



## ***Where Needs Meet Love***

***July, 2016***

### **By the Numbers Served . . .**

*June, 2016*  
823 Families  
2658 Individuals

*June, 2015*  
720 Families  
2380 Individuals

### **Volunteers**

**Carter Blankenship** - Pantry  
**Keyanna Cole** – Clothing  
**Kim Lester** – Clothing  
**Billy Murphy** – Pantry  
**Janice Payne** – Baskets  
**Cynthia Willis** – Pantry  
**Steven Willis** – Pantry

### **Special Donation**

**Joyous Junque - \$1800**

### **LIBRARY IS OPEN! A REMINDER TO ALL VOLUNTEERS**

All resources in the library  
(near clothing) are available for  
your use on a loaner basis.  
Please help yourself!



Cora and daughter Josie Arthur, Pantry Volunteers,  
pick up the toy carton for their church, Morgans  
Baptist Church.

See Page 6 for Walk-A-Thon Results

### **Mark Your Calendar. . .**

**Christmas in July** – NOW! Containers in The Agape Center, Agape Partner Churches, and various businesses throughout July for unwrapped toys and books. (More info Page 6).

**School Supply Collection** – NOW! Check out <http://www.agapecentersml.org> for items needed, OR, simply write a check (payable to Agape) and we'll save you the time and shop for the specific items needed. (See Page 5 for more info).

**Agape's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Tournament** – Saturday, September 10— 8 am Mariner's Landing – Register at [www.agapecenterSML.org](http://www.agapecenterSML.org) or contact: Bob Winters at [bob.lynn.winters@gmail.com](mailto:bob.lynn.winters@gmail.com) or call: 484/888-1856

**SML Charity Home Tour** – October 7-9 – Call to volunteer NOW!

Carol Moyer: [carolmoyer1960@gmail.com](mailto:carolmoyer1960@gmail.com) 540-538-6230 (phone or text) OR

Patti Galofaro: [galo\\_lis@yahoo.com](mailto:galo_lis@yahoo.com) 201-572-3723. **Help is also needed to distribute posters to businesses outside beyond the Lake area.** (See Page 6).

# GOD Stories

## Prayer and Faith

Prayer and faith are two words that describe Cam Brandon's life in a nutshell! She lived in Bedford for one year, her tenth grade, and then moved to Richmond with her Mom. She had been praying for the opportunity to return to Bedford ever since 1967, over 44 years! During that time, she married, lived in several states, worked, and cared for her family. But her heart remained attached to this area as well as her prayers to return. Finally, in 2011, the opportunity arose to return to the place of her desire and prayers. She saw God lead her first to her new home, which happened to be available. It had some acreage, a lot of potential, and to her surprise, she was able to qualify for a mortgage. The house had been in foreclosure, and the bank offered it at a dramatically reduced price. God had miraculously brought her home, answering her long and constant prayer.

However, that joy soon began to unravel as job hunting produced no results. Cam said, "I had always had sufficient resources, but now, I was facing foreclosure myself. Jobs were not available. I searched for two years, but to no avail. I had finished two years of college, and I had never been unable to work, even after my stroke. I had never been in a position where I couldn't pay my bills. I was saved when I was seven years old; but this was probably the greatest faith-building period of my life. I was in a good church that taught me about prayer and faith. This was what I needed and my faith grew very strong through my faith and trust in God's Word."

Cam had had a stroke in the early nineties, which left her with some disabilities and brain damage. However, it never occurred to her to seek disability income. She had used all her savings and all her retirement funds to purchase and make the house livable. When someone suggested it, she applied for disability, but there was a waiting period of 5 months once approved. Ultimately she was approved, and God's timing again proved sufficient. She teetered on the brink of foreclosure, and went through three different attempts to get a loan modification.

Throughout the nearly two years it took to qualify for a loan modification to get a more manageable mortgage, Cam's trust never wavered. She says, "God

brought me here, gave me this home, gave me friends and a church family, so I never doubted Him. I simply trusted His Word that He would provide, even though I didn't know when or how".

Once she got her finances in order, it was clear that most things were covered; she could tithe, pay her mortgage; she could pay her electric bill, and put some gas in her car. But she was still struggling to have adequate food each month. She was going to another food bank in the area when someone suggested that the Agape Center was closer to her home in Bedford County.

"When I came to Agape, I was blown away! The opportunity to share my concerns with someone who really listened and cared; and then to have them pray for me had never occurred anywhere else in my search for assistance. I felt an extra empathy from everyone who volunteers at Agape. I quickly felt a desire to volunteer here myself. I had had a good life without major worries, and I know that I have God-given talents and skills. So when I interviewed with Sue Lipscomb and learned about the Data department, I felt drawn to serve. Volunteering is my way to give something back for what Agape is doing for me. Serving is an opportunity to give time and skills since I cannot give financially. I really feel this is where God has put me and I enjoy being a part of the volunteer staff here at Agape. I feel that I make an important contribution to the organization and am part of making this a good experience for our clients, since I am a client also." Cam now volunteers several times a month at Agape. She is also very involved in her church, New Life Christian Ministries in Roanoke.



Cam Brandon is thrilled to contribute to Agape by volunteering in the Data department.

*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9 (KJV)*

## Blessed to be at Agape

Carol Brown, volunteer in the Gift Shop, was cheerfully telling a group of students from Staunton Middle School about volunteering at Agape when she casually mentioned she had had a heart attack 4 months ago. Their ears perked up as they listened to her describe her commitment to Agape and the people served through this ministry.

In February, she was sharing with her church, Morgans Baptist Church,



about their mission program when she felt weak; she sat down in the choir loft, relying on the pastor to finish her presentation. The next day, she didn't feel much better, but went to the "Y", her usual morning routine. The staff there urged her to get to the hospital, so she drove herself to Bedford Memorial. They quickly assessed that she had congestive heart

failure and urged her to go to Lynchburg General Hospital, where she was hospitalized four days. The best thing that happened was that her doctor

(Continued page 3-Brown)



# GOD Stories

## A Second Chance to do it God's Way!

"I am a product of the 60's, and that didn't work out too well in raising my own children. I was a single mom, working full-time in a hospital an hour away from home, and trying to raise 5 children, including a foster child. Now I am raising my three grandchildren, and this time, I am trying to do it God's way," said Susanne Connors, an Agape client and volunteer.

Susanne moved to Moneta about two years ago from her home and family in New Jersey. "I would have never left my 93 year old mother because we are very close, or my church family. But I could sense God had something ahead for me."

Susanne's daughter had passed away suddenly, leaving her mom, Susanne to care for her children. Susanne, who has been a strong Christian for the past 15 years, was spiritually alert to this new life that God was directing. She was able to take early retirement from her job of 24 years, but needed more resources, a larger living space, and more money, to accommodate this enlarged family. In addition to three children, 6, 8, and 9 years old, she also has her disabled adult son living with her. Through a series of divine circumstances, friends helping her, prayers, pastors and other church members getting involved, she has recently moved into a home that is accommodating her family and costs less to rent.

"A friend invited me to EastLake Community Church, and this has made a huge difference, not only because of the friends I have made, but also due to the effect it is having on the children who have never been involved in church before." Susanne continued, "After I was forced to move from my first home after a tree fell on it and structurally damaged it; I was able to move temporarily into another home belonging to someone from Eastlake. They decided to sell their home within three months, which meant I needed to move again. However, as a result of that living situation, I became very good friends

and prayer partner with the owner. At the same time, my youngest son suddenly passed away in Pennsylvania, and although I was stressed to the max, who kept me going? Only God! I don't have such strength on my own. Then, people from my church not only helped find my current home, but they showed up to help me move!"

Another friend brought Susanne to Agape to volunteer, and it was there they she found even more friends. "I had no credit and no savings, but God has provided everything I have needed just in time. I would have never left New Jersey, but I am willing to sacrifice my comfort in order for my grandkids to have a better place

to live and get educated than I could provide in New Jersey."

Susanne's Agape Mentor is Grace Cooper. "I love Grace...we laugh together, we cry together, we connect so well. I can't say enough about Agape, because everyone has been so good to me. I went as a client, but ended up with new friends! They all live out their words."

Having elementary children at home makes adhering to a schedule, even a volunteer schedule, difficult. However, Susanne works in clothing at Agape, and is looking forward to helping with the Charity Home Tour in October.



Susanne Connors with grandchildren Alexis, Carmelo and Sean.

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### Brown-Continued from Page 2

suggested her pastor pray for her, and the doctor and other family gathered around her as Pastor Justin Arthur prayed in the hospital room. She was never without prayers, as most of her nurses were from Liberty University, and they also prayed with her each time they came in the room. The doctors adjusted her meds, and she is doing much better now.

Carol had driven a school bus for Bedford County for 27 years before she retired. She has been volunteering every week at Agape for about a year. She has had several great experiences since she's been at Agape, as client's needs have been provided. She shared about one man who came in for his birthday gift, hoping to find a winter jacket. There was no jacket to be found in the store, or in the warehouse. But the mentor made a note in his file, and two months later, the Lord had provided a very nice jacket in his size and color. Carol says, "I was there for the first visit, and the second, when we could actually provide his need, and that was a blessing for me to see his gratitude." She continued, we have had several women who come in on their birthday, and head straight for the children's area, to select something for their child rather than themselves. We also provide gift baskets for expectant moms, so they have some really cute things on hand when the baby is born. To see all the appreciation and thanks from the clients makes working in the Gift Shop very rewarding," Carol concluded with her ever-present smile.

