

Where Needs Meet Love

September, 2016

Welcome New Volunteers

Jodie Ansel – Pantry
 Sue Childress – Linen Director
 Kayla Dimassimo – Clothing
 Tammy Henderson – Linens
 Jeff Mangold – Maintenance/
 Acquisition Director
 Joey Nance – Toy Factory
 Bailey Ratliff – Clerk/Runner
 Regina Rodriguez – Clothing
 Suzy Windsor - Clothing

DO YOU HAVE A KROGER PLUS CARD?

It is time to re-enroll for Agape!

The Agape Center has received over \$15,000 since 2014 from Kroger's Rewards Program. Praise the Lord!

Thanks to each of you for registering with Kroger and indicating that you support The Agape Center, Moneta, VA. Each year, Kroger donates up to 5% of the value of your purchases to the charity of your choice. HOWEVER, you must re-register your card with your designated charity each year in August! Your selection does NOT carry over year to year. You must re-enroll in the Community Rewards program annually. So, whether you were already enrolled, or if this is your first time, go to: www.kroger.com/communityrewards and register to have Kroger donate a portion of your spending to the SML Agape Center or #83866.

By the Numbers Served . . .

August, 2016
 Families – 813
 Individuals – 2683

August, 2015
 Families – 717
 Individuals – 2358

Nearly **850** School Supply Packets were provided to clients' children.

Agape Strategic Plan Results in Facilities and Program Expansion

Beginning in January, 2016, the Agape Board of Directors began a strategic planning process to identify how we are doing and where improvements could be made. Responding to comