

# Spotlight

SPRING 2011

METHODIST  
HOME FOR  
CHILDREN



at home  
at last



## Spotlight on the Family™

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Methodist Home for Children

*In service to God, our mission is to build upon the social, physical, emotional, and spiritual strengths of children, youth, and families, and to affirm their worth.*

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## Relationships For Life

I had the honor of attending spring commencement at NC State to see Micheal Cox, 27, graduate cum laude with a master's degree in social work. This is a great achievement by any standards. But it's an especially powerful accomplishment and cause to celebrate for us at Methodist Home for Children—because we know how far Micheal has come to wear that robe and hood of academic achievement.

You may remember Micheal from our Fall 2006 *Spotlight*. He was a senior then at N.C. Central, and he said, if not for MHC, "I would quite possibly be in prison or dead." He'd grown up in chaos, surrounded by drugs and violence in a low-income neighborhood. Although he was bright and motivated in school, he found his way into trouble at a young age. At 13, he came to one of our multi-purpose homes for violating probation on a larceny charge; at 15, he came back for selling drugs at school.

MHC has stood behind Micheal, as it does for all of those whom it serves. We may close a case, but we seek to leave open a loving relationship. People may be discharged from our caseload, but they never leave our care. Over the years, we have challenged, encouraged and mentored Micheal. We've helped pay for his education. We are proud that he will use his experiences and credentials

Micheal Cox celebrates his degree, a Master of Social Work, with Methodist Home for Children President/CEO Bruce Stanley, left, and Vice President Ken Perry, right.

to help other kids whose families cannot or will not take care of them.

It is a true blessing, and a benefit of the work we do, to see God's hand in building strength and confidence in young people. Micheal is one we celebrate in this season of graduations; Monica Irwin is another. At 18, she just finished high school and aged out of foster care without an adoptive family. Monica doesn't have the traditional safety net of family that most of us have at her age, but she has a plan for her life, and she knows that she can count on MHC to stand behind her, as always. You can find more of her story on page 7.

With God's blessings, we are able to transform the lives of young people, and we thank you for your support through prayers and financial gifts. We ask that you continue to walk with us in this ministry and to celebrate with us as our children grow into productive, compassionate adults.

Blessings,

Reverend Bruce E. Stanley  
President/CEO

**ON THE COVER:** Talmadge Howard scales the new climbing wall in his backyard. He and his older brother, Tashawn, were adopted in December 2010 by Jayne and Richard Howard of Southport.

# Specialized Treatment Changes a Child's Life

It can be hard work parenting a child who has a developmental delay or mental illness. Imagine, then, what it's like to parent a child diagnosed with both life-altering conditions.

Jan Alexiou of Raleigh can tell you: "It's bewildering." She and her husband, George, decided in January 2005 to place their 14-year-old son at FACT Specialized Services, a residential treatment center in Jacksonville, after he was hospitalized with crippling anxiety and depression. Because Darek also has autism, his parents had struggled for six months to find a program with the right expertise to treat him. A social worker at UNC Hospitals finally pointed them to FACT.

"It was an answer to our prayers," Alexiou says. Darek spent 2 years and 8 months in care at FACT Specialized Services before he returned home to his parents. Today, he's on the honor roll in high school, with plans to graduate next year, and he's singing in a vocal group and playing tennis and volleyball. FACT helped when others couldn't because it is one of the few facilities specializing in treatment for children who are dually diagnosed with mental illness/severe emotional disorders and an underlying developmental disability.

People with developmental delays are thought to be up to five times more likely than others to develop mental health issues, but community-based services for this population of children were nonexistent in North Carolina when FACT was founded in 2001, says clinical director Becky Fields. Today, however, they're part of the continuum of care at Methodist Home for Children. A January merger with FACT expanded MHC services to include outpatient therapy, diagnostic

evaluations, psychiatric services, day treatment and Level III group homes.

The merger was a good fit for two organizations committed to doing whatever is necessary for the well-being of each child, says Bruce Stanley, MHC president/CEO. "Methodist Home for Children is devoted to serving children, but especially those on the margins—children who have run out of options," he says. "The need among children who are dually diagnosed is great, and this work calls for highly effective and specialized services."

In his case, Darek had always been a naturally outgoing kid who did a good job managing the symptoms of autism and anxiety, Alexiou says. But by 8th grade, with the pressures of adolescence building, he became overwhelmed and suicidal: "He was afraid to go to school," she says. "His anxiety was so gripping that it became depressive. It was a very serious point in his life where he talked about running in the road."

FACT staff took time to know Darek as an individual and build a highly structured therapy and desensitization program that helped him control his anxiety and rebound from depression. Through home visits and a carefully choreographed return, Darek has been able to reclaim his life in Raleigh.

"Anxiety is going to be part of who he is for the rest of his life, but he manages it much better," Alexiou says. "He learned at FACT to build on strengths and to know what he's good at. He has confidence that he can do this now." ■

## Some Facts About FACT

**FACT** Specialized Services, a program of Methodist Home for Children, treats children and youth, ages 8 to 21, who have mental illness/severe emotional disorders and underlying developmental disabilities.

