

Open Doors

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Giving Children Hope and Purpose For The Future

PCHH

Jeremiah 29:11

McGEE WINS ANNUAL BALL DROP

One of the abilities we have been blessed to have here at PCHH has been the ability to take in whole families. One such family was the McGee family who graced our campus in the 70's and 80's. This year Richard McGee came up as the lucky winner. What is unique about this kind family is their willingness to share with each other. They had made a promise that if one of them won they would split the money equally as well as make a contribution back to the home. Richard, Robin, Charles and brother-in-law Gene are all enjoying the spoils of their family pact. When he came to pick up his check we had time to talk with Richard about his time at the home and he offered some great memories. He remembered Ms. Arbuckle and Mr. Booth fondly for their abilities as directors. He reflected on the wonderful food prepared by Mrs. Barbara and as usual he remembered the comforting smile of Mrs. Wynette. Another thing he reflected on was the bonding that took place over games of horse shoes and the infamous PCHH softball games. Richard put it quite simply and eloquently when he said "what it comes down to is we were one big family." To this day we here at PCHH strive to be one big family and we consider supporters like you to be members of that extended family. Please join us in congratulating Richard on his big win.



Robin, Richard and Charles McGee with the big check.

Executive Director's Comments



Billy Rice
Executive
Director

This newsletter features two wonderful feel-good stories – alumnus Richard McGee winning our 50/50 ball drop and the celebration of Wynette Yontz's 45 year of outstanding service at our ministry. These events brought great joy to our campus, and I hope you can feel that as you read those articles. Unfortunately, what I need to share with you is not a pleasant subject but I feel it is important to be up front with our supporters. A week before school started one of our male residents was diagnosed with COVID-19. We were able to keep the coronavirus away from our campus for 18 months, and this diagnosis was a wake-up call for us. In addition to our young man, two of our staff members tested positive for COVID and three of our staff members had to be quarantined due to contact tracing. On the positive side, none of our other residents tested positive and their behavior was fantastic while they were in quarantine. After going through this, it became painfully obvious that we needed to do all we could to ensure the health and safety of our children and staff and remove the need to miss time due to contact tracing. With the overwhelming

support of our Board of Directors, we are requiring our staff members to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Anyone who has not received the first dose of the vaccination by September 30th will no longer be eligible for employment at our ministry. This decision was not made lightly, and I understand in our polarized society there are differing opinions about the vaccination. We had hoped that by this time the worst of the pandemic would be behind us and that our lives would be headed back to normal. The rise of the Delta Variant of the virus and its spread throughout our community made it clear we needed to take action. Our priority in any decision we

make is the safety and welfare of our children. When put in this context, it is clear that making sure that the people that care for our children are vaccinated is the best way to keep them from being infected with the virus. We know nothing is a 100% guarantee, but it the best we can do for our children and those of you who faithfully support us. I ask for your continued prayers and support as we look forward to the time when the pandemic is not at the forefront of our thoughts and decisions.

With Hope,

Billy

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P.O. Box 545
Wytheville, VA 24382
(276) 228-2861

www.pchh.org • info@pchh.org

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Open Doors is an educational publication produced in-house periodically to provide insights about PCHH.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Billy Rice

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Shower of Blessings
for
Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands

- Shampoos
- Conditioners
- Body Washes
- Deodorants
- Disposable razors
- Laundry detergent pods
- Dryer Sheets
- Dishwasher pods
- Craft supplies
- Adult Coloring Books
- Coloring pencils
- Puzzles
- Good used vehicles
- Prayers, Prayers, Prayers



Administrative Director Achieves 45 Year Milestone



The first time I met Wynette was on August 16, 1999. It was a big day for me because I was coming to here to interview for the job of Executive Director. When I sat down with the Search Committee Wynette was one of the five people interviewing me. I made a mental note that she must be very important to the ministry, and when I got the job I found out how true that is! There were a lot of

things I needed to evaluate back then, but I quickly figured out that supervising Wynette's responsibilities did not need to take up much of my time. She is incredibly efficient, and her experience extends to every part of our ministry. I found that she would tell me directly and bluntly if she felt I was going to do something she disagreed with, and I still appreciate that. She is a trusted colleague and friend, and she elicits tremendous respect from the rest of our staff. The greatest gift Wynette has given our ministry comes through when our alumni come back to visit. Without fail, the first thing they want to do is come in her office, get a hug, and sit down and catch up with her. No matter how busy she is, she always has time for each of them and the laughter that comes out of her office speaks volumes on how much she means to each of them. Wynette's 45 years of service make her the longest tenured employee in the 102-year history of our ministry. Her love and dedication to our ministry and the children we serve is unmatched, and is a blessing to all of us whose lives she has touched. At some point she will retire and someone will assume her position, but everyone who has worked with her knows she will never be replaced!

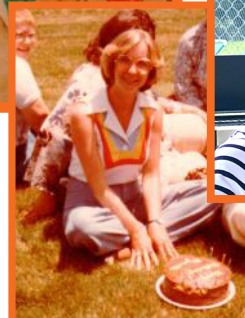
Billy

I am humbled by this recognition and to serve as Administrative Director of Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands. I'm been blessed to serve this ministry in several capacities for 45 years. I was hired as Secretary but when I came to work, realized that we were in need of a bookkeeper, so I took on that role as well. Whether we needed toilets scrubbed, flower gardens weeded or an interim Executive Director, I was here to serve. People often ask when I plan to retire. My answer is, "when I can no longer walk through the door of my office." I love my job at The Children's Home and cannot imagine not being here. One of the things I love most is when former residents come back and say that they don't know what would have

happened to them if it had not been for the Children's Home. That tells me that through all the ups and downs, it was well worth it. We know that all of the children we have served over the years have not made the right choices for their lives, but we are confident that we showed them during their stay here, that there is a different way of life than the abuse and neglect they came from. Giving them that opportunity is a blessing in itself. When I try to think of the highlights of my work here, they are too numerous to list. I did enjoy the times when we could keep families together and have them longer periods of time. Now the times are much shorter and it's seldom that we get a sibling group. For some reason, legislative issues have gotten in the way of the wonderful, professional work we do with children who need our care. We have now become the last resource for many of these children and this saddens me. My hope is that one day soon, the people in the legislative arena will realize the importance of group homes such as ours and put the unimportant things aside and do what is best for the child in need of placement. The background stories of the children we have had placed with us over the years are heart-breaking. No child should ever have to go through what some of them have been through. We do provide a safe, loving environment for them to heal enough to break the cycle of abuse and neglect with their own children. I have been here long enough to see the children who were here when I first came, to bring their children and grandchildren to visit. Do you think that makes me feel old? Well I am old but not willing to give up the work I have dedicated my life to! I want them to see a familiar face when they come to visit. Please keep this ministry in your prayers as we continue to "give children hope and purpose for their future."

In His service,

Wynette



SUMMERTIME FUN!!!



We Proudly Accept:

