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Charity & Children

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



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Issue 2

Volume 137

Victoria returns to Lindsay Home after life-threatening illness

By Jim Edminson, Editor



Victoria complained about not feeling well. She was visiting her parents, Alyssa and David Tanigawa, in Morganton. Victoria's abdominal pain seemed extreme but she could not explain her suffering. Alyssa knew her daughter needed doctor's care. The duo began the trek to Watauga Medical Center in Boone.

Between Victoria's sobbing and groans, she asked her mom, "Am I going to die?" "It was serious," Lindsay Home QP Laura

Combs says. "Victoria arrived at the emergency room, was admitted, and, in the end, intubated to help her breathe. Her oxygen levels were dangerously low. We didn't know what would happen."

Victoria was diagnosed with a life-threatening combination of a virus, influenza, and pneumonia. Alyssa remembers: "At the time, I didn't realize how close things had come. I was being brave for Victoria. But we could have lost her." (Continued on page 9.)

Sister remembered for love of children

Star Edwards understood childhood hardship. The voices in her head were haunting and the look in her mother's puzzled eyes were cause for fear as doctors tried to help the seven-year-old girl. She grew up not liking doctors because with every new doctor came another stay in a different hospital, far from home.

As she grew older, Star's condition only grew worse as she exhibited more signs of her mental illness.

Star was born in 1947 and grew up in Sampson County. Her mother was a teacher and father was a businessman and farmer. With her mental illness,

her suffering tempered the little girl making her sympathetic to others, even animals, and the pain they suffered.

Her sister Marsha Huskey wished to memorialize Star and their parents by giving the lead gift to build Starlite Home at River Hill Refuge near Shelby. (Continued on page 8.)



Volunteer engagement director has servant's heart

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

Volunteers give of themselves to help others. Volunteer North Carolina Baptists and other friends giving to help the most vulnerable have been an essential part of Baptist Children's Homes' (BCH) rich history.

"Our volunteers are so important," BCH Executive Vice President, Development and Communications Brenda Gray says. "We welcome and depend on them. Volunteers who freely give of their time and resources add in every way to the success of our mission."

It has been a part of Gray's vision to enhance the relationship between the day-to-day ministry and volunteers. To accomplish this goal, a director of volunteer engagement (DVE) has been added to her staff.

"I could not be more thrilled about Kristyn Butts joining the development and communications team," Gray says. "Kristyn feels called to this task and has made an impact from day one. She looks forward to recruiting new volunteers while working closely with those who have served throughout the years."

One of the first things Butts did after joining Gray's department was email her new coworkers. She expressed her joy in serving with them and addressed her desire to help and to work together to meet the needs of BCH clients, staff, and facilities through the ministry's volunteers. Her spirit shined through, signing off with "Joyfully Serving Him."

The new director of volunteer engagement's focus is to enhance the volunteer experience while directing a comprehensive volunteer program that meets identified needs at all BCH locations. The DVE provides the planning and strategic direction for volunteer activities in support of BCH's vision and mission.



Kristyn Butts is BCH's director of volunteer engagement. The Jacksonville native will recruit new volunteers and enhance volunteer experience while connecting volunteers to real needs that daily impact the lives of those the ministry serves.

"It's my hope that volunteers feel they are an active, daily part of the ministry, serving to meet real needs while becoming part of the total fabric of BCH," Kristyn Butts asserts.

Butts understands the value of service. She was raised in a military family. Her father retired as a career Marine. Her mother served through public education. It was not unexpected for her to marry a serviceman and spend 19 years as a public school teacher.

"I feel called to serve," Butts says. "It's a part of who I am. Serving others and ministry is important to me and my family."

She and her husband Jason have made family and the raising of their twin daughters and son a priority. The couple draw from their childhood experiences, determined to "be the center of the children's lives." Fifteen-year-old Logan is a high school sophomore. Madison and Morgan are seniors and heading to college. Despite being very close, the girls are going to different schools and pursuing different careers. The parents model

self-sacrifice, intent to imprint the three with a desire to serve others.

Butts began with BCH, serving as part of its foster care and adoption program as a case manager in 2022. Feeling God leading, she left her career as a special education teacher.

"Leaving was the farthest thing on my mind," she says. "But it was the perfect thing. It was about God's timing."

Butts was aware of displaced children and those in foster care. She and Jason welcomed a student to live with their family for two years. "We wanted to help."

Foster care was different than being a teacher. But it was much the same. She knew how to build relationships and, just as an educator, she served to help children and meet

their needs. Six months after joining BCH, Butts became a foster care licenser and recruiter based at Kennedy Home in Kinston.

"I fell in love with the ministry," Butts says. "I was committed to my task, but my heart was stirring again. I had no idea what God had in store for me."

She was experiencing success, working with 26 families. It made sense. Her classroom experience had prepared her to train foster families. But her desire to serve and the realization that God's plans are not always her plans prompted her to respond to an inner-agency email.

Butts realized she would need to step out in faith. She knew becoming the new director of volunteer engagement would stretch her, but she was ready—confident God was leading her to serve again.

For information about serving as a volunteer, contact Kristyn Butts by calling 336-943-3862 or emailing kbutts@bchfamily.org.

Mission:

sharing hope . . . changing lives

Vision:

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

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New cottage parents share stories of ministry paths

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

People who become cottage parents come from different places and have diverse backgrounds. Each person is unique with special gifts and talents. But all come with a sense of calling and their purpose is shared as they care for children.

The Reeds, Kivetts, and Myers are new to cottage parenting at Broyhill Home in Clyde. The Myers are recent additions beginning last June. The other couples have served just more than a year. The paths each couple took reveal God's leadership.



Rachel, Alex, and 5-month-old Tripp Reed

Rachel and Alex Reed

Having a house full of children is nothing new for Rachel and Alex Reed. The young couple grew up in large families. Rachel is one of seven children and Alex is one of nine. Serving as cottage parents is familiar.

"When Alex and I married in 2021, I wanted to be a homemaker, raising and nurturing children," Rachel says.

The couple met through their passion for missions. Alex had traveled and served in exotic places, reaching people for Jesus. Rachel was a preacher's kid with a heart for ministry. While working as a nanny and in construction, Rachel and Alex felt restless in their jobs and dreamed about working together.

A search online led them to BCH. Serving as cottage parents was the open door they were seeking. They could even begin a family.

"We are on mission for these kids," Alex says about the boys in their cottage. "It is different from traveling the world but these guys are now our focus. We are trusting God every day to lead us. We are gospel focused."

The Reeds find themselves trusting God more in every way. "We are learning that in the moment, being here for these boys, God is all we need," Rachel says.



Rachel and Steve Myers

Rachel and Steve Myers

Cottage parents Rachel and Steve Myers have family ties in Waynesville. The couple first planned to move to North Carolina from their home in Ohio seven years ago.

"We tried to come once before," Rachel says. "Our hearts were looking outwards, but God needed us to stay. We waited until God gave us the desires of our hearts."

Feeling a stirring in one's heart and then having to wait can be difficult. Difficult experiences are always times of preparation.

"When God moved it was more than we imagined," Steve adds. "We needed to wait. God had plans to place us in a cottage. It was about a ministry calling. We never saw it coming, but we are at Broyhill Home one hundred percent for the ministry."

The couple have a blended family. Their oldest child is 27. The youngest is five and in kindergarten. Married life over the last nine years has been busy. They have felt like they were always on the go. Caring now for a cottage full of girls ages 4-11 demands they use all their life's experiences.

"Steve and I are a team," Rachel says. "The lessons we learned about working together are used every day. We rely on each totally."

Stacie and Tim Kivett

The path began as a matter of prayer. To step away from careers was a major move for Stacie and Tim Kivett. In their early 50s, their thoughts had been on retiring to the beach not dedicating themselves to caring for up to eight girls as

cottage parents.

"We prayed," Stacie recounts. "Tim had a confirmation in his heart, but we both had to be together. I kept praying."

When the peace came to Stacie, the couple was ready. "We knew BCH was where God was leading," Tim says. "It was time to step out in faith."

The Kivetts quickly learned that a cottage parent's life can be hectic. There are things happening all the time. Keeping the children busy is important. Keeping God first is essential.

"You cannot be what you need to be for the children without Jesus being in the middle of everything," Stacie says. "It is not uncommon for Tim and I to stop and pray together."

The couple agrees that being a cottage parent is a calling not a career. "You need to know this is where God wants you," Tim adds, "for yourself and for the children in your care."

Becoming cottage parents

BCH is actively seeking Christian, servant-minded, married couples who want a great mission career opportunity to serve as salaried Cottage Parents. Each candidate must be a minimum of 25 years of age, have a high



Stacie and Tim Kivett

school diploma or equivalent, and be a licensed driver. BCH provides cottage homes where professionally-trained parents care for children in a Christian, family environment. A nonprofit organization, BCH is nationally-accredited and uses CARE, a trauma-informed model to help boys and girls find healing. Cottage parents work as a team and oversee the daily activities and needs of the children in care. They also work in tandem with another set of cottage parents, each set working two weeks on and two weeks off.

Interested couples can learn more and apply online at bchfamily.org/careers. Both husband and wife must fill out a job application. For questions, contact Samantha Allred, BCH's HR manager for recruiting and staff development, at 336-307-1181 or email her at sallred@bchfamily.org.

Generosity from Passover to Betrayal to Resurrection

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

Passover to betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and finally resurrection—these events tell the core story of our faith. As the dramatic events unfolded, there was grief, fear, horror, unbelief, forgiveness, triumph, victory, hope, and, yes, generosity.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke report that as Jesus went to Calvary, no doubt weakened by the cruelty he had already experienced, a bystander was compelled to help Jesus. Simon of Cyrene was in town—no doubt for the Jewish Passover. Simon was chosen by the soldiers to carry Jesus' cross to Calvary. How is this an example of generosity? Sometimes we are called out to give of ourselves out of duty, responsibility—to do the right thing. A bystander, Simon suddenly was obligated to help Jesus. Because he had been asked by a Roman soldier, it became his duty. Simon was compelled to give assistance to Jesus. Had he not been a religious person, a devout Jew, doubtless he would not even have been in Jerusalem during Passover. Because he was meeting his obligation as a devout Jew, he was in a place to become a part of the crucifixion story. He was compelled to help Jesus—to give.

A pastor friend of mine told me that at the beginning of his ministry, visiting shut-ins and making home visits was not something in his comfort zone. He did it because it was expected of him—it was part of the ministry of the church. The people appreciated his visits. He prayed with them, talked with them, and did his best to be a representative of the church. This same pastor reported that as the years passed, as he continued to visit and be faithful, he discovered that these visits became extremely meaningful times for him. They became times when he was blessed far more than anything he could have imagined. Doing things because it is our duty or obligation sometimes affords us the opportunity to grow in our understanding of service and generosity.

Another character in the drama of salvation is a man named Joseph of Arimathea. Luke and Mark write that Joseph was a member of the very council that had put Jesus on trial but that he had not agreed with the decision. Matthew's gospel states he was a "disciple of Jesus"—although it is not clear whether this means he was openly a disciple or only believed privately. It is clear that he was a leader among the Jews and was acquainted with Jesus.

Passover was approaching. It was considered unclean to handle a dead body after the beginning of the Sabbath. There was only a narrow window of time. Jesus was dead and something had to be done fast. Joseph of Arimathea saw a

need and acted to meet that need. Joseph stands in a line of generous folk who give because they see a need, like the thousands of people who contribute to victims of disasters all around us. They do not contribute because they know anyone personally effected or have ever visited the sites of devastation caused by wars, hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, floods, earthquakes, etc. They see great need and give in response to that need. Joseph of Arimathea saw the need and gave in response. Thank God for the many people who give in response to human need.

The third kind of generosity illustrated by the Easter story is the example of the women. Mary Magdalene, Mary, and others went to the tomb to properly prepare the body for burial. They were doing for Jesus the last kindness that could be done. These followers of Jesus acted not out of duty or obligation, and not just out of an awareness of an unmet need, these women were generous out of a deep and abiding love for Jesus whom they followed and no doubt helped care for during his life and ministry. Their generosity grew out of a deep and abiding love. They went to the tomb expecting to do a generous deed for their friend whom they loved. Love certainly leads to generous giving in all times and places. But when they arrived at the tomb, they encountered the greatest example of generosity they could ever imagine.

The greatest generosity in the Easter story is the generosity of God who sent His only Son to demonstrate how far love would go to atone for the sins of all people everywhere for all times. This was the generosity that Paul describes "did not count equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." This Easter, we are reminded of the gift we have all received—that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Hallelujah!

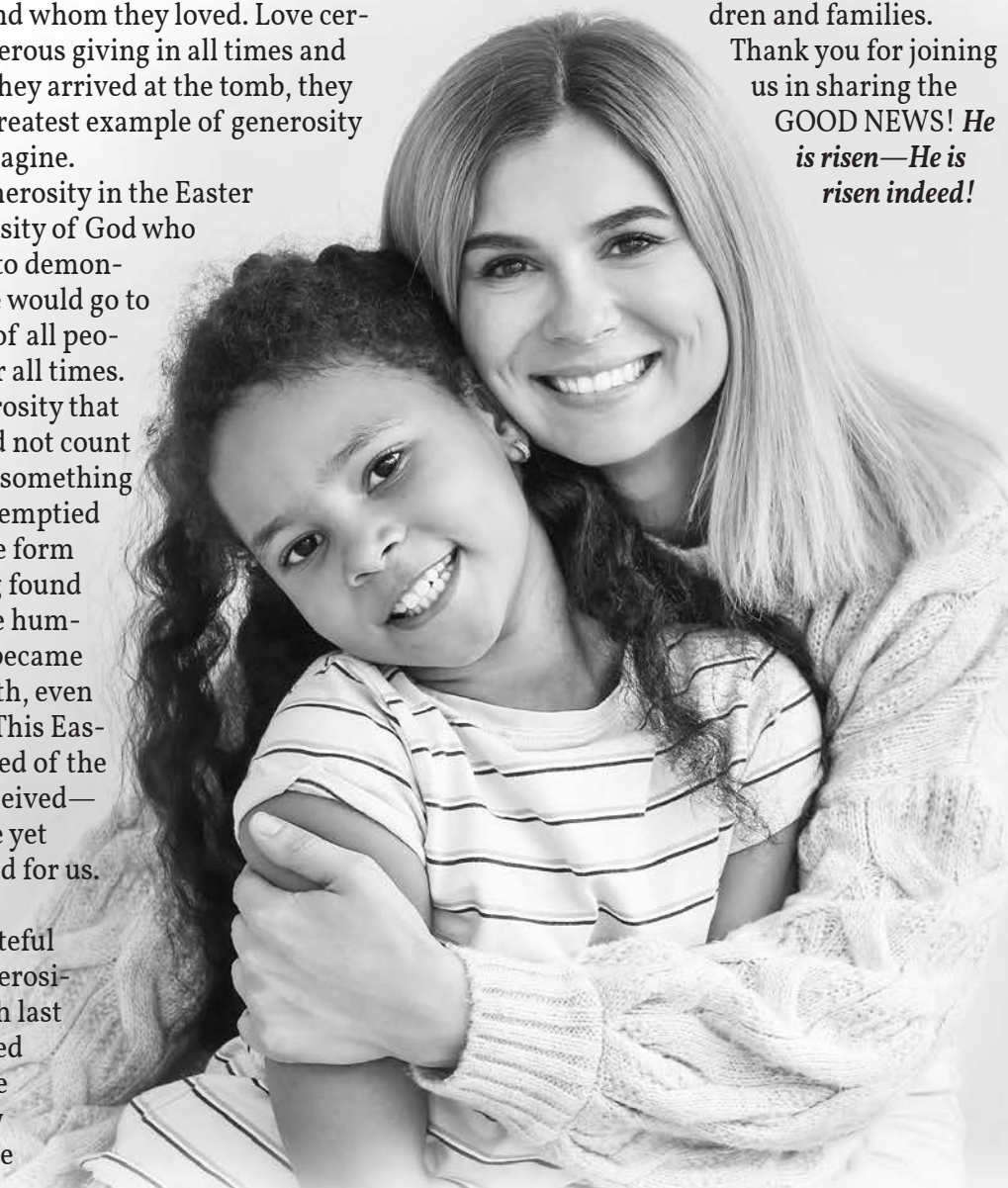
I am so very grateful for YOU! Your generosity had a huge reach last year. Three hundred and eighteen made decisions to follow Christ. Eighty-nine

babies and children were adopted into their forever home. Two hundred and fifty-five expectant mothers received counseling. And 122,643 days of care were provided for children in need of a place of refuge—a place to experience hope and healing. Thousands of meals were provided for children and families desperately hungry for food. One of our children described their hunger with these words: "I was hungry for food. I was hungry for a home. I was hungry for hope. I was hungry for someone to care about me. I was angry. I was empty!"

Behind every number is a child in crisis. Behind every number is an individual or a family in desperate need. ***In the past two weeks, we received calls requesting care for three precious babies born addicted to drugs—beautiful, precious newborn babies.*** They were placed in loving foster homes. You do not know these children, you do not know these families, and yet you give. "Whatsoever you did for the least of these you did unto me." Generosity, selfless acts responding to real needs, is our faith in action.

Thank you for being a generous part of changing the lives of children and families.

Thank you for joining us in sharing the GOOD NEWS! ***He is risen—He is risen indeed!***



Matt had never heard of resurrection hope.

Matt sits at the table with his cottage parents and the other boys in his Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) cottage as they prepare to dye Easter eggs. *The seven year old had never celebrated Easter before and was not familiar with its traditions including dying eggs. Matt had never heard about the hope and love of Jesus.*

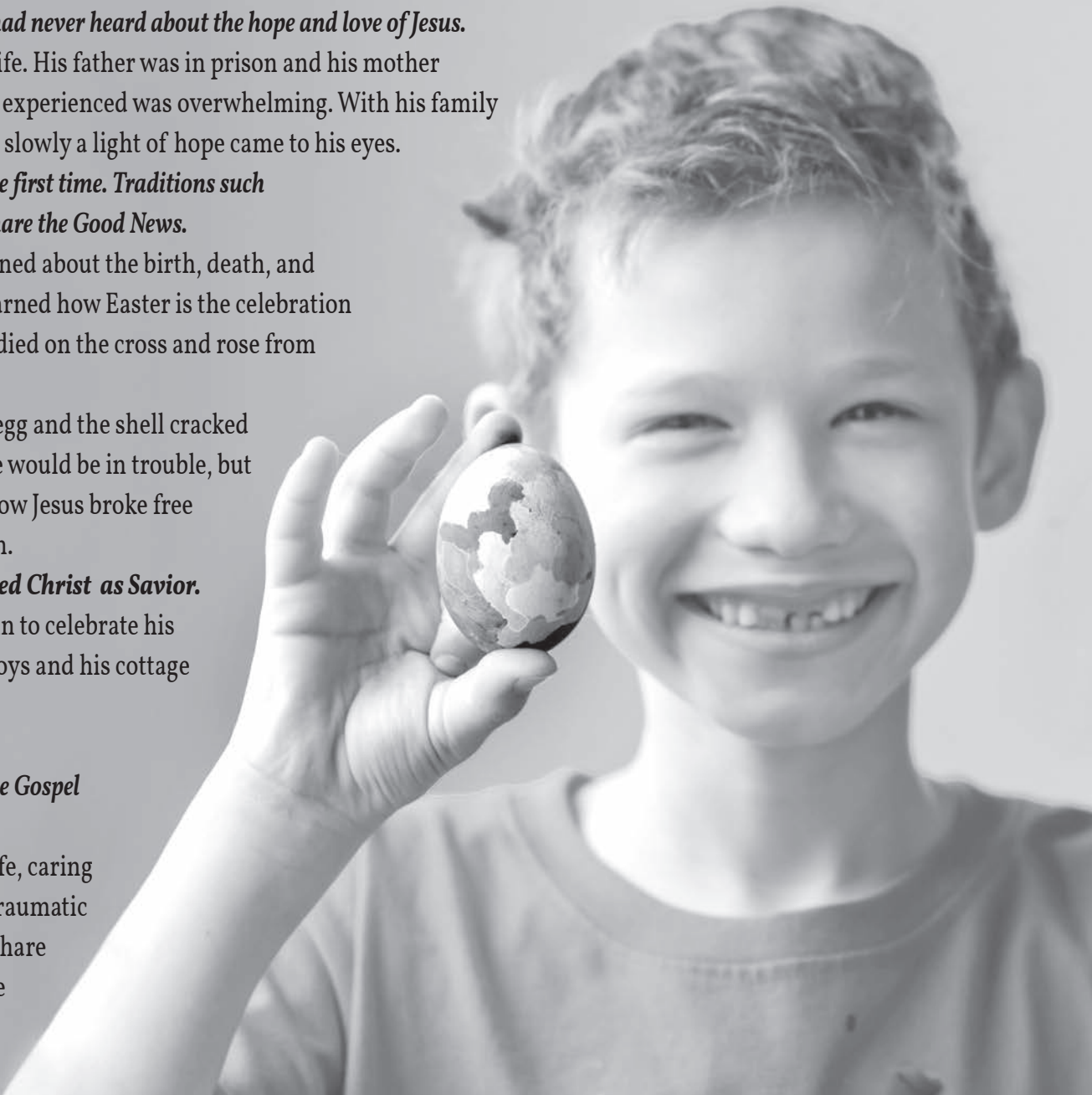
Hope was largely absent in his life. His father was in prison and his mother overdosed on drugs. The trauma he had experienced was overwhelming. With his family shattered, Matt came to live at BCH and slowly a light of hope came to his eyes. *Matt was learning about God's love for the first time. Traditions such as dying Easter eggs opened the door to share the Good News.*

As the boys dyed eggs, they learned about the birth, death, and resurrection of God's only Son. They learned how Easter is the celebration of eternal hope because Jesus willingly died on the cross and rose from the grave for the forgiveness of sins.

Matt accidentally dropped one egg and the shell cracked when it hit the floor. Matt was scared he would be in trouble, but the broken egg became a lesson about how Jesus broke free from death and the tomb and lives again.

A few months later, Matt received Christ as Savior. He asked if the boys could dye eggs again to celebrate his decision. Looking around at the other boys and his cottage parents, Matt intentionally dropped an egg, declaring: "Jesus lives again."

When you make an Easter gift, the Gospel is shared with children like Matt, offering eternal hope! Your donation provides safe, caring homes for children who have suffered traumatic pasts. Your help ensures we are able to share hope and introduce boys and girls to the love of Christ.



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Adults with special needs vital to Baptist community

By Jim Edminson, Editor

In 1987, March was declared National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. The emphasis includes raising awareness of those with physical and/or intellectual as well as learning and behavioral impairments. BCH's goal is to raise people's awareness of adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities within communities and celebrate their inclusion in spiritual and social life. The month-long awareness campaign seeks to highlight how people *with and without* disabilities can come together to create stronger, more vital communities in churches and neighborhoods.

In 2000, Baptist Children's Homes (BCH) created a ministry for adults with special needs. With the encouragement and support of North Carolina Baptists, BCH's new Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Ministry (IDDM) took shape. Today, BCH provides nine cottages for adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities in six



Left to right, Margaret, Rebecca, and Victoria live at Lindsay Home in Zionsville. BCH provides nine IDDM group homes in six communities across North Carolina. In addition, BCH is developing an in-home program, inviting individuals and families to open their homes to an adult with special needs.

North Carolina communities. The family-style homes provide a safe living environment for up to six adults with special needs. The homes operate in a Christian atmosphere which includes spiritual enrichment, preparation of nutrition-

al meals, transportation, enhancement of daily and independent living and social skills.

BCH is now developing a network of Alternative Family Living (AFL) Homes (see a related story on page 7). The AFL in-home program invites individuals and families to open their homes as a safe, stable living environment for an adult with intellectual/developmental disabilities. BCH is actively looking for AFL in-home providers. For more information, contact Stefanie Effler by calling 828-275-3394 or email seffler@bchfamily.org.

Learn how you can help at an IDDM cottage. There are maintenance and social activity opportunities. Interested individuals or churches can contact BCH's Director of Volunteer

Engagement Kristyn Butts by calling 336-943-3862 or emailing kbutts@bchfamily.org.

To learn how to help financially, contact Brenda Gray at 336-474-1230 or email her at bbgray@bchfamily.org.

Sweet dreams...those where he runs amongst the stars!

Becoming a "Sweet Dreams Bed Sponsor" is one of the most direct ways you can help change a life that has been bruised by hurt and neglect. Sponsors' names appear on plaques that hang in each cottage—reminding children they have "angel friends" who watch over them. **Use my gift to help a child!**

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- Use my bed sponsorship gift of \$_____ to help a child.