**FACT** offers day treatment for children in Onslow and Carteret counties.

**FACT** offers residential treatment with two round-the-clock Level III group homes for youth who need out-of-home care but don't meet criteria for inpatient psychiatric services. About half come from the Wake County area.

**FACT** is a CABHA (Critical Access Behavioral Health Agency), meeting a new state requirement for mental health service providers. The state certifies only agencies that offer five or more mental health services for the various and complex needs of referred clients.



Darek is back at home with parents George and Jan after specialized treatment for anxiety and depression.

## God's Blessings on a Full House

Saturday mornings are always lively at the Southport home of Jayne and Richard Howard—but this one is electric. After three weeks of design and construction, “Fort Howard” is ready for play.

Four boys in matching camouflage wait for permission and, getting their signal, launch onto the backyard playset like an invading army. Jayne and Richard supervise with the alert eyes of field officers, evenly repeating safety rules discussed earlier but forgotten in the heat of the moment.

*Don't swing too high.*

*Watch where you're walking.*

*We don't drop toys from the top.*

*Use your helmet on the climbing wall.*

*Let your brother come down the ladder.*

Jayne is patient, a natural nurturer, guiding the boys with a voice like calming, cool water. Richard is all energy and efficiency, inspecting the fort, pushing a swing, enforcing rules with timeouts on the steps. Together, they operate as a team, managing a platoon of children who are learning a new definition of family. The Howards adopted brothers Tashawn, 8, and Talmadge, 5, in December, and they hope to finalize adoptions soon for John, 6, and David, 4—as well as 13-year-old Susan, who came to them in October.\* Already, the boys consider themselves brothers, two brown-skinned and two white, and Susan is their sister. Jayne and Richard are “Mommy” and “Daddy.”

*\*We withheld photos and names of the Howards' three foster children to protect their identities. As their adoptions are completed, we'll post their names and photos online. For now, see Talmadge and Tashawn at [www.mhfc.org/galleries](http://www.mhfc.org/galleries).*

“People think these children are blessed, but it's really us,” Jayne says. “We're blessed. God brought them to our doorstep and has their plan in front of them.”

**T**he plan must have been God's, because it certainly hadn't been the Howards'. Not originally, anyway. With three grown children and four grandchildren, they hadn't conceived of building forts and refereeing snack time at this point in their lives. But all that changed about three years ago with a period of soul-searching and prayer.

Jayne and Richard had been working on their New Year's resolutions for 2008, taking stock of their lives—their happiest moments together, their strengths. They'd been running a nonprofit, traveling the country teaching hydrogen fuel cell

technology at high schools and middle schools, and some colleges. But the unfolding economic crisis was sapping their contracts and, at the same time, Jayne's beloved mother was in failing health. They were at a crossroads, wondering whether to take the business abroad, where opportunity was greater, or find a way to stay closer to home.

So they took the question to God: What's next for us?

Within weeks, in January 2008, Jayne opened the Wilmington newspaper to a Methodist Home for Children ad recruiting foster parents. Her grown daughter Tamara had seen it too, and emailed her immediately. By August, Jayne and Richard had gone through training and earned a license as foster parents. Their pastor, Skip Williams, had a connection to Methodist Home for Children through his own parents, who had grown up at Methodist Orphanage in Raleigh, and the Howards were anxious for him to bless their newly licensed home. So on a hot, late-summer afternoon, Williams stood in their foyer to ask







God's blessings. Jayne remembers that within minutes of Williams' "amen," the phone rang and foster care specialist Laura Mayer was on the line with a request. She wanted to know if the Howards would take in Talmadge, a 3-year-old boy.

Jayne and Richard had prepared themselves mentally for a teenage girl or two, maybe sisters, since they were accustomed to working with older kids. But they were open to any child God brought them, Jayne says, and so they stepped faithfully to this new chapter of their lives with potty training, teaching letters and numbers, and nurturing children who'd known mostly neglect and loss.

What they couldn't foresee at the time were the myriad medical and behavioral issues that would test them as parents and advocates—and also bless them in ways they could not imagine.

**P**arenting has always come easily to the Howards. They raised three kids together, worked with teenagers in schools and led church youth groups and Sunday school classes. Their home was always open to young people—friends in need or teens in trou-

ble. On their honeymoon, they took a youth group whitewater rafting, so they figured they were ready for anything as foster parents.

Then they met Talmadge. A sweet-faced bundle of nerves, this little boy had been in 14 homes before coming to them. Talmadge suffered from reactive attachment disorder and, perhaps, seizures related to his undiagnosed epilepsy. Afraid to be touched or to be left alone, he'd scream 12 hours at a time until collapsing from exhaustion. "He had been turned away from home after home because no one knew what to do with him," Jayne says. "Richard and I couldn't leave the room. He'd get so

Jayne and Richard Howard, with Talmadge, left, and Tashawn, learned the first time around as parents to emphasize experiences over toys. The boys play T-ball in the spring, and the family celebrates special occasions with camping trips, hayrides or stargazing on top of Fort Howard.

upset if he couldn't see us. One of my neighbors came over during a screaming episode and I remember her saying, 'Jayne, how can you stand that noise?' I replied, 'How can I not?' No one had ever listened to this little one."

Talmadge was joined shortly by his 5-year-old brother Tashawn. Jayne remembers Tashawn struggling to adjust to a new home and, within two days of arriving, the start of kindergarten; he went to school unable to identify letters or numbers or correctly hold a pencil.

Since they weren't planning to adopt, Jayne and Richard accepted a second set of foster children nine months later. Brothers John and David, ages 4 and 2, had just been removed from a family that passed them around like luggage. No one had noticed, until he arrived at the Howards', that John had a dislocated hip or that he fell over a lot, a symptom of an undiagnosed neurological disease.

Jayne and Richard set out to right the wrongs in these boys' lives. "I remember one of the family specialists from Methodist Home for Children telling me that if I can give just one happy memory to a child, it may be the one thing he clings to for the rest of his life," Jayne says.

**"People think these children are blessed, but it's really us."**

JAYNE HOWARD

**M**ethodist Home for Children specifically trains foster parents to take in children like these—children imprinted early in life by neglect, substance abuse and chaos. A national study out of UCLA shows 50 to 80 percent of kids in foster care have mental health problems associated with neglect and abuse. In North Carolina, about 8,000 children are in foster care annually.

Foster care specialist Brian Wylie works with this population of children, and he's seen a lot of difficult cases in 13 years with Methodist Home for Children. The Howards, he says, have done amazing work as foster parents: "Children learn to know when they're loved and appreciated versus when they are not. And there was just something about the Howards. They instantly connected with Talmadge. They are extremely structured and, over time, the boys began to conform. It's unreal how well they did with structure."

But in their early months with the Howards, the boys' behaviors had been bizarre. All of them had special needs and medical issues—none diagnosed. Three had eating disorders, retching at the table as they tried unfamiliar foods, and two needed therapy to chew. Two had epilepsy, one had autism symptoms and three didn't talk. Three had been drug addicted at birth. And so the Howards began their crash course in advocacy and mastery of an alphabet soup of therapies and diagnoses—PT, ST, OT, ADHD, PTSD, OCD, RAD, PFS, CMT and others.

"Nothing got by the Howards.



Nothing," says Mayer, the specialist who placed Talmadge. "They took detailed notes about what they were seeing, and they'd come back, saying, 'This isn't right. This isn't normal.' They pursued the medical issues, they pursued the diagnoses. God bless the two of them."

And God has.

The children in their home have blossomed beyond expectations and Jayne has co-founded a nonprofit, AWAKEN (A Working Alliance for Kids with Exceptional Needs), to help parents access educational services for their exceptional children. In April 2010, they decided to adopt and, with the fall arrival



of Susan, the teenage daughter they'd prayed for, their family was complete.

"We just pray now for good health so that they can have happiness," Jayne says.

**T**hese are the faces of happiness. Tashawn, above right, is the oldest boy, a 2nd grader diagnosed with a math-related learning disability. He's also got a wicked sense of humor and he loves to fish, read and ride his boogie board. He was the only boy who talked when he arrived at the Howards, and what he told Jayne was often hard to hear. Among his stories: a memory of breaking open a glass jar of mayonnaise to feed himself and Talmadge when they were left home alone and hungry.

Talmadge, a kindergartener, above left, didn't talk when he arrived but he would eat "everything in sight," Jayne says, including Brussels sprouts and sauerkraut. "It was like, 'Give it to Mikey. See if he eats it.' He would eat nonstop because he was afraid he wouldn't get anything else." Today, Talmadge is a big hugger who loves The Weather Channel and fishing, and he'll take a catch off the hook when the others won't touch it. He's also a truth-teller, Jayne says: "He'll sit there and do something wrong, and then he'll come and tell you he did it."

John, a kindergartener, suffers from a genetic disease (Charcot-Marie-Tooth) that damages peripheral nerves and causes loss of sensation in his hands and

**BRIAN WYLIE**, foster care specialist, met Talmadge and Tashawn at admission and worked their cases through adoption. He continues to monitor the Howards' remaining foster children.

### ON THE CASE:

**LAURA MAYER**, foster care specialist, placed Talmadge and Tashawn with the Howards.

**MICHELLE KENNEDY**, adoption supervisor, brought Talmadge and Tashawn through the adoption process. She is working on adoptions for John, David and Susan.





The fishing pond and cul-de-sac are favorite play areas.

feet. Fortunately, he's a natural problem solver, and that skill will serve him well as his disease progresses. "[John] will see a problem and think of a solution while the others will come and ask for help," Jayne says. "He's developed special ways of putting on and taking off the leg braces he has to wear every day."

David, in pre-kindergarten, is highly intelligent and strong willed. "He'll sit there and tell you the sky is purple even though it's blue," Jayne laughs. "But being the youngest, he has to be." Athletic, he likes to climb, swim and fish. All four boys play soccer and baseball and cheer when their brothers play on other teams.

Susan, a 7th grader, was removed from a violent and neglectful home at age 11, along with three younger siblings who've been placed with other families. She enjoys softball, dancing, drawing, reading and music—and she likes to pile on the sofa with the boys for nightly bedtime stories. Susan has an A average in school, in spite of a newly diagnosed hearing impairment, and she plans to go to medical school.

Jayne believes these children, especially the boys, will form bonds that endure for life. Even at their young ages, she sees them filling in for one another, offering a strength to cover a weakness.

**"Children learn to know when they're loved and appreciated versus when they are not. And there was just something about the Howards."**

BRIAN WYLIE

MHC FOSTER CARE SPECIALIST



"We have those who are academically challenged and those who are physically challenged. They're all emotionally challenged," she says. "So I think they're going to nurture each other along. I see in the future that perhaps [John] won't be able to carry his bookbag, but Talmadge will. And perhaps Tashawn can't understand his math homework, but [David] can."

**B**ack at Fort Howard, David is hurtling across the monkey bars and the other boys line up for a turn. Susan steps outside to say goodbye before leaving on a church trip, and the sight of her sets off a round of shouting from the boys:

*We already tried the fort.*

*Do you want to play?*

*We have yogurt raisins, too.*

*Are you using my sleeping bag?*

*Bye-bye. When will you be home?*

*What are you going on? Are you going to fall asleep on the bus? Are you going on the bus or the train?*

With patient answers to each and four tight boy-hugs around the waist,



Susan is ready to leave.

"She is so sweet and so nice with the boys," Jayne says.

"Every now and then, Rick and I do a reality check. We step back and say, these are nice children. The average person doesn't know the challenges they have. They don't know the abuses or the problems they've had to overcome." ■

## A Gift of Opportunity

As an advocate for young people in North Carolina, Connie Maynard has long invested in programs that create opportunity, especially through education. In March, her family honored her passion and 16 years of service on the Methodist Home for Children Board of Directors with a \$200,000 gift in her name.

The Connie Maynard Program Fund at MHC supports a new vocational/educational program for teens committed to Youth Development Centers, helping them avoid gangs, finish school and find jobs after they're released. Called WORK4IT! (story below) the program operates in Nash, Edgecombe and Halifax counties, a region with poverty rates as high as 23.7 percent.

Easter Maynard says her mother has always found satisfaction in improving the lives of children. She earned an education degree at East Carolina University and taught elementary school before starting a family with her husband, James. At that point, she devoted herself as a homemaker and advocate for children—both her own and others whose options were much dimmer.

"She and my father both felt like they came from pretty humble circumstances," Easter Maynard says. "And they believe that the very best thing you can do is give children access to a good education so they can set their own path for the future."

In her years of service to MHC, Connie Maynard contributed a strong intellect and an unshakeable faith to the Board of Directors' operations, says President/CEO Bruce Stanley. "Her dedication has been complete and, with this significant gift in



James and Connie Maynard, center, announced a family gift on March 22 with their children: Easter Maynard and John Parker, left, and Quinton and Jessica Maynard. Dozens turned out to honor Connie Maynard at the end of her second and final term on the MHC Board of Directors. "It was a very special day for me," she says. "I appreciated seeing and hearing from everyone, the effort they made to be there and the thoughtful notes they sent afterward."

her honor, her influence will continue. The Connie Maynard fund is helping to give education, guidance and practical job skills to young men and women who come from places where these things are rare commodities. Connie Maynard has been, and continues to be, a blessing to children." ■

## Programs Offer New Start to Troubled Teens

Teenagers leaving Youth Development Centers (YDCs) are vulnerable to countless setbacks and distractions when they try to make a clean start at home. Alex knows this firsthand. Formerly associated with a gang and a few credits short of his high school degree, he's been committed to YDCs twice now for juvenile offenses. Growing up, he says, he saw other people making "fast money" through drugs, breaking and entering, stealing cars, selling drugs. He was 12 when he decided to join them.

Alex set out to break with his past through Methodist Home for Children's vocational/educational program, called WORK4IT!—one of two new initiatives to help youth finish school and find jobs after their release from a YDC.

WORK4IT! operates with support from the Connie Maynard Program Fund at MHC and targets teens, ages 14 to 17, as they return to homes in Nash, Edgecombe and

Halifax counties. Through WORK4IT! Alex enrolled in the Adult High School Diploma program at Nash Community College and worked on networking and job skills training. "It's hard, but I'm trying," he says.

Unlike Alex, other youth can't return home after release from a YDC, and they need a safe haven while they integrate themselves into the community. For them, MHC is piloting a transitional living program in New Bern in partnership with the N.C. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Starting in July, MHC's Craven County home will open to 16- to 18-year-olds with mentoring, job skills training, educational support and round-the-clock supervision.

The program will receive six youth for up to a year at a time with the goal of becoming a state model for helping teens get back on their feet as they leave YDCs. ■



# Aging Out: Monica Shares Her Story

Childhood for Monica Irwin was not typical or easy. She lived in foster care and group homes and she grieved an adoptive family that didn't work out. Adulthood, she hopes, will be better.

