

Open Doors

Vol. 30, No. 3 The Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands, Inc.

Third Quarter 2005

IMPRESSIONS OF THE PAST: A GREAT MOTIVATOR

One of the most challenging decisions Americans make today is what career path to choose. Many let "nature take its course" and do not really think about it or prepare for a specific job.

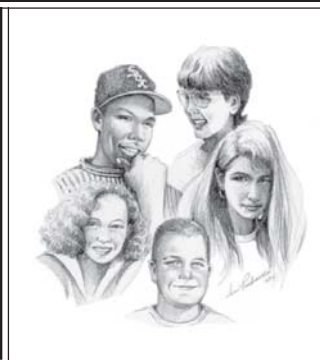
This was not the case for Audrey Shirey, PCHH alumnus, who has returned to our campus this summer to learn about the other side of the childcare coin... staff instead of resident. Audrey is preparing for her career as a social worker.

Past impressions of Audrey's memories of children in residential care have taken on a new 3-dimensional look. She now understands why many things were as they were then.

Audrey Blair Shirey, PCHH Alumnus, visits to prepare for service to children and youth as a social worker.



Audrey was a resident at PCHH in 1998-99. She was successful with campus life, graduated from high school, and somewhere along the line developed a deep passion to help people. She is married to Joseph Shirey. Audrey is completing her college work and is preparing for an internship which we hope she can do with us... her PCHH family.



So many memories hang around every corner of campus for Audrey. She wanted to know all about her peers and the staff members who were here during her time at PCHH. Working with staff holds new special meaning.

Audrey's maturity equips her to share many important insights into life with current residents. Her young age (relatively speaking) allows her to really connect with the residents and fosters honest listening of what she has to share. Judging from reaction of residents, she will be a very effective social worker wherever she lives.



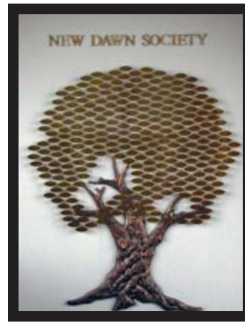
Billy Rice
Executive Director

I hope you enjoy our cover story on Audrey, one of our alumni who has spent the summer serving an internship with us as a part of her curriculum at Old Dominion University. It is always a thrill when one of our children grows up and we get the opportunity to observe their accomplishments. When your ministry stretches back to 1919, some of your "children" are not so young any more! However, we still enjoy hearing from them and catching up on their lives.

We have alumni all over the world whose lives were turned around during their stay at the Children's Home. They have careers in many different walks of life, including two who are serving their country in Iraq and Afghanistan. I always enjoy seeing our former residents who return to celebrate Alumni Day with us. Some settled down right here in Wytheville after their stay at the Children's Home, while others traveled from as far away as New York. They talk of the changes we have made since they left (I wish we had a gym when I was here!) and tell stories of their time with us. Some of the stories are hilarious and others are sad, just like any family reunion. What is obvious is how much they enjoy seeing each other and how much their time at the Children's Home has affected their lives.

We have many reasons to be proud of our ministry, but one stands out to me. When most of alumni come back to see us, they have their families with them, including their happy and well adjusted children. There is no greater source of pride than knowing that we contributed to breaking the cycle of abuse and neglect that brings children

New Dawn Society



Remember PCHH in your estate planning and become a member of the New Dawn Society. Call for information.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER



We are another step closer to our goal of becoming debt-free. Tom & Molly Copes recently hosted a fundraising dinner in Williamsburg for the McGavock Center debt reduction efforts.

Thank you dear friends! We thank everyone who participated. If you would like to host a fundraising reception or dinner in your area, call Wynette Yontz or E. C. Hill at (276) 228-2861.

Executive Director's Article Continued...

to our door. Our mission statement is "Giving children hope and purpose for the future". For the past eighty-six years, we can point to countless cases of "Mission Accomplished"!

We pledge to continue to provide that hope and purpose to the children who need us for years to come.

Billy

The Summer of 2005...

The Summer of 2005 has been memorable for several reasons. One was the heat... we had high day-time temperatures for many days this summer.

It has also been memorably as one of the best summers we have experienced at PCHH with residents working, attending summer school, participating in life-skills training, recreating, and having more fun than is legal in some parts of the world.

Residents attending the annual Children's Homes' Olympics this summer not only benefited from those activities there but got to broaden their horizons with a side trip to New York City.



Joey Beach, PCHH alumnus, is currently serving his second tour with the U.S. Army in the Middle East. Joey is from the Harrisonburg area and has three children. He stopped by to see us on his way to Disney World with his children on his last visit home.

Open Doors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|--|---|
| P.O. Box 545
Wytheville, VA 24382
(276) 228-2861
FAX (276) 228-8154
http://pchh.org
info@pchh.org | * Harold Lamm - Martinsville, VA
Libby Beamer - Christiansburg, VA
Bay Boyd - Eagle Rock, VA
Margaret Carter - Charlottesville, VA
Eural Clippard - Wytheville, VA
Molly Copes - Yorktown, VA
David Dickerson - Rockbridge Baths, VA
Mary Lou Cox - Monterey, VA
**Joe Duckwall - Roanoke, VA
Mary Lee McGrady - Hillsville, VA
Marilyn Moore - Chester, VA
Cap Oliver - Vienna, VA
Tim Outlaw - Bristol, VA
Nancy Schroeder - Edenton, NC
Catherine Shoulders - Roanoke, VA
Sara Staley - Marion, VA
Frances Trent - Roanoke, VA |
|--|---|

Giving Children Hope & Purpose for the Future.

This agency complies with all state and federal non-profit fundraising regulations. A financial statement is available for the asking.

*Moderator **Vice-Moderator

... it was a very good year!



Kayla
Buchanan Cottage
3-Year H'Olympic Veteran



Kayla sat down with PCHH staff upon her return from the 2005 Children's Homes Olympics in Ocean City, NJ and shared some of her thoughts on the event and side trip to New York City.

- It was heartwarming to learn that one of her favorite things about the whole experience was getting to hang out with Ms. Stephanie (one of her houseparents).
- Kayla participated in swimming, basketball, softball and track while attending the H'Olympics and has brought home several medals.
- She was excited about seeing some of the new friends she had met at the last H'Olympics.
- The trip is packed full of things to do all day and half the night. Rest is a cherished thing.
- The side trip to New York City was really eye-opening. Many things got her attention - the subway ride (she does not like being underground), seeing the Statue of Liberty during a boat tour, shopping the many street vendors and huge department stores (Macy's included), all the different people, the horse carriage ride through Central park, and visiting Ground Zero.
- One of her most vivid memories was the lights of the city. The teletrons, advertising billboards, and lights of the buildings made it glow like no place else she had ever seen.
- The hours of walking to get around were really different for a country girl used to riding places.
- She wrote her boy friend's name on her hand in ink to remind her not to enjoy the attention of boys at the H'Olympics.
- She definitely thinks New York is a great place to visit but she does not want to live there.



Participating in life adventures with peers who have lived in similar situations and share many of the experiences our residents have is a good experience. Therapy comes in so many ways through so many people. The trick is to recognize good help that can really make a difference and accepting it. Friends make life so much easier and interesting. (photo of Kayla & Jamie)

Billy Rice, Executive Director, and a couple of residents deliver water to a local ministry taking a load of supplies to the hurricane victims on the Gulf Coast. It is never too late to learn how the gift of giving can make a difference in people's lives.



PCHH has lots of experience being on the receiving end of gifts. Thank you so much everyone for all you do for us!

Residents' families are invited to our annual Awards Banquet. It is really nice to have your family present not only to share a wonderful meal but to be present for the presentation of awards.



The Awards Banquet has become an important event in campus life. Residents, families and staff are proud of all the residents' achievements.

INDEPENDENT LIVING... A BIG STEP

"Hello friends, I was just browsing the web and thought of PCHH. I was a resident in 98' & 99'."

"I was blessed to have the home as an option out of my situation. Thank you for the love and help I received. I am now a father of the most beautiful baby boy."

"Thank you again for your open hearts. God bless."

Tony Cook

E-mails from alumni...

"I just wanted to thank you all for everything you have done for me. If it wasn't for you all, I would be nowhere in life. I would especially like to take the time to thank Mr. Hammond, Ms. Sharon and all the Buchanan Staff that were there at my time of stay. I know I was hard to deal with sometimes but it was all because of you all that I made it through."

"Mr. Rice, I would like to also thank you for letting me stay at the Childrens Home as long as I did... it was like home to me. Ms. Wanda was a very generous, kind woman I would also like to thank for helping me through all the tough times I had. But all in all, without the home and you all there to help me, I would be nowhere in life. So, thank you for all that you did for me. I will never forget you."

Sincerely with love.... Jamie Collins

It is with mixed emotions that we watch one resident after another leave PCHH for independent living. We are thrilled that they are taking the next step in their lives towards independence but sad because we will miss them. It is always a delight to hear from them.

Independent Living Needs

- Towels & washcloths
- Twin-size bed linens
- Pots, pans, & kitchen stuff
- Silverware & glasses
- Personal care products
- Wal-Mart gift cards
- Food Lion gift cards
- Your continuing prayers



The importance of work to the success of anyone trying to make it on their own is fundamental. Residents have the opportunity to work on campus or in the community part-time to earn money but more importantly teach them how to keep a job. A quality work ethic will pay big dividends for a lifetime. Don, the PCHH maintenance man, has helped many residents earn while they learn. The manicured look of our campus this year reflects their efforts.



Bargains are important when you are trying to "set up housekeeping" for the first time. It is amazing what all you need when you have nothing and need everything to set up your first home. Local auctions are one way to make limited resources go further.

Residents who qualify to go into independent living get work experience while at PCHH with either on campus jobs or part-time jobs for businesses in the community. Our policy of residents saving 80% of their earnings really pays off when it comes time to move out and be on your own.