Return this completed form with your check. Or use your credit card by visiting bchfamily.org/bedsponsor. Call 336.474.1277 to setup a monthly sponsor gift.

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Felicia welcomes adult with special needs into her home

By Jim Edminson, Editor

Felicia Hughes has a very big heart. It is evident walking into her home, talking about her family and church, and learning about her career working with students with special needs in the Forsyth County school system. Now, she is opening her heart and home to an adult with special needs through Baptist Children's Homes' (BCH) Alternative Family Living program (AFL).

"I felt God calling me to work with people with special needs," Hughes says. "At first I was unsure, but I prayed about it. I believe the Lord was speaking to me and I couldn't deny it."

Tapped "Special families for special adults," BCH's AFL in-home program connects an individual or a family with a man or woman with special needs. These AFL providers welcome adults with special needs, or members, into their homes, offering a safe, stable living environment. Hughes is BCH's first AFL provider. The program became part of BCH's Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Ministry in October 2022.

An AFL home provides the individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities an opportunity to meld with a family while exploring a new family structure; new school, work, day and community services, and volunteer opportunities; and other community and family-based activities. In many ways, AFL is comparable to foster care except it is designed for providing a supportive home to an adult with special needs instead of a child.

"I love AFL because it allows adults with special needs to integrate into a family, living in the family's home, and interacting with them," BCH's AFL coordinator Stefanie Effler says. "Members become part of a bigger community."

Hughes works daily with students with special needs ages 16 to 22. Their needs are varied and some are extreme, but despite the challenges, she has learned their needs come first.

"Meeting needs is a process of adapting," Hughes asserts. "The key is learning that a person's developmental needs are not what makes them special. You learn that who they are as people is what makes them special—in so many



Felicia Hughes is BCH's first Alternative Family Living (AFL) in-home provider. The Winston Salem native is opening her home to an adult with special needs who will benefit from more one-on-one care. For Hughes, the desire to become an AFL provider grew from a love and need to care for others. The AFL program is part of BCH's Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Ministry.

wonderful ways."

At times, adults with special needs require a change. A group home setting can be the perfect place but when needs change and they could benefit from more one-on-one care, AFL can

provide a better setting—a setting where they can thrive and experience more freedom.

"Felicia's experience is unique, but it makes her a great fit to be an AFL provider," Effler says. "Add her positive and loving attitude toward adults with special needs, which we look for in every AFL provider, and we have a winning combination."

Felicia's heart for others grew from her childhood. "I need to love others. From the time I was a little girl, I felt a need to help and care for others."

As an AFL provider, Felicia welcomes the adult with special needs not only into her home but invites the person to become part of her life. Holiday events, summer cookouts, anywhere she is welcome, the member is welcome, too.

It is important to match the right adult with special needs with the right AFL home. Prospective members take part in selecting their AFL home. Provider and member have opportunities to get to know each other before placement. Compatibility is a key to success.

"God does things for a reason," Hughes says. "When your passion lines up with His calling, becoming an AFL home is the right thing."

BCH is actively looking for individuals and families to become AFL in-home providers. For more information, contact Stefanie Effler by calling 828-

275-3394 or email seffler@bchfamily.org. Effler is also available to speak to church and community groups about this special ministry opportunity.



HOME-BASE RECOGNIZED: Western Carolina University honored HOME-BASE with the Community Champion Award for the ministry's community impact and work with WCU students during a timeout at the men's basketball game on January 24 at the Ramsey Regional Activity Center on the Cullowhee campus. In recognition, HOME-BASE Director Jim Dean and Assistant Sydney Young were given a commemorative ball signed by the men's basketball team by WCU mascot "Paws."

Star's memory inspires life-changing gift in her honor

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor
(Continued from page 1.)

Star's parents were advised to put her away and forget they ever had her; instead, they never stepped away from caring for their oldest daughter. The demands became part of their daily life. Appointments with the best psychiatrists, private school accommodations, and the stark behavior that included outbursts and disappearances were never cause for their love to wane.

"Star was diagnosed at 13 with mental illness—schizophrenia," Marsha says. "She heard voices all the time. There was never any rest. We knew Star would need lifelong care."

Amidst the fragility of daily life, Star found solace with paper, pencil, and paint. She excelled, drawing the awe of her high school art teacher who often exhibited the student's artwork. Her mother helped Star with her academics, assuring she graduated high school.

Marsha, the youngest of three siblings, found herself spending more and more time with Star. As small children, the two sisters shared a bedroom. When her mother could not be there for Star, it was Marsha who stepped in, becoming the one in the family who began to take care of Star.

"It amazed me," Marsha says. "I believe God gave me an ability to uniquely care for Star and anticipate her needs."

In 1985, Marsha became Star's guardian. She was only 30 years old. To protect her from herself, Star was declared mentally incompetent. Now, Marsha and her husband Tom Huskey focused their attention on caring for Star's daily needs.

"I advocated for her and made sure she received the best possible care," Marsha recalls.

"The Lord helped me as I found the best doctors and psychiatrists—always leading me to the right people to help her."

In the 1990s, Star was one of the first to be admitted to a group home for the mentally ill in North Carolina. An effective communicator, she was able to assist the others with whom she lived.



Marsha and Tom Huskey of Whittier, NC gave the lead gift for Starlite Home to honor the life of Marsha's sister, Star. River Hill Refuge near Shelby in Cleveland County consists of three foster homes, The Westmoreland Family Home, Tucker Home, and Starlite Home, with Christian foster parents caring for up to five children at each residence.

"There was one resident in the group home who was verbal but could not be understood," Marsha remembers. "Star understood him and would translate what he said. She was concerned for him and wanted to help him."

Marsha and Tom moved to the mountains in 1997. The couple moved Star to be close to them. She continued to live in a group home but had living quarters in Marsha's home. When Alternative Living Family (AFL) homes came into existence, she moved to an AFL home. She was living in an AFL home when she passed in 2015 at the age of 68.

"Her AFL provider, Florence, was born and trained to work with the mentally ill in France," Marsha says. "Florence got my sister to do things I could never have been able to do. This was important after Star was diagnosed

with advanced endometrial carcinoma."

Star's parents had taken steps to provide for Star. With Marsha's help, she was self-supported throughout her life. Just as her younger sister had cared for Star when she was alive, Marsha would now manage her assets after her passing.

"The money was not mine," Marsha asserts.

"I felt the Lord had plans. My parents would have wanted to do something in honor of Star's life."

For years, Marsha and Tom supported the ministry at Broyhill Home in Clyde. She contacted Linda Morgan. She told her about Star's passing and her desire to do something meaningful in her sister's memory. Linda thought about River Hill Refuge. The project needed a large lead gift to construct one of the three foster family homes.

"I knew helping children would be something Star and Mother and Father would have liked," Marsha says. "It matched Star's love for children and Mother's commitment to their wellbeing. Constructing Starlite Home

through Star's estate was a perfect match."

In early 2021, brothers Wes and Jay Westmoreland had donated a parcel of their late father's River Hill Angus Farm to Baptist Children's Homes and made a gift to construct three foster homes. Named River Hill Refuge, the Westmorelands' efforts provided the momentum needed for the project.

Starlite Home is one of the three that will have a set of Christian foster parents to care for as many as five children at a time. Construction of Starlite Home, The Westmoreland Family Home, and Tucker Home was completed this year.

"Despite the darkness these children have lived through, I want them to experience hope—a hope for a better future," Marsha says. "May every child who walks through the door of Starlite Home truly blossom."

Artistically piecing quilts for each child entering care at the River Hill Refuge homes, Marsha remembers the lessons her mother taught her: Care for your neighbors and give to those who are less fortunate and in need. Their mother's generous spirit will impact the lives of children for years to come. Star would have loved it.



Victoria praises God for renewed health and prayer

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor
(Continued from page 1.)

The ventilator pumped rhythmically, helping Victoria breathe. Her mother Alyssa quietly sat nearby.

The pastor of Brushy Fork Baptist Church where Victoria and the ladies of Lindsay Home attend, rushed to the hospital.

"I called Pastor Johnmark (Brown) and he came that night," Laura says. "The church was precious in supporting Victoria and her family. They never stopped praying."

Victoria entered the hospital on Saturday, December 16. The next nine days were trying. Alyssa spent the early morning hours of Christmas unaware she and David would soon receive the best gift ever.

"It was Christmas Day when things changed for the better," Laura recalls. "The improvement was pronounced. Plans were made to take Victoria off the ventilator. She had turned a corner."

Victoria is a resident at Lindsay Home. It is adjacent to Three Forks Home and is located in the Zionville community north of Boone. Each home provides residential services for six adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Thirty-five-year-old Victoria was born with Down syndrome.

In 2000, Baptist Children's Homes (BCH)

created a ministry for adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities that now encompasses nine residential homes in six North Carolina communities and an Alternative Family Living (AFL) in-home

program that invites individuals and families to open their homes to an adult with intellectual/developmental disabilities. The Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities Ministry (IDDM)



Victoria's parents Alyssa and David Tanigawa, pictured with her below, are thankful for Lindsay Home and the loving care and support the family were given by the home's staff and residents. Victoria is back with her friends and has picked up where she left life before her illness.

programs offer residents the opportunity to pursue individual goals while living in a safe, supportive Christian environment. IDDM promotes maximum independence, individual growth, and inclusion in the community.

Alyssa remembers the despair she and David felt before Victoria came to live at Lindsay Home. Victoria was living in a group home where she was becoming more and more unhappy and the couple were concerned for her well-being. They needed a change. Desperate to find a new group home for their daughter, Alyssa searched online and found BCH's intellectual and developmental disabilities group homes. David encouraged Alyssa to call and, for the first time in months, they felt hopeful.

"I was trusting and believing that if we seek God, all things will be added," David says.

"Alyssa and I knew when we first walked into Lindsay Home it was where Victoria needed to be. We knew it then and we know it now."

On Tuesday, January 2, two and a half weeks

after arriving at the emergency room, Victoria was discharged from the hospital. Nearly a month later, after resting and recuperating in Morganton, she was reunited with her Lindsay friends.

Victoria understands the seriousness of her illness and had great concern for her friends: "What would my friends have done without me? I didn't want to upset them. I'm glad to be home."

Alyssa and David are thankful for the care and concern of the staff at Lindsay Home, especially Laura Combs.

"Laura did so much out of a great love for

Victoria—the way she and the staff love each of the ladies," Alyssa says. "David and I are thankful for our BCH group home family. We hit the jackpot when it comes to group homes. We love them."

Victoria and her mom made a stop at the hospital on Victoria's trip back to Lindsay Home. It was important

they thanked the doctors and nurses who gave of themselves to help restore Victoria's health.

The Wednesday evening after returning home, Victoria stands up at Brushy Fork Baptist Church, declaring: "Thank you for praying for me. Praise God that I am better!"

Victoria is back to her old self. She takes pride in her home and never misses an opportunity to sweep or dust—and "even likes cleaning baseboards." She doesn't dwell on her illness. That was then. She is living in the now.



Zac Clark puts hard work and prayer into The Haven

By **Jason Sullivan**, Assistant Director, Cameron Boys Camp and Education Director, Wilderness Camping

In Moore County, beneath a stand of pines, Zac Clark busily constructs a new haven, a place of safety and rest, on Cameron Boys Camp property. Songbirds provide the tunes as he puts the finishing touches on a table he has just built. Their chorus adds to the forest symphony of rustling leaves, chattering squirrels, and buzz of cicadas.

The Haven is the newest addition to the Camp's wilderness area. It is an outdoor space accommodating thirty-five overnight guests—plus more in a tent camping area. It's modeled after campsites the boys create and live in at Cameron Boys Camp. The Haven offers outdoor showers and there is a shower house only a short walk from the campsite that includes an ice machine and a washer and dryer. There are also an outdoor classroom, kitchen/dining area, and a fire ring to gather around at night and contemplate the day's activities under a blanket of stars.

This is a special place created for the community. Boy Scout Troops and Trail Life groups can use the site for camp outs. Homeschool co-ops can use the outdoor classroom for day trips. Church groups, father-son activities, and military ministries like the Centurion Project will find refuge in the simplicity of this forest haven. Any group desiring to experience God's wonder through nature are welcome.

Zac pours his heart into the campsite. Every board and plank is inspected using his eye for detail. Creating the campsite has proved to be a learning process. He takes construction classes at the community college and puts his knowledge to work in the campsite. He has built his own scaffolding to construct the roof in the kitchen/dining area. He has built tables and bunk beds, laid the stone floor, and designed the kitchen and shower areas.

A fair amount of Zac's time here is spent alone. He has become acutely aware of nature's friends that keep him company. An eastern phoebe builds her nest among Zac's sturdy posts. Cooper's hawks and pileated woodpeckers scout the near tops



The Haven is a community outdoor space that is able to accommodate 35 guests, with an additional tent camping area. The site includes an outdoor classroom, kitchen/dining area, and fire ring. Amenities include running water, a shower house, washer and dryer, and ice machine. Above, Zac Clark works in the kitchen area. Below left, he is putting the finishing touches to a sign he carved. Below is one of the newly constructed tents for seven guests.

of the large pines. Cedar-waxwings snack on bright red berries from holly trees. Ruby-crowned kinglets keep watch, darting from branch to branch and seemingly chirping their approval.

One doesn't need to look far to experience the beauty of God's creation at The Haven. In addition to watching numerous species of birds (which is one of Zac's favorite things to do), there are networks of trails to hike and ponds to fish. Other discoveries to enjoy are the muscadine vines wrapped around branches offering their bounty and persimmon trees that drop delicious fruit in late fall for those lucky enough to taste them before the fox and deer eat their fill. Their tracks are easy to spot in the sand and jumbled pine straw among the mining bee entrances and reindeer moss.

Time slows at The Haven. One can breathe deeply, relax, and listen for God—just as Elijah did when he met God through His gentle whisper after the chaos (I Kings 19:11-13).

Zac has had help in building the campsite. Christ Community Church from nearby West End helped build platforms and roofed structures. Adult and Teen Challenge from Carthage lent their manpower on several occasions. The



group spent many days setting trails and building platform tents with Zac. Troy Lumber donated the boards to construct the shelters. Smith Saw Mill graciously provided cedar logs for the trails and planks for the shelter walls. The Haven's construction is a community effort.

Zac is hand carving a plaque to hang in the dining area. Crafted using pine harvested from the property, it captures the heart of The Haven, providing clarity for all who visit: "On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God" (Psalm 62:7).

And as he works, he prays that all who come to The Haven will pause and connect with God, nature, and those who come along side them.



Eight new trustees comprise this year's board

By **Blake Ragsdale**, Managing Editor

The beginning of the New Year has not only seen a fresh start for Baptist Children's Homes (BCH), but it has also welcomed eight NC Baptist friends as first-time members of the Board of Trustees.

"We are grateful for each of these dedicated individuals who have accepted the call to serve on the Board of Trustees," said Brenda Gray, BCH Executive Vice President of Development and Communications. "The roles our trustees play are more vital than ever as BCH enters this new season in ministry."

In cooperation with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, potential BCH trustees are identified and elected to a four-year term. The group of eight individuals, who are all members of NC Baptist churches, began their service in January and will complete their terms at the end of the 2027 calendar year.

"Our trustees are the stewards of every aspect of ministry BCH has the privilege of carrying out," said Keith Henry, BCH Chief Operating Officer. "Alongside those who are already serving, their expertise and hearts for the Lord will be an asset as we look toward the year ahead."

This year also includes identifying BCH's new executive leader.

"Last year was a difficult year for BCH, and these trustees are stepping into a new era," said Ronnie Holman, Chair of the BCH Board for 2024. "Our service as trustees is not about one individual or us as a group— this is God's ministry. We were made to glorify and honor Him and this is one of the ways we are able to do just that."

TRUSTEES 2024 - 2027

Ray Brickhouse lives in Fletcher, NC. He serves as the Senior Pastor of Oak Forest Baptist Church and is married to Ivy.

Denise Hunter is a member of Mintz

Baptist Church in Roseboro where she also resides. She is married to Robert.

Marty Johnston serves as Senior Pastor of Supply Baptist Church in Supply. He lives in Bolivia with his wife Jennifer.

Richard Matthews lives in Nashville with his wife Vandy. Richard attends Momeyer Baptist Church in Nashville.

Eric Segars serves at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Hayesville as the Associate Pastor of Youth and Children. He lives in Hayesville and is married to DeAnna.