At age 18, Irwin has reason to hope. She graduated from high school in June and got a Fostering Bright Futures Fellowship to study at Wake Tech. She's standing on the edge of adulthood, trying to imagine all the possibilities and responsibilities, and she's doing it without the safety net of a traditional family. As one of 500 teens who age out of foster care in North Carolina each year, Irwin is part of a vulnerable population. A quarter of them drop out of high school, according to national data, and half experience homelessness. But because Irwin is part of the Methodist Home for Children family, she has access to educational and emotional support that will help her succeed. In her own words, this is her story:

I was 5 years old when social services removed me, along with my younger sister, from our birth mother's home in Manteo. We went from foster care, back to our mother and into foster care again before we were adopted by a local family. At that point it looked like our childhood would settle down, and that was true for my sister. But not for me. I didn't feel love in that home, and I never built a relationship with my adoptive parents. They decided to send me to a group home when I was in 5th grade, and I lived apart from them for about a year. It was a rough year. I remember being depressed, running away a lot and threatening to kill myself. I failed 6th grade. Not long after I came back home, I got into a bike accident that broke my pelvic bone, and my parents decided that I should leave again.

When they took me to Raleigh and dropped me off at the North Hills group home, I really didn't know what to think. I had just turned 13. I was there a year

before I heard that my parents were terminating rights to me. They were giving me back. That was really hard. Even though we had struggled, they were the only family I'd known. They mailed me my things—my baby blanket and photos—and I cried every time I looked at them.

At that point, I was in the care of Methodist Home for Children, and the staff found a wonderful foster mother for me in Raleigh. Her name was Ms. Allison, and she saved me. I remember that I hated to go out in public places because I was so self-conscious of what people thought. I'd have my hair in my face, looking down, and I'd walk around like that. Ms. Allison taught me confidence and she encouraged me to joke around and to laugh—which is something I didn't do before. She took me on great surprise vacations for my birthday. Her parents treated me like their granddaughter. I'd never had a family that actually opened their arms and let me in, and it made me really feel good. I'd lived with Ms. Allison in foster care for four years when she was diagnosed with cancer and I had to return to a group home. She is better now and married with another foster child in her home, but I never went back to her.

Today I know that I'm not going to have the same kind of family support that most people have when they graduate. But I still like to consider Ms. Allison as my mom and Methodist Home for Children as my family, standing behind me all these years and teaching me what I need to succeed in life.

With their help, I've learned how to...

- get along with people—especially other teenage girls in a group home.
- carry my head high when people make assumptions about me because I live in foster care or a group home.
- work hard (I have a job at the Jordan Center) and pay my bills.
- stay positive and hopeful for my life.

A lot of foster kids have a story like mine, but they go through the system without ever having the kind of encouragement that Methodist Home for Children gave me. A lot of them don't have a plan for their lives and they end up homeless or in jail. I want to be an example for them, to show them that aging out isn't the end. Yes, it's a little scary, but I'm excited. I know I can make it if I've made it this far, and I have Methodist Home for Children to thank for that. ■



## Our Newest MHC Families!

Jimmy and Kathy Shepard of Kenly adopted Taylor, 10, photo below, on July 6, 2010. Taylor is in 3rd grade and enjoys reading and attending Sunday school. Family and friends are important to her, Kathy Shepard says: "She is shy until she gets to know you, and after that she is a burst of energy."

Pauline Phillips of Wilmington adopted Lia, 4, and Miguel, 5, photo top right, on



Jan. 15, 2010. The siblings join sisters Makayla, 11, and Celine, 15. Lia loves horses and Barbie dolls, and Miguel enjoys playing T-ball. "There's a lot of love in this home," says Laura Mayer, foster care specialist. "With Miguel, it takes him 10 minutes to get to know you and 15 minutes to tell you he loves you."

Daniel and Vanessa Hines of Wilmington adopted twins Ty and Zy, 9, photo right, on Feb. 12, 2010. The girls join brothers Zaire, 13, and Darian, 14, who were adopted through Methodist Home for Children as infants. Ty and Zy are the biological sisters of Tonasia West, featured in the Fall 2010 *Spotlight*. They are in 4th grade and enjoy drawing, beating their mom in Uno, singing in their church choir and laughing. "I love to visit them," Mayer says, "There is always laughter in their home." ■



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about this grand evening, contact  
Regina Hawse, Development Officer,  
910.471.6088 or email [rhawse@mhfc.org](mailto:rhawse@mhfc.org).

## Legislators Briefed on MHC Record

Methodist Home for Children runs multipurpose homes in North Carolina for repeat juvenile offenders who are likely to end up at a Youth Development Center (YDC). A retired federal justice official told N.C. lawmakers in March that MHC gets the best results with the most difficult kids, significantly reducing their rates of reoffending, and it uses evidence-based practices consistent with those at the country's top juvenile delinquency prevention programs.

James C. "Buddy" Howell, former director of research and program development for the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention, told legislators that only 4 to 6 percent of juvenile offenders should be in YDCs. Matching the others with programs like MHC multipurpose homes—operated at about 60 percent the cost—would save the state money and get better results.