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE

### Pantry Restocks with Donation from Gleaning for the World

Keeping the Pantry stocked with nutritious, fresh, varieties of food is an ever-present effort. Normally, pick-ups occur every day of the week, except Sunday. Occasionally, one of Agape's partners has surplus goods, and Agape volunteers are ready to pick-up, unload and restock the shelves. Recently, Gleaning for the World, located in Concord, VA, provided about 4000 pounds of pallets including water, juice, foods and snacks. Says Pantry manager, Judy Harper, "Praise the Lord Jehovah Jireh! He keeps providing!"



Gleaning for the World volunteers Steve (on the forklift) and Glen (standing at door) loaded several pallets of pantry goods for The Agape Center.





## RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE



### IT TAKES A TEAM!

Geoff Orth, Pantry, delivered 1000 pounds of potatoes (left) through the Society of St Andrew, from the Southview United Methodist Church in Roanoke.

(Right and Below) Bill and Laura Flight (green shirt), Pantry, organized a group of 5 adults and 14 children and teens from their church, Bedrock Community, to bag the donated potatoes into manageable sizes for our clients.



### School Supplies Needed NOW!

School supplies are now being distributed to Agape clients! There are over 1000 school age children of Agape clients who will receive school supplies for the coming school year. Since each school and class is very specific about the items needed, the easiest way to help is to provide a donation of \$10 for each packet of supplies and Agape volunteers will do the shopping for you! The window of opportunity is short (July 12 to August 17), so your help is needed NOW! A complete list of supplies needed is listed on the Agape web site or you can also donate on the website:

<http://www.agapecentersml.org>



### New Program Planned for Agape Clients

Agape will be offering a new class for 12-15 Agape clients from October 10 through December 5 on *Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World*. This international program is designed to help participants understand the issues that impact poverty with the goal of developing resources in order to move to self-sufficiency. The program is being funded by the SML Rotary, Centra Foundation, and the Moneta Medical Services. Applications are being accepted through August 30.

Jan Hogle, Pam Sinex and Debbie Griggs are the Agape volunteers who have been trained to offer the program. Jan says, "Every ministry of Agape is submitted to God. This program has been covered in prayer, and the prayer team continues to pray for it as we move forward. We are eagerly anticipating what He might do with this course. We don't know how many clients will apply or what will happen, but we are eager to "get on going with Getting Ahead!"



# RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE

## Christmas in July Walk-A-Thon a Success



### Volunteers and Walkers celebrate Agape's First Annual Walk-A-Thon!

Below Left — Jan (Mentor Administrator) and husband Woody Hogle, wrap up the Walk-A-Thon, held at the Moneta Community Park. Right—Santa and Mrs Claus are flanked by Executive Director, Sue Lipscomb and Assistant Director and Chair of the Christmas in July event, Karen Jones.

Containers are currently available in all thirteen Agape partner churches, The Agape Center, and many area businesses through the month of July to receive donations of new, unwrapped children's toys for Christmas.



**Volunteers:** If you have regular places of business that you visit in any of our nearby communities, such as Lynchburg, Forest, Roanoke, Salem, or even further, please consider taking a poster for the Charity Home Tour for posting. Contact Bonnie Fiori at 540-892-5906 or [abfiori@verizon.net](mailto:abfiori@verizon.net) and she will provide the poster(s) for you!



# RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE



## Tours are a Normal Part of Agape

Tours happen so frequently at Agape that most of us hardly notice. However, the time and effort of repeatedly telling people our story pays off in many ways, including new volunteers, donation of goods, partnerships in the community, and financial contributions from individuals and organizations.

Recently a group of students from Staunton River Middle School arrived with their teachers, as they were learning about being good citizens. They were guided through The Agape Center by Assistant Director Karen Jones, and interacted with several volunteers along the way. The volunteers always tell how blessed they are to be able to give back to the community, and many acknowledge that they are here by God's divine calling on their lives. What a testimony to these students and their mentors.



## Volunteers Bring Children, Grandchildren to Serve at Agape

Josie, 11, and Lydia, 14, join their mom Cora Arthur volunteering at Agape. They have volunteered in the pantry, clothing, and are 'urgent responders' for the intake area. Cora explained, "We live very close to Agape, so when there is an abundance of donations at the intake department, Moira (Bell, Intake Coordinator) will call us and we'll run over to help sort and distribute the donations."



Laura Flight trains her granddaughter, Bella Creary, 8, in the Pantry.

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## Sponsoring Churches

Bedrock Community Church

Goodview Baptist Church

Covenant Fellowship

Inner-Faith Fellowship Ministries

Dwelling Place Christian Fellowship

Morgans Baptist Church

EastLake Community Church

Palestine Baptist Church

Flint Hill Baptist Church

Radford Baptist Church

Franklin Heights Baptist/CrossPointe

Rocky Mount Baptist Church

Staunton Baptist Church

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