Matt Sigmon lives in Youngsville with his wife Shauna. He is the Execuvie Pastor at Imago Dei Church in Raleigh.

Kyler Smith is the Senior Associate Pastor at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte. He also lives in Charlotte with his wife Lauren.

Nick Smith serves as Pastor at Lake Junaluska First Baptist Church in Lake Junaluska. He is married to Laurel, and they reside in Waynesville.



Brickhouse



Hunter



Johnston



Matthews



Segars



Sigmon



K. Smith



N. Smith

BOARD OF Trustees

FOR THE YEAR 2024

2024 Baptist Children's Homes Board of Trustees

- Carl Anderson - Leasburg
- Pam Annas - Hudson
- Ray Brickhouse - Fletcher
- Vickie Burge - Fayetteville
- Lenuel Chamberlain - Yadkinville
- Denise Critcher - Deep Gap
- Dana Dixon - Garner
- Jim Dyer - Wake Forest
- Kent Fann - Salemburg
- Matt Glover - Seaboard
- Ken Haigler - Wilmington
- Marcia Heckman - Concord

- Matt Hollifield - Davidson
- Milton Hollifield, Jr. - Asheville
- Ronnie Holman - Granite Falls
- Roy Howell - Apex
- Denise Hunter - Roseboro
- Marty Johnston - Bolivia
- Gail King - Reidsville
- Justin Lee - Clinton
- Mike Leslie - Waynesville
- Joann Lutz - Boiling Springs
- Rhonda Martin - Raleigh
- Richard Matthews - Nashville

- David Powell - Sylva
- Sandy Saunders - Fayetteville
- Eric Segars - Hayesville
- Steve Shreve - Pleasant Garden
- Matt Sigmon - Youngsville
- David Smith - Granite Falls
- Kyler Smith - Charlotte
- Nick Smith - Waynesville
- Ryan Thomsen - Raleigh
- Rit Varriale - Shelby



Ronnie Holman
Board Chair 2024

Churches' efforts point children towards hope

When boys and girls come into Baptist Children's Homes' (BCH) care, it is obvious they have gone without—*without food, without love, without hope*. The majority of them are comprised of the more than 10,000 children



Members of First Baptist Church in Greensboro and their Food Roundup collection from 2023.

that are in the care of the NC foster care system. They have been removed from their homes because of abuse and neglect which includes

lack of regular meals.

"One of the most essential ways our cottage parents and caregivers establish trust with a child when they first come into our care is by feeding them," said Keith Henry, BCH Chief Operating Officer. "When children see their needs are going to be met, they begin to realize that they are valued and loved in ways they have not experienced with their own families."

The Food Roundup each April plays an essential role because it is an opportunity for NC Baptists to collect food, supplies and gift cards. Not only does it ensure that caregivers can provide three meals a day plus snacks to boys and girls—and everyone BCH serves—but it opens up the conversations for the gospel to be shared.

"It is an essential way for us to point children to Christ," Henry explains. "Our caregivers are



FOOD ROUNDUP

BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES

able to share that churches do this out of the abundance of love Jesus has for them."

Resources for Food Roundup are available at bchfoodroundup.org including a step-by-step collection guide, needs list, slides, social media posts and more.

For support, contact BCH's Alan Williams at 336-474-1277 or awilliams@bchfamily.org.



Scan the code or go online to bchfoodroundup.org to access resources to help your church.

Updated list focuses on the greatest needs

MOST NEEDED (in bold):

- **Canned Fruits**
- **Fruit Juice (Apple, Orange, Grape, Cranberry)**
- **Laundry Detergent**
- Paper Products (paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, Kleenex)
- Bottled Water
- Canned Vegetables (green beans, corn, etc.)
- Dry Cereal
- Bake Beans
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Pasta (Spaghetti, Lasagna, Macaroni)
- Canned Tomatoes (diced, sauce, paste)
- Pancake Mix and Syrup
- Soups (All types & condensed)
- Sugar (Granulated & Brown)
- Flour
- Splenda
- Popcorn, Kettle Corn
- Apple Sauce
- Fruit Pie Filling (Cherry and Peach)
- Beverage Mixes (Tea, Tang, Kool-Aid, Lemonade, Cider Mix - All Sugar Free)
- Vegetable Oil, Shortening, Olive Oil, Pam Cooking Spray, Bakers Choice
- Canned Sweet Potatoes, Canned Yams
- Canned Meats (pink salmon, tuna, roast beef, chicken - packed in water)
- Stuffing Mix
- Gravy Mixes
- Hamburger, Chicken, and Tuna Helper (all types)
- Pickles (Sweet & Dill)
- Refried Beans
- Hot Chocolate Mix
- Snack Foods with & without sugar (Fruit Rollups, Fruit Cups, Beef Jerky, Slim Jims, Pepperoni Sticks, Cheese Nips, Pretzels, etc.)
- Healthy Snacks (Dried Fruit, Nuts, Raisins, Cranraisins, Trail Mix)
- Individual Cookie Packs
- Jello
- PopTarts
- Rice
- Instant Potatoes (scalloped, au gratin, mashed, julienne)
- Muffin Mixes
- Bisquick Mix
- Kidney Beans
- Pickle Relish
- Cranberry Sauce
- Mac & Cheese
- Corn Meal
- Jiffy Mixes, Corn Muffin Mix, Hush Puppy Mix
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly, Jams, Preserves (Strawberry is the favorite)
- Pizza & Pizza Dough Mix
- Saltine Crackers, Ritz Crackers, Graham Crackers
- Sauces (A-1, Steak, BBQ, Texas Pete, Cheese, Worcestershire, Soy, Teriyaki, Sweet & Sour)
- Spices and Seasonings (including Salt & Pepper)
- Dishwashing detergents
- Laundry pre-treating products (i.e. Shout, Spray and Wash)
- Brooms, Mops, Scrub Brus-

- hes, Dust Pans
- Foil and Plastic Wrap
- SOS Pads
- Fabric Softener
- Dryer Sheets
- Sanitary Pads & Tampons
- Hand Lotion
- Shampoo
- Body Wash
- Soap
- Household cleaning products (i.e. bleach, Comet, Lysol spray and wipes, Clorox spray, Windex, Pinesol, Pledge, Tilex, etc.)

OTHER NEEDED ITEMS:

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

- Wasp/Hornet Spray
- Sunblock 30+
- Batteries (AA, AAA and D)
- Disposable Gloves (Latex & Non-Latex)

IMPORTANT NOTES:

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

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

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

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

Pack like items together. Please do not pack chemicals with food.

"Orphan siblings" gather for January reunion – A short stay at Mills Home gives big life returns

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

On January 13, several alumni met at Tex's Fish Camp in Connelly Springs, NC for a Mills Home (MH) "orphan siblings" reunion and delicious meal. Attending were **Martha Berndt Fisher** and friend **Charlie, Pat and Linda Jolly, Danny and Jane Brown, Lynn and Johnny Connolly, Bucky Clark, Evelyn and Gary Burns** and daughter **Sheree, Flora Hicks and Grady Patton, Lisa Carter and Ron Lancaster**, and Alumni President **Ruth Berndt Hodges**. Of course, with this crowd, it is always a joyous gathering.

We were happy to get an update from **Ann White Caine** shortly after Homecoming. We learned that she came to MH from Burlington in 1959 with siblings **Lynn and Juanita**. She left in 1964. She well remembers her "duty" of working in the library and she says she did her best to stay out of trouble. She was especially fond of **Pastor Williams** because he always made all the children feel special. She enjoyed the last Homecoming she attended because she was there with her sister Juanita. After high school, she married **Elbert M. Caine** and reared two children. Now retired from R. E. Broker of Burlington, she and Elbert find time to spend with the two grandchildren. A memory that stands out in her mind is the time at age 12 she broke the "house rule" of no shaving of the legs without permission from the houseparents. Somehow, she accidentally cut a long gash in the front of one leg so she "got caught" breaking the rule. Yep! She was grounded for two weeks.