MHC operates the homes in partnership with the N.C. Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Their practices, found among 700 of the best programs nationally, focus on reducing repeat offenses and requiring accountability.

Howell told lawmakers that two out of 10 youth served in MHC multipurpose homes are gang-associated, with more risk factors, problem behaviors and trouble in their lives than other repeat juvenile offenders. "They showed a lower rate of reoffending and a lower rate of recommitment [to a YDC]," Howell said. "So it's really impressive the track record that's been demonstrated."

A study by Research Triangle Institute documented the multipurpose homes' effectiveness in reducing repeat crimes among juvenile offenders. ■



# A Winter's Tale: The Epilogue

Glittering tables. Glamorous gowns. Glowing lights. After 14 years, these are the elegant and time-honored signatures of *A Winter's Tale*, Methodist Home for Children's fundraising gala in Raleigh. But the *piece de resistance* isn't what you can see. It's what you can feel in the company of more than 500 glad and giving hearts.

Supporters raised a record \$215,000 this year through *A Winter's Tale* auctions, ticket sales and fund-a-need gifts to care for individual children. MHC is grateful for each person who bought a ticket, invited a friend, donated an auction item, raised a bid card or—you know who you are—paid \$1,400 for an autographed NC State basketball.

The event is also an occasion to honor new members of the Guardian Angel Society—businesses and people who, through their service and support, have made extraordinary commitments to those in MHC's care. The 2011 Guardian Angel Society inductees were FFG Companies Inc. of Knightdale, Matt and Susan Glover of Seaboard, Michael and Martha Hetrick of Ocean Isle Beach, and Wyrick Robbins Yates & Ponton of Raleigh.

Without the support of friends, in ways



small and great, Methodist Home for Children could not fulfill its mission of serving vulnerable children and their families. Join us next year at *A Winter's Tale* on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2012. ■

MHC President/CEO Bruce Stanley with Board of Directors Chair Julie Hans, right, and hostess Debra Morgan, anchor for WRAL-TV



*Methodist Home for Children thanks those who made A Winter's Tale a success:*

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## They Taught Us To Work

In December 1950, 7-year-old Janice Roebuck arrived at Methodist Orphanage (MO) in Raleigh along with her sisters Minnie and Alice and brother Steve.

A younger brother, John, was placed a few miles away at the N.C. School for the Blind. The five Roebuck

children were the youngest of nine and their father, a Bertie County tenant farmer, was unable to keep them after their mother died.

Janice remembers she wept almost constantly those first few weeks at MO until, finally, teacher Mary Ferree made her an offer: "If you'll just stop crying, I'll buy you a drink." The drink was a Nehi orange, Janice remembers, and the teacher was a steadfast source of encouragement and compassion for the next 12 years. There were supportive others on staff, as well, Janice says. Teacher Helen Madison instilled in her a love for reading, and Mabel "Muh" Brown, "the closest thing to a substitute parent any MO kid had," loaned her books from the campus soda shop. "I read every Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys book we had," she says.

But orphanage life was more than books and sodas, with fully scheduled, task-filled days cleaning bedrooms, scrubbing bathrooms, collecting kindling, stoking and banking boiler fires, ironing clothes, and fixing and serving breakfast for hundreds. The work ethic she developed was the "heart of the gift" she received from MO.

In 8th grade, Janice was inducted into the National Junior Honor Society and, with that success, she says, "I made up my mind that I was going to college." This meant additional academic work, and soon she was saving her lunch allowance for a summer-school geometry class to prepare for advanced math in high school.

The planning paid off when Janice graduated in 1962 and enrolled at N.C. Wesleyan College. A scholarship from the Women's Society of Christian Service (today's United Methodist Women) helped pay the way and introduced her to Janis Gravely and Marilyn Spencer, two caring members at First United Methodist Church in Rocky Mount. She found another ally in N.C. Wesleyan President Tom Collins, who made sure she had a steady stream of campus work-study jobs.

"Remember," she laughs, "I knew how to work; I knew how to study. Living in a dorm, rising early for my shift in the dining hall before classes—that was not hard for me."

The summer before college Janice had worked "barning" tobacco in Rocky Mount, and it was on that job she met Charlie Meyer, a high school football star about to start classes at UNC-Chapel Hill. The pair built a friendship that grew over time and, after graduation, they married and landed teaching jobs in Rocky Mount.

Janice taught several years in the Nash County schools and then left for home and her new job as mother. She returned to teaching briefly before welcoming children two, three and four, this time staying home 12 years to raise her family. Charlie found a new career



The five youngest Roebuck children, top photo, came to Raleigh for care after their mother died. From left are Steve, John, Janice, Alice, Minnie and their father. Janice married Charlie Meyer, bottom, after college.

in information technology and worked for Hardee's, BB&T and Nash General Hospital. In 1985, Janice went back to the classroom and worked 24 years as a high school math teacher.

