences to the family may be sent to www.melcher-sowers.com. Memorial contributions may be made to BCH, P.O. Box 338, Thomasville, NC 27360.

Alumni rejoiced with **Thomas Whitt** when he sent this note on March 15: "Dear friends and family: Yesterday at my doctor visit, I received news regarding the CT scan from my neck to my knees. There is no new cancer and the cancer spots I have are not increasing in size! Praise God." Send "Happy" cards to Thomas at 6171 Cedar Lane, Maple Falls, WA, 98266.

Our hearts go out to **Charles Ray Fortenberry** who lost his sister **Charlene Garris**. Send Ray condolences at 605 Tema Rd., Hartsville, SC 29550.

I was happy to receive an update from **Juanette Trantham Thomas**. Juanette entered MH in 1957 with two distinctions; she had a twin named **Jeanette** and they were members of the largest group of siblings to ever enter MH (we think). They were a cute bunch, outstanding on campus, and much loved. They were also beneficiaries of the new campus family grouping that was introduced that allowed them to live together in the same cottage. Other members of the family were **Earlene, Kaye, Ronnie, Robert, and Ramona**. Juanette has spent a large part of her adult life in Charlotte where she and her husband **Daniel** have reared their three offspring.

Juanette says she enjoys Homecoming because of the great fellowship with treasured friends and having such delicious food during the weekend. She especially treasures house parents **Miss Imogene Wilson and Mr. and Mrs. Steele**. She wrote: "I'm glad I had the experience of living at MH. My mom

worried about having to leave us at the home—even on her death bed. We told her she had given us a precious gift by putting us at MH. We thanked her and told her how much we loved her and that she was the most wonderful mom in the world. She went to be with God knowing we were also thankful and at peace with her decision. Thank you MH for giving our mom peace in her heart all the time we were there and during her last days."

We are sad to report the death of alumna **Brenda Allen Hoff** and thank **Sally Beck Ferguson** for helping us keep up to date. Brenda passed away in 2004 at the age of 66. A resident of San Francisco, CA, Brenda had suffered a long illness. She is buried at Olivet Memorial Park in Colma, CA. A former Vietnam Veteran, Brenda is survived by her husband **Mitchel Nisperos**, daughter **Sabrina**, and brother **Charles**.

A cheerful email from **Betty Jean Gasaway Hartsell** reads: "I am now 'Gigi'—a great grandmother as of March 10 when our granddaughter **Brooke** had a baby girl." Betty Jean came to MH in 1941 at age four with her brother **Robert**. She was in the class of 1955 until she and five others were allowed to skip sixth grade because it had too many students. After completing the seventh grade at MH, she and Robert left to live with an aunt and uncle in Bryson City. She then finished high school in three years and entered Berea College in Kentucky to earn her BA in sociology. Following college, she worked as a summer intern in 1956 at New Jersey Women's Reform School where she became friends with an older co-worker. With encouragement from the co-worker, Betty began correspondence with her co-worker's son, **Gene Hartsell**, who was in the Air Force. In due time, a lovely courtship began, they married, and then moved to Portola, CA to be as close as possible to Reno where Gene was stationed. Gene finished his service requirement in July and they moved back to New Jersey. He got a job as electronics technician

with RCA and Betty started a 25-year career with the New Jersey Department of Labor. Gene eventually became manager of Matrix Test Equipment and retired in 2002. Along the way they reared three daughters: **Janelle, Pamela and Bobbi**. Although she misses her husband, she now lives in Wesser, NC and enjoys friends, visits from far-away family, and trips back to MH for great reunions with old friends.

Thanks for another update sheet from 1966 graduate **Albert Smith**. Albert entered MH in 1957 from High Shoals, NC. He is married to **Janet Hill Smith** and their progeny includes four offspring, 13 grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Currently, he lives in King and is self-employed.

Sometime ago, I received a "get well" note from **Betty Gurley Stubbins** ('41). After wishing me quick improvements, she was gracious to include a bit about herself. She wrote: "I managed to reach the age of 92 in February, but have had a rough time since Sunday after Thanksgiving. I lost power for nine hours and as I was resetting clocks, I very stupidly reached up to the top of the refrigerator to change the clock (it is a battery clock and did not need changing) and stepped out of my slipper, fell, and broke my wrist. I was in a cast for nine weeks. Wearing the cast caused carpal tunnel and required an operation and I wore a splint for another four weeks. I'm thankful that feeling has now returned to my fingers and everything is working out. I finally retired from choir since my voice has become too raspy and I was unable to get to practice while I was in a cast. I finally retired from delivering for Meals on Wheels this month after 25 years, but I still enjoy being active and able to count money every Monday at church as well as send out acknowledgments for honorariums and memorials."



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



North Carolina Baptists Association brings Easter joy

Girls living at Camp Duncan, along with others served by BCH, were thrilled to receive Easter baskets. Churches from the New South River Baptist Association provided hundreds of baskets.



North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry Volunteers assist with baskets

NCBAM Servant Care participants and local youth placed Gospel tracts on 646 baskets from New South River Association. They hope the baskets help share the Easter story with children.