Pat Baucam lived at MH only about two and a half years from age 8 to age 10, yet he is as emotionally attached to the home as some of the students who lived there 14 or 15 years. He lives part time in Waco, TX and part time in Alaska, but he comes to as many

Homecomings as he can. While at MH, he appreciated having the privilege of living in the Durham Cottage with his three brothers. Together they could enjoy the many activities on campus, his favorites being swimming and baseball. Pat was old enough to be assigned the campus duty of helping **Miss Sally** keep the papers and other things organized on her desk. She was kind enough to give him her safe driving award which he still owns today. Another "duty" for him was sweeping the porch of the Durham and he recalls that on the day he received the news of his father's death, he was sweeping it. He had heard the phone ring and he knew that **Mr. and Mrs. Rankin** were supposed to receive a report on his severely burned father. Hearing the phone ring, he guessed at the news and he prayed he would not become a bitter person over having lost both his parents. And he feels his prayer was answered because he spends a lot of time and effort bringing joy to other kids besides his own two grandkids. He has four "selected" children he tries to keep happy, especially at Christmas time. Some years, he travels back to Alaska just to play Santa Claus for them.

Pat explained that he and his brothers were placed at Mills Home with the promise that they would be able to live together while their mother's sister was finishing college. When she finished college, she came back to get them and she reared them out in Texas. Although he could be retired, Pat stays busy dealing with rental property and selling medical equipment. He maintains two homes in the two states mentioned and spends his leisure time fishing, scuba diving, or flying airplanes.

Dan Lambeth has recently suffered from a knee replacement and a severe cut on his foot. Please

keep him in your prayers. He still finds time to do kind things for other people.

I was very sorry to hear from **Belinda Church Bailey** that her husband, **Bill (William Nathan) Bailey**, passed away on December 23. Bill was born to the late **C. Franklin and Bonnie West Bailey** on Nov. 30, 1955. This was very special to the MH kids because Frank and Bonnie were held in such high esteem by the MH children who anxiously awaited the birth of their baby son. It was especially thrilling that the baby arrived in time to play the part of baby Jesus in the 1955 Christmas Nativity Pageant. Frank was beloved as a worker but especially respected as the campus scout master and Bonnie served the kids as a nurse's assistant. Bill spent a large part of his life on the MH campus. After he finished high school, he went on to earn "his Doctorate in Theology from Life Christian University and a Doctorate in Natural Health from Trinity School of Natural Health. He retired from High Point Regional Hospital where he worked as a Computer Systems Architect. He attended Expedition Church in Pleasant Garden where he was very involved with administrative and technology assistance. Likewise, Bill was active in pulpit ministry and assisting ministers with technology needs. He supported and hosted *Speak Faith Television* and *Word of Faith Radio*. Bill was also a big contributor to Frank's creation of the four-part pictorial history of Mills Home. Bill is survived by his wife, son **Benjamin Franklin Bailey**, and his wife Belinda's special family. A Celebration of Life service for Bill was held on Dec. 20 at Expedition Church in Pleasant Garden."

Pat Heath Beck was kind to send the sad news of the death of **Russell Hoffman**, brother of the late sisters **Barbara Hoffman**

Brewer and Dorothy Hoffman Vernon. Russell entered MH in 1951 though his sisters had been there since 1946. After graduation, he obtained work in the Durham area and spent most of his adult life there. Russell was a very shy fellow but he developed a good singing voice while at MH and he used that talent in his adult church life. He is survived by his wife **Margaret Hoffman**, son **Aaron Time Hoffman** and daughter **Christine Gayle Mundy**. His funeral service and burial were held on Dec. 6 at the Guess Road Baptist Church, Durham. Condolences may be sent to Margaret and family at PO Box 11222, Durham, NC, 27703.

Our hearts go out to several alumni this month. We learned that **Sandee Guyer Meyers** (1960s) lost her husband **Tommy. Pete Knight and Geneva Martinez Knight Bourgeois** lost their daughter **Peggy** in January. Send condolences to Pete and Judy at 2712 Sloan's Mill Rd., Hamptonville, NC, 27020 and to Geneva and Bernard Bourgeois at this address: 2358 Cypress St., Litcher, LA, 70071. We were also sorry to hear that **Ruthann Highfill Reaves** lost her husband, **Conrad**. Send condolences to Ruthann at 209 Marie Dr., King, NC, 27021. We also learned of the deaths of **Joe Lindsey, Grace Panther Willis, and Jeff Griffin**. Reports on them will be in a later issue.

Please contact me at Libsjohnson@triad.rr.com or 336-299-7412 if you wish to add or correct an address for your *Charity & Children* subscription. Contact **Sharon DeHart Stiles** to discuss use of the God's Acre Columbarium: 704-685-2443 or 1588 Elkhart Circle, Gastonia, NC, 28054.



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

Making News Every Day Around the State



Youth volunteer at Greater Vision

Youth from East Davidson High School in Thomasville and Green Street Baptist in High Point sorted and organized donations at Greater Vision located at Mills Home.



Billy Graham Assoc. donates van

A 15-passenger van was given by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Vans are used to transport children and special needs adults. (L to R: Roy Graham and BCH's Jody Yopp)



Lindsay adults bless nursing home

Ladies at Lindsay Home for special needs adults in Zionville created Valentine's Day cards for residents at a local nursing home which included personal notes and treats.



Children, adults showcase their talents

Children and special needs adults living in Western NC locations participated in the annual talent show at Broyhill Home in Clyde. It is an evening of affirmation and fun for everyone.



HOMEbase takes students tubing

Jim Dean with HOMEbase at Western Carolina University treated college students to snow tubing. The outreach aids independent college students with little to no family support.



WMU celebrate Odum Home children

The WMU from Mt. Airy Baptist Church blessed children living at Odum Home in Pembroke with a party. They celebrated the boys and girls who recently had birthdays.



The "M" family finalizes adoption

These special people became the forever family to this international child. So far, BCH's Christian Adoption Services has placed 12 babies and finalized four international adoptions.



Georgia churches help in NC

Five churches in Georgia made a difference in North Carolina. They donated laundry detergent for the cottages in Western NC. (L to R: BCH's Linda Morgan & Lewis Smith)



Guatemala children play and learn

Indigenous boys and girls in the care of Good Shepherd Ministries in Guatemala attend school where they learn and grow. Many come from impoverished circumstances.



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

Get connected at every-child.org



TURN YOUR CALLING INTO A CAREER

Statewide positions to serve children, families and/or adults are available for you or someone you know.

BCHCAREERS.ORG

DONATE YOUR VEHICLE

and it becomes a part of the ministry. Doctor visits, rides to school, church activities — *your vehicle helps!*



Contact Sam Barefoot
at svbarefoot@bchfamily.org
or call him at 336-474-1224

Set Your Reminder and Join Us for these Events & Mission Days



MARCH

14: Christian Adoption Services (CAS): Charlotte Benefit Banquet

14: NCBAM Aging Well Conference, Kinston

APRIL

Entire month: Food Roundup

4: CAS: Triad Benefit Banquet, Greensboro

11: NCBAM Aging Well Conference, Mocksville

12: Camp Duncan Open House, Aberdeen

18: CAS: Upstate Golf Tournament, Spartanburg, SC

18: NCBAM Aging Well Conference, Vale

26: CAS: Rocky Mount Golf Tourney

27: NCBAM: Rampin' Up!

27: River Hill Refuge Dedication, Shelby

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN SATURDAY MISSIONS

Cameron Boys Camp, Cameron – April 13

Camp Duncan, Aberdeen – May 4

Kennedy Home, Kinston – May 11

Odum Home, Pembroke – May 18



For a complete 2024 list of events as well as registration and other details, visit bchfamily.com/events

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

For each person's specific need, Baptist Children's Homes offers a unique ministry that is prepared to help. Reach out today.



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#3641

New Memory Rooms to debut at Homecoming — Alum remembers meeting baseball legend

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

The new Alumni Memory Rooms have been moved to three rooms behind the church choir loft in the church. The alumni is trying to have them finished before Homecoming on June 1-2. Make your plans now to attend. This is always a great time of alumni fellowship! We have a special work-day coming up on April 13 at 10:00 on that Saturday morning at the church to prepare the new rooms. We hope to do some painting and go through the old alumni photos and documents that will be on display. Dave, Donna Weeks husband, will be preparing a lunch for you to enjoy that day. **Clayton Pate, Joyce Connie Surbaugh, Debbie and Gary Caulder, Larry and Brenda Gilliam, Billy Smithwick, and Dave and Donna Weeks Duty** were on hand the first work day. The new Kennedy Home director, Matt, met all of us at the church and showed what rooms to use. Around noon, two of the three rooms already had photos hung. Placing some photos and other items on shelves made it perfect. Alumni President **Larry Gilliam** is calling a meeting of the Alumni Board that morning also. He will let us know what time it starts. The purpose is to make plans for Homecoming.