Janice and Charlie are now retired and enjoying the "dream home" they built outside of Rocky Mount. Three of their children live nearby, the fourth is in Boone, and they dote on seven grandchildren. Janice stays involved with the MO/MHC Alumni Association and says the four Roebuck children were well served by MO. "They [staff] taught us how to work, and they taught us the difference between right and wrong," she says. "That prepared us for life." ■



# Bequests Reveal a Son's Giving Heart

It was only after Bruce Cannon's untimely death at age 49 that his family realized the extent of his caring for people in need. "We knew that Bruce was a giver," says his father, Billy Cannon. "But we just didn't know how much of a giver he was. He was a Bill Gates in his heart—without the means of Bill Gates."

When Cannon died on Dec. 26, 2009, he left behind a legacy of love with significant bequests to Methodist Home for Children and other charitable organizations. "He loved children, with none of his own," Betty Cannon wrote in a letter informing MHC of a \$30,000 gift in her son's will. "What a wonderful job you do at Methodist Home for Children, and I'm glad our son is having a part in helping children's lives."

Cannon spent most of his life in

Kinston, where his parents still live. He studied sports management at Lenoir Community College (LCC) and later graduated from the University of Alabama. He particularly loved the LCC sports program and, through his will, established a scholarship for student athletes at the school.

An on-the-job injury forced Cannon to retire after 20 years at UPS, but he remained busy in the community, attending Westminster United Methodist Church and engaging in his passion for renovating houses. Along the way, he found ways to serve others, delivering meals and helping people without the means to buy cars.

Stories about Cannon's acts of kindness, told at the funeral and in letters that followed, have been a source of



comfort to his parents. Through gifts to MHC and other charitable organizations, his father says, Cannon will live on through service to others. ■

## A Legacy of Faith

Donations by bequest—gifts of cash or property made by will or testament—are blessed reminders of God's grace. "We are always humbled and awed to receive this type of contribution," says Polly Willis, vice president for advancement at Methodist Home for Children. "What could be more inspiring than to leave a gift for a child in need as part of your final earthly business?"

A bequest notice arrives on Willis' desk every three or four months, usually from folks who've been part of the MHC donor base for some time. Others appear without any apparent connection. "Often I recognize the name of a legacy donor," Willis says, "and it will be someone I have spoken to or corresponded with over the years." For those who are unknown to

MHC staff, Willis is convinced that "clearly, God has spoken to them" in a beautiful and purposeful way.

One such bequest came this winter from Bruce Cannon of Kinston (story above). Two others arrived in spring from longtime supporters in Morehead City and Rockingham. Like all unrestricted bequests to our ministry, the donations are placed with the MHC Foundation, the steward of endowments and invested funds.

If you are creating or revising your estate plans, please consider establishing a gift to support MHC. You can find sample language at [www.mhfc.org](http://www.mhfc.org) with three clicks: How You Can Help + Donate by Bequest + Click Here for Bequest Language.

For more information, call Willis toll-free at 888.305.4321 ext. 321. ■

## *A Heartfelt Thank You...*

to the United Methodist Women, pastors and congregations in the North Carolina Conference for your special offerings on

## **Methodist Home for Children Sunday**

Your gifts of nearly \$136,500 will support our ministry to serve vulnerable children and families in North Carolina.

*Thank you.*

# You Make It All Happen!

## 1K FOR 1KID

Inspired by a sermon series on Robert Schnase's *Five Practices of Fruitful Living*, **Asbury UMC** in Washington launched its 1K for 1Kid campaign with an impromptu collection on MHC Sunday.

**The Avett Brothers**, photo below, gave more than \$10,000 to support children in our care with a year-end benefit show at Cat's Cradle in Chapel Hill. Credited in *Southern Living* as "the best thing to happen to Southern rock since 'Free Bird,'" the three-member band has roots in North Carolina and a following that sells out concert halls worldwide.



**Bethel UMC** became a 1K for 1Kid church in November 2010 with its first \$1,000 gift.

**Farmville UMC**, a three-year 1K for 1Kid church, has found a new way to support Methodist Home for Children. Members who traditionally donate fresh flowers for the sanctuary are encouraged instead to make a gift to 1K for 1Kid or other ministry. Their gifts are noted in the church bulletin.

**Raleigh District UMC churches** raised \$11,435 through the 2010 Christmas Offering for the support of more than 11 children in care.

Christian band **Sojourner** and **White Plains UMC** in Cary raised nearly \$1,000 with a Christmas concert.

**Swepsonville UMC** in Burlington raised \$1,000 last year and renewed its 1K for 1Kid commitment for 2011.

After MHC President/CEO Bruce Stanley spoke at **University UMC** in Chapel Hill, senior pastor **Carl King** urged his congregation to help financially with the care of 10 children for a year. The congregation gave \$12,500—enough for more than 12 children.

## ACTIVE SUPPORT

The **Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce** donated \$570 in the name of John Meyer of Pinehurst, who jumped into Chetola Lake at the January Winterfest Polar Plunge. Meyer raised more than \$320 in donations and won a \$250 bonus for collecting the most gifts for his charity of choice, MHC.

**Karen Boyer** of Germany ran a half-marathon in honor of the girls in our North Hills group home. She finished the race in 2 1/2 hours and sent back \$680 in sponsorships—plus a care package of cookies and clothes.