Good Shepherd Ministries in Guatemala Children chase field mice

The orphans living at Good Shepherd Children's Home in Guatemala are fascinated by the field mice along the grounds. Living in the country near corn fields, there are many field mice and other critters.



Christian Adoption Services Brother loves new adopted sister

The "K" family welcomed a new addition. The adoptive parent's biological son often tells them how much he loves her and that he always wanted her as his baby sister.



Hyde Park Baptist Church, Lumberton Class collects items for Odum

Murray and Annette West, who are members of Hyde Park Baptist, delivered supplies for boys and girls at Odum Home in Pembroke. Their Sunday School class collected the items.



Weekday Education in Thomasville Children are ready for Spring

The boys and girls attending BCH's Weekday Education centers are enjoying more outdoor time now that warm weather has arrived. Recently, little ones all wore colorful sunglasses to celebrate.



Cameron Boys Camp in Cameron Rangers return from trip

Recently, the Rangers group completed a successful two-canoe trip along Lake Jocassee. The time paddling, camping and exploring resulted in team building and accomplishing personal goals.



Lindsay Home in Zionville Lindsay ladies are grateful

The adult ladies at Lindsay Home showed their appreciation to special friends through a socially-distanced cookout. They celebrated the Sirmon family who are supporters of their home.



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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
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6. Camp Duncan for Girls
Brad Gearhart, Dir., 910-944-3077
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13. NC Baptist Aging Ministry
Sandy Gregory, Dir., 336-474-1221
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14. Good Shepherd Children's Home in Guatemala
Keith Henry, COO, 336-474-1215

one



Remember to make a joyful noise unto the Lord — Alum remember watching television in the cottages

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

The beach cottage at Indian Beach is an exciting place for children to visit in the summer and have retreats in the winter. Every summer, cottages of residents from most BCH locations from across the state come and spend an entire week having fun!

There is swimming on the Bogue Sound side as well as in the Atlantic Ocean. When I was on staff, it was fun to go out in sail boats. My wife **Becky** and our two boys were invited to go down and spend a week from time to time with different cottages to help out—especially if there were three cottages there at the same time.

We would even take the boys and girls to the North Carolina Aquarium. The weeks were filled with whatever the houseparents could dream up to do for the Kennedy Home (KH) youngins.

Here is an article from **Donna Wade Daniels**, a former KH resident and very talented musician and songwriter. She writes: “I do not remember ever going to the beach until I lived at KH. My cottage, Ferebee, usually spent a week with Bunker Cottage or one of the other cottages. Time at the beach was possibly my favorite and most fun time. The girls bunked at one end of the cottage while the boys bunked at the other. The cottage was on the sound so we could sail the two-person sunfish boat. I remember the only time I sailed it was with **Juanita Rochelle**. We decided to sail out to the small island and back. As luck would have it, we made it there but could not sail back. We wound up having to swim back with the sailboat in tow. Boy, did we get a talking to when we finally made it back!

“I remember there being two rows of sand dunes and we loved to climb to the top and roll down or slide down. We even built bonfires in the valley of the dunes. We always made a trip to Fort Macon and stopped by the Trading Post on the way back. The night before

leaving, we always had a talent shows which was so much fun! I especially liked the two-person shaving skit. There was lip-syncing, too. I remember one time dressing up in a pillow case and dancing. My name? Ms. Pillow-case, of course!

“I still love going to the beach now. When I go with my kids and grandkids, the highlight is going out on the beach about 10:00 at night to chase crabs with buckets and flashlights!”

Great memories! Donna suggests that you join her by sending me stories about your beach experiences. I’ll include them in my summer columns. Can’t wait to read the stories.

Recently, KH alum **Jim Dyer** visited the KH office which is the building that was CCB (a cottage for little boys in the day). He discovered on one of the walls a picture that was taken back in 1955. He remembers how CCB was home for as many as 24 boys. they lived in four large bedrooms, six boys in each room

Jim posed the question, “Can you imagine being a houseparent with 24 boys age 6-9 years old?”

Mrs. Lanie Cribb was house-mother when I served at KH. One of her sons lived with her at the time. Everyone loved her. She was so sweet natured, but could be stern when needed.

Barbara Smith remembered on the alumni Facebook account the day when there were no televisions at KH. **Teresa Carmire Hubbard** says there was a TV in the A-Davis cottage in 1984-85. She wrote that TV-time was limited because of chores and homework. “We watched almost anything rated ‘G.’ The television was set up in a back room that was called the TV room. We didn’t have much time to watch but when we did it was fun.”

Donna Duty wrote that they had a TV in Brokenhurst and also in Pollock Cottage. “**Mr. and Mrs. Moore** let us play records in the

den and we could invite boys over to dance with us. Jeff Garvey came over a lot because I invited him; he was my boyfriend at the time.

Donna continued, “I still love to dance!”

Becky Rochelle Barnett wrote that she remembers dancing, but not with boys. “**Mr. Moore** would dance with us. He was a great housedaddy that everyone loved. **Mrs. Moore** mostly wanted us to just listen to the music.”

When I was on staff at KH, I remember Mr. Moore telling me he couldn’t ever retire because he was the only person who knew where all the sewage and water lines were on campus. He and Mrs. Moore were so good to Becky and me.

The television in Brokenhurst was in the den right by the steps that led upstairs. At Pollock it was in the den off of the kitchen and back porch. We loved watching the **Waltons**. All the cottages had black and white TVs

I remember my dad had a black and white Sylvania set when I was a little boy. He *thought* color TV would make us go blind.

Alice Russum wrote that she recalls the TV in the Biggs Building, especially when the Beatles came to America on Feb. 7, 1964.

I remember Ed Sullivan would not let the cameras show Elvis below his waist because he wiggled too much.

Sandra Maszady wrote that in Ferebee, the children weren’t allowed to watch much TV because of so many chores and school work to do.

Bobbie Jean Heaney recalls that they had a TV in Lenoir but didn’t get to watch it much, either.

Suzie Hughes wrote that in Bunker “we loved to watch *Dallas* together.” She agreed there was not much TV watching in Lenoir and Pollock.

Billy Smithwick chimed in that in the Canady Cottage in the early 70s, they loved to watch *Emergency*.

Morris Carter wrote that in the early 50s, **Mrs. Creel** would switch off the TV at midnight and sometimes earlier.

Katie Parker, our alumni president, wrote that she remembers TV in Williams Cottage. She remembers when Prince Charles of England was in the news. “I remember that every night the news would give a death report from Vietnam and it broke my heart to watch the helicopters and stretchers with young boys dying. It made me think that at least we were safe and warm living at Kennedy Home.”

Next month in my column, I will share some more memories of the KH youngins watching TV. Don’t forget to send me some tales about your visits to the beach cottage. That will be real interesting.

One last word: My morning devotion came from Psalms and Ephesians. As you know I love music—all kinds, styles, speeds, easy or hard. Music is a big part of my life. In Psalm 95:2 it reads: “Let us come before Him with thanksgiving and extol Him with music and song.” Ephesians 5:19-20 reads: “Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.”

Both of these passages really speak to all of us. During my five years as KH’s minister of music, I tried my best to get folks to sing from their heart. Let me encourage you to always make a joyful noise unto the Lord.

Remember that Becky and I love you very much. We love to hear from you. You are always welcome to come to our home in Havelock and visit.

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.

Being out of gas gets you nowhere

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

The morning is clear and there is no forecast of rain. I drink my second cup of coffee, a weekend indulgence, and make plans. There is an hour before breakfast. The game starts at 2 pm. I have time for a mow!

First, the pine cones. Living under the whisper of 50 plus pines, there is a price to pay for all the benefits I experience—the unending crop of cones on the lawn is too plentiful, and every chore outside begins with picking up or raking them. I give myself that hour before breakfast, put on my gloves, and head out with Lily at my heels. There is a cool breeze and the birds’ songs encourage. I wave to other early risers out and about and feel my breathing ease into the work. Before the call to the morning meal, I check off this chore. Done.

Later, my mowing shoes laced and my lawn cleared, I pull out the mower and decide where to begin. I notice the green stripes of the last mow still evident, and I determine to go the opposite direction this time. The birds are less vocal at midmorning and the breeze is a bit less with the sun’s rising; still, the day beckons outside work, and I can’t wait to begin. I pull the cord and listen for the motor’s hum. Nothing. I check the reservoir. No gas. I head back to the garage to retrieve my old metal gas can. Lifting it, I know immediately. Empty. I stretch backward, head raised to the clouds, and take a deep breath. Back inside, I grab keys, wallet, and phone. Off to the corner convenience store for gas.

Life has a way of redirecting set courses, even simple ones. While I do not relish

this break in my momentum, one thing is sure. If the grass will be mown, that gas tank must be filled. Being out of gas gets you nowhere.

We all find ourselves with an empty tank. Jesus himself needed time to fill up and be renewed. After mighty miracles such as feeding the thousands, Jesus paused to refresh. Before the awesome task of choosing His disciples, Jesus took time aside to pray. To reset after particularly heavy demands, He stepped back and rested, finding strength that only comes from intimate connection to the Father in heaven.

Unlike Jesus, I have the tendency to selfishly bulldoze along, under my own power, feeling no need to withdraw to seek God’s counsel. Or His peace. Just as He provides that sunny day to inspire and those birds’ songs to cheer, He gives opportunities to pause, shut down from the headlong rush to do, to complete, to check off items on that list. In the busyness of life, I am guilty of neglecting quiet time with Him.

To and from the gas station, I travel with the window down and watch the landscape pass. The breeze brushes across my face, I begin to slow down and enjoy the enforced solitude. The songs I’m streaming call me

to prayer, and before I know it, I refuel with what I really need. I begin counting blessings, loved ones’ needs surface in my mind and I intercede, I turn over problems and difficulties I’ve been struggling to solve, and then, I drive in silence, listening to the Spirit within, going from empty to full. By the time I return home, I am ready to

complete the mowing and so much more.



Edminson encourages others through the Good News of Jesus. Email him at wjedminson@bchfamily.org.



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