Please note that I have a new gmail address. It is johnbthompson43@gmail.com. Please change it in your address book and start sending me articles for the next *Charity & Children*. Your help is always appreciated.

Did you know that in the past five years 844 decisions have been made for Christ in our Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

A word from Alumni President **Larry Gilliam**: "Thank you Brother John for the job you do in writing the alumni column for *Charity & Children* each month. I was surprised to see the section in the last issue that my wife had sent. I had no idea that she had written it.

This year, we gave each other the gift of going to see Noah's Ark in Kentucky. We attend First Free Will Baptist Church in Washington. We were able to go with seven other people from the church, including **Pastor Darren Walker, my nephew Chase and sister-in-law Nancy Cayton**. After stopping a couple times, we finally arrived at our motel 12 hours later. The next day, we visited the Ark. It was a trip of a life time. It was hard to tell someone about the size of the Ark and do it justice. The past year has been bitter sweet. I lost my only brother, James Gilliam, this past year. It is still hard to believe he is gone. I look forward to seeing him, my father, and all my Kennedy Home brothers and sisters who have gone on to live with the Lord one day. I pray each day for the Lord to forgive me of my sins which have been many over my life time. We were born in sin and only Christ can forgive our sins. Please note that we now reside at 75 Victoria Drive, Chocowinity, NC. May God Bless all my Kennedy Home brothers and sisters. Love in Christ."

A word from **Donna Duty** (1967-1974): "One of my favorite things to do at Kennedy Home during our free time at the gym was to roller skate! I learned to roller skate in the old gym. Then when the new gym was built, most Saturday afternoons you could find me skating away with my other alumni friends. **Bill Beacham** would play our favorite rock and roll music tunes and we all would have such a great time skating to the music. My skating partner at that time was **Wayne Jackson**. He could also dance on skates and skate backwards really well. I finally learned with his encouragement and patience to skate backwards. But I never learned to dance on skates. But he and I still had a lot of fun skating together on Saturday afternoons—plus it was great exercise for us. After I left Kennedy Home in 1974, my husband **Dave** and I would go skating on many of our dates

before we got married. Now that I'm a senior citizen and much older, I don't skate anymore because of possible falling and breaking a bone! But I sure have wonderful memories at Kennedy Home."

Bill and Betty Beacham were houseparents when I lived at Kennedy Home. Bill was in charge of the recreation and I loved to skate but I think I liked swimming in the great big pool the best. What did you prefer, reader?

Donald Wetherington writes: "Let me tell you about my little eight transistor radio. I could only pick up one radio station—WISP in Kingston. I fell in love with music about the time that **The Beatles** came out with the song "I Want to Hold Your Hand." I spent all the money I could scrape up to have batteries for my radio. They were carefree days."

Hugh Kirkman writes: "In 1975, we had a big Christmas party at the gym. There were about 200 of us! I was blessed to receive a nice watch. In 1976, we had lights all the way down Cedar Dale lane. We sang at the Christmas parade in LaGrange. We met **Jim 'Catfish' Hunter** (New York Yankees, 1975-1979.) at the Christmas party at the gym. The most important thing he did that day was to give his personal testimony! What a good day!"

Joyce Surbaugh writes: "When I worked at the Peach Basket in Sligo, N. C., we knew 'Catfish' Hunter's nephew, **Marvin**. He loved to hunt for antiques. After he got off work at Dominion Power, Marvin was the one that let us know that Jim Catfish Hunter had **Lou Gehrig's** disease. It was such a sad time for his family and friends."

I thank all my piano students for working so hard to learn to play. The first thing I did when I got to Kennedy Home was to contact churches and ask for them to donate a piano. I got one for every cottage on the campus. This way, I knew all the students would have a place to practice. I don't know what the

houseparents thought about having a piano, but they all went along with the idea. I had 62 piano students back between 1972 to 1977. They were all ages. I even had some of the adults taking lessons. The students would come to our apartment in the middle of the campus for lessons. We later changed to the big brick house near the front gate of the campus. Kennedy Home Director **Rev. and Mrs. Rogers** moved into a brand new house and he made sure that Becky and I got their old house. We loved it. Children would stop by my house for me to talk them out of running away. That really happened from time to time.

We presented a piano recital at Christmas and in the spring. They worked so hard to learn all the music from memory. I know of several of them who went on to work in churches with music programs. I'm so proud of them all.

I would put up about four tents in my backyard and we would have a camp out for a lot of youngins. We even spent many nights down in the old Skeeter Hut—just to have an overnight camp out.

I was so fortunate to have an adult choir for the church plus a senior high and middle school choir. We also had two choirs for grades 1-5. And then on top of all that, we had a choir known as the Madrigal Singers. That choir gave concerts in the gym. **Mrs. Brock and Mrs. Hamilton** made all the girls long, beautiful dresses for the concerts and the boys would wear suits. We would learn music from shows like "The Sound of Music."

If you are ever in Havelock, drop by to see me. I live off the Minnosot Ferry Road. I live at 102 Maritime Court. I would be glad to visit with you. jt



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

Not just green scraps of paper

By **Jim Edminson**, Editor

The green slips of paper cover my desk. Each one contains two or three, sometimes four if they are shorter, verses of scripture. The daily green paper tucks under my midmorning protein bar next to my thermos of coffee. All of these items come from Kathy, and I discover them at the beginning of the day just after she leaves for school.

When the green sheets first appeared, they were surprises, encouragements to start my day. After a while, I came to expect them.

I began stashing the notes around my work space. As days turned into weeks, the stacks piled up, almost untidily, and one memorable day a wind rushed in through an open door and the green slips sailed on the breeze only to float to the ground, finding their way to nooks and corners of the room. I scrambled and set about collecting the pages in my trash can, and as I did I noticed words and phrases written in that so-familiar handwriting. I knew then they would never be tossed out; although the large pile littered my desk, I knew they were too important to discard.

In ancient times, God's people took His commands in Deuteronomy 6:8 to heart, wearing the words on their bodies: "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes" (ESV). In today's world, many of us have bookmarks in our bibles with favorite scriptures printed on them, treasures to find as we thumb through the pages, reminders of God's commands—His watchcare and His love. My own green slips are not formal, bound in a leather cover, and yet they stop me as I go about my tasks and remind me of God's living word that sustains me if I pause and remember.

I try to figure out the rhyme and reason of

Kathy's selections—to see a theme or understand her train of thought. There are times when the words highlight struggles she or I or we are going through. There are days when she finds words that coincide with the holiday or a remembrance day important to us. Sometimes the day's collection seems random. Almost always, she gathers the verses from different sections of the bible: old and new, prophets and poetry, laws and revelation. I wonder if she thinks of me specifically as she peruses scriptures so early in the morning, choosing verses to undergird me and help me as I face the problems of the day, making sure I am equipped. Psalm 119:11 says it this way: "Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee."

Kathy, ever the teacher, has flashcards and sticky notes attached to all of her reading materials—books and magazines. They protrude from her journals and notebooks. She fashions impromptu page markers with quotes that help her through her days. I thought of her and these habits as I read one of the entries on today's green sheet from the third chapter of Colossians: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (16).

I wonder if she knows the value I place on her daily jottings on those ever-present green slips of paper? Recently, I showed her my impressive stash of sheets, spilling from their piles on my desk, shifting across the surface at all angles. Her eyes widened as she understood that I kept all of her notes. "Jim, they aren't even written in good penmanship," she remarked, looking at them with their uneven lines and cramped letters

fitting on the small pages. "You certainly do not have to keep these."

But I do, you know. I must keep them. They are there when I need a study break

or a fresh reminder of God's providence or a refreshment of the Father's love for me given through the love of my partner. My eyes fall upon the uppermost green page, and I read the last verse near the bottom, just before the three hearts she draws sometimes at the end. These are life-giving, copied in the poetic King James Version, and I must remember to read the words several times today: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8). Simple green scraps of paper, a true gift from one heart to another, from the very living word of our God!

Think on these things, my friends, and may your day be filled with the Father's blessing.



Edminson encourages others through the Good News of Jesus. Invite him to speak to your church or organization. You can email him at wjedminson@bchfamily.org.

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