**North Carolina State Employees Combined Campaign** donated nearly \$13,400.

**Wrightsville UMC** donated \$2,090 from its annual Son Run at Wrightsville Beach, held in April to benefit MHC and other charities.

## PASS THE PLATE

Led by **Barbara Bunn** and **Kelly Clay**, **Friends of MHC** at **Edenton Street UMC** in Raleigh donated \$3,500 from *When Pigs Fly—Missions Happen*, an April barbecue benefit. Photo right of volunteers Margie Schroeder, left, and Kelly Greenlee.

**United Methodist Men** and **United Methodist Women** at **Oleander UMC** in Wilmington donated a portion of proceeds from "Chicken for Children," an April fundraiser.

**White Plains UMC** and **First UMC-Cary** donated proceeds from their N.C.

State Fair booth to MHC and other Methodist causes.

## FUN FOR A CAUSE

**New Life Sunday School Class** at **Hayes Barton UMC** in Raleigh hosted our annual adoption awareness party in November with an inflatable bounce house, face painting, crafts and an unlimited supply of temporary tattoos. Photo, page 13 bottom left, of Mimi and Rainey.

Three churches hosted foster care appreciation dinners in May: **New Life Sunday School Class** at **Hayes Barton UMC** in the Raleigh District, **Farmville UMC** in the Greenville District and **Oleander UMC** in the Wilmington District.

**HELP** donations allowed teens in our Robeson County multipurpose home to meet Wes Moore, author of *The New York Times* Best Seller *The Other Wes Moore*.

The **N.C. Theatre** donated tickets for our kids to see Broadway musical shows—most recently, *Hello Dolly!*

**Oleander UMC** in Wilmington hosted an adoption party in April with dinner and gifts for three new "forever families."

**Wakefield UMC** of Raleigh donated tickets for our kids to see *Shrek The Musical* at the Durham Performing Arts Center.







**CLOSE TO HOME**

**Edenton Street UMC Circle 3** gave 52 backpacks, stocked with books and school supplies, to children leaving the Jordan Center for kindergarten.

**United Methodist Women of Edenton Street UMC** in Raleigh gave \$11,385 for the education of special-needs students at the Jordan Center and other children in our care.

**Julie Farris** and **GlaxoSmithKline** donated bears with warm hearts from

Build-a-Bear Workshop to our foster children in Wilmington.

The Methodist cross and flame welcomes visitors to MHC's Raleigh headquarters, photo bottom right, thanks to **Shaun Fath** of Durham and his Eagle Scout project, completed in April. Shaun is in Troop #461 at **Epworth UMC**.

**Healthways** of Morrisville donated bunny bags with books, toys and snacks for our Jordan Center kids. Photo above of Wellness Committee members at delivery.

Triangle **Krispy Kreme** stores celebrated Dr. Seuss Month in April with a book drive, collecting 300 books for our kids with a free doughnut offer.

**United Methodist Men of Pine Valley**

**A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS**

Christmas is a hard time of year to be in a foster home or a group home, but friends of Methodist Home for Children made sure that no child in care lacked for gifts under the tree or a reason to celebrate. With toy drives, parties and infinite kindness, you showed MHC children that they are remembered and loved. We could not have done this without you! A list of our holiday helpers is online at [www.mhfc.org](http://www.mhfc.org) under News.



**UMC** in Wilmington donated backpacks with emergency supplies for children placed in foster care. The congregation sponsors backpacks with gifts of \$25.

**St. Pauls UMC** in Carolina Beach provides monthly Angel Food packages to MHC families who provide foster care and who receive family preservation services. ■



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## Employee Excellence Awards

Methodist Home for Children ministers to children and their families, but the circumstances can be difficult—many young people are hardened by years of living with pain and calamity. The employees who put in long, hard hours to give these children a future are nothing short of heroes.

Among them, six were recognized with Employee Excellence Awards.

**Derrick Crumpler**, program manager, Wayne County multipurpose home, Residential Services

**Anita Crutcher**, administrative assistant, Consumer Relations

**Bobby Davis**, teacher assistant, Jordan Child & Family Enrichment Center, Early Childhood Services

**Amy Dellinger**, family preservation specialist, In-Home Services

**Evelyn Medina**, resident counselor, North Hills group home, Residential Services

**Nicole Walker**, resident counselor, Chowan County multipurpose home, Residential Services



**COMBINED  
FEDERAL  
CAMPAIGN**

**TO OUR FRIENDS WHO ARE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES:**  
MHC has been accepted into the Combined Federal Campaign. Our CFC agency number is #28619. Please designate MHC as your charity of choice — and encourage friends, co-workers, and neighbors who are also federal employees to do the same! We participate in these areas: Research Triangle Area, Onslow County (includes Camp Lejeune), Southeastern North Carolina (includes Fort Bragg), Cherry Point, and Piedmont Triad Area.



**CALLING ALL STATE EMPLOYEES!**  
You can designate MHC as your charity of choice in the State Employees Combined Campaign. Our SECC code is 1588. Encourage others to do the same — and better the lives of children, youth, and families in North Carolina.

