



Open Doors

Vol. 35, No. 1 Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands, Inc. (PCHH)
First Quarter 2010

CHRISTMAS 2009: TREASURED TRADITIONS & BLESSINGS



Christmas Traditions...

Courtney shared the Christmas Story during our Christmas Dinner celebration. Residents, honored guests, and staff members participated in our long-standing Christmas tradition of gathering together to listen to the greatest story ever told, enjoy a great meal, and open presents. Decorating the cottages usually begins by the first of December and each one is as individual as the residents and staff living there. After the celebration in the dining hall everyone returned to their cottage to open presents. Santa was generous this year due to the friends of the Home. Houseparents ensured special presents fit each resident and helped Santa choose just the right gift. It is very difficult to express the joy on these children's faces. Many of them have never experienced Christmas like the one they had this year.



**GIVING
CHILDREN
HOPE &
PURPOSE
FOR THE
FUTURE**



Billy Rice
Executive Director



Part of the process we go through at the beginning of each year is an evaluation of all aspects of our ministry. It is important for us to know that we are making the best use of the funds that our supporters give to us. The trust you place in us to provide our children the best possible chance for success is one we take very seriously.

The past two years have brought another variable into our evaluation process. Due to the For Keeps initiative championed by the First Lady of Virginia during the previous administration, residential homes such as ours have fallen into disfavor as an option for children who are victims of abuse and neglect. The push to put children in foster homes regardless of their needs and the financial penalties placed on localities that place children with us have made it more difficult to serve the children that need us. In turn, this has affected the funding balance between the monies we receive from the localities and the gifts from our donors. To give you an example, in 2006 our beds were filled at a 92.5% capacity; in 2009, that number dropped to 64.8%. I can assure you that it is not because there are fewer children needing our help.

What are we doing about it? On the legislative front, we are working diligently with our elected officials to return children's homes to the equal footing we need both financially and legislatively that will allow us to continue to serve abused and neglected children. Here on campus we have re-

viewed every line item in our budget to ensure that we are putting our resources toward providing the quality of care that our children need and deserve while realistically evaluating the funds at hand. This means we had to take cost cutting measures, including closing one of our boys' cottages until our population increases. We have also instituted a salary freeze for the second consecutive year and the administrative and professional staff are taking a day without pay each month until we weather the storm. Our staff is fantastic – I have not heard the first negative word about these decisions. Their primary concern is taking the best possible care of the children we are privileged to serve.

What can you do? Continue to pray for us and give us your support. I read every day about the difficult economy and the decrease in charitable giving and am so grateful for the loyalty of our donors. You continue to give at levels that allow us to keep

all of the services our children need. Without you, that would not be possible. We also need for you to share your belief in our ministry with your legislators, church members, and friends. The more people that understand what we have meant and continue to mean to so many abused and neglected children, the better chance we have to be successful. In return you have my word that we will do everything we can to serve God's most needy children with the same excellence that we have shown for the last ninety years.

Billy

Thank You For Remembering Us In Your Estate Planning

Alumni Gathering
July 10, 2010

CURRENT NEEDS

- Art and craft supplies
- DVDs (PG-13, PG or G)
- Gift cards to Wal-Mart, McDonalds, Wendy's, or Hardee's
- Twin sized sheets or comforters
- Towels and washcloths
- Microwave popcorn
- Brownie, cookie or cake mixes
- Digital cameras for house-parents to capture memories of life in the cottages for the children's scrap-books

Open Doors

**Giving Children
Hope & Purpose
for the Future**

P.O. Box 545
Wytheville, VA 24382
(276) 228-2861
FAX (276) 228-8154

<http://pchh.org> • info@pchh.org

This agency complies with all state and federal non-profit fundraising regulations.
A financial statement is available for the asking.
Open Doors is an educational publication produced in-house periodically to provide insights about PCHH.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Billy Rice

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DEVELOPMENT TEAM: IMPORTANT FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

The PCHH Development Team consists of four experienced, committed individuals who bring over 70 years of experience in the children's home ministry.

Three of them, Billy Rice, our Executive Director; Wynette Yontz, Administrative Director; and E. C. Hill, Development Director also have administrative duties in addition to development responsibilities. Travis Wirt, Development Officer, serves the Home with sole responsibilities for public relations and development.

Working closely with the Home's Church & Public Relations Committee, PCHH development activities are planned and executed with much thought and prayer.

The fruits of the labor produced by these team members is important to help meet the current operating budget as well as obtain gifts for the Home's endowment account for the future.

Travis spends most of his time "on the road" attending Presbytery Meetings, Presbyterian Women's Meetings, speaking in churches, making presentations to interested groups, and meetings with friends of the Home one-on-one when possible.

For the past two and one-half years Travis has carried the Children's Home message to folks all across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Many of you probably recognize his photo and have talked with him at various functions. You may also know that Travis recently underwent thyroid surgery and treatment for cancer. He is back to work and raring to get back on the road spreading the word about PCHH and the ministry for abused and neglected children in the Appalachian Region of Virginia.

Travis offers the following comments in response to all your cards, letters, and phone calls.

"Thank you so much for the outpouring of love, prayers, and support that you have shown in recent months. I am constantly humbled, encouraged, and strengthened by the love that you have given. Cancer is not a word that I expected to hear concerning my own health, but I must admit that this has been an incredible journey. My faith, family, and friends have given me much joy and encouragement along the way, and I have learned to recognize and appreciate life's large and small blessings more and more."



Travis Wirt
Development Officer

"One of the greatest blessings I am thankful for is the opportunity that I have to work with the staff and children of PCHH. Our staff truly are some of the most dedicated and loving individuals in the world, and I'm so thankful to have the opportunity to pray and work alongside such dedicated folks. Your prayers and financial support are key to our success."

If you would like to invite Travis or one of the development team members to provide a special program on the ministry of PCHH, please call (276) 228-2861 and we'll set it up.

PCHH Website Provides Tons of Information

If you haven't checked out our website, click on <http://pchh.org> and look around.

During this age of technology, people can learn quite a bit about interesting issues and programs. However, there is nothing like an on-site visit to see and hear about what's going on first-hand. Call us to arrange a personal tour of our ministry.

Meantime, browse our website at <http://pchh.org> and share what you learn with a friend.



INTERESTING HAPPENINGS AROUND CAMPUS...

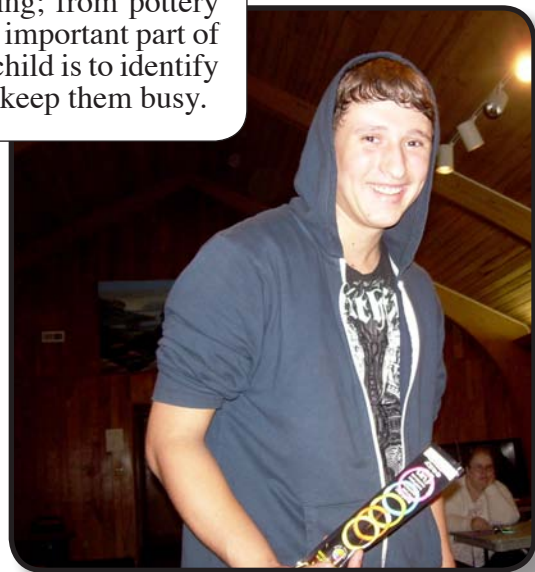


Fun in the Wintertime... The PCHH recreation/activity program does not slow down in the wintertime. Our rec director, church groups, and several talented volunteers see to that. Residents enjoy and benefit from egg decorating to basketball tournaments; from drawing contests to snowboarding; from pottery making to bowling. An important part of our strategy with each child is to identify individual interest and keep them busy.



WOW ... What a Ride!

The long, sloping hillside on the left not far from the entry to our property always makes for difficult mowing in the summertime but great for sleigh riding in the winter. Somewhere along the third time down the hill, one realizes that walking back up that steep hill in snow is more exercise than the average person might want. But it sure is fun making some wonderful memories of a special place!



Gilmer Cottage... Due to the push by the Commonwealth to direct state funding to foster care instead of residential care, children's homes across the state are suffering. Until this can be corrected, PCHH has consolidated its two boys' cottages. Gilmer is temporarily closed and Webb Cottage is for now our only boys' cottage. We look forward to reopening Gilmer as soon as possible. Residential care is a valuable ministry in caring for children.



GIVING CHILDREN HOPE & PURPOSE FOR THE FUTURE

**Call
(800) 987-0301
TO LEARN HOW YOU CAN
SHARE INFORMATION WITH
YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE
Children's HOME.
Our development
STAFF is ready
TO SERVE
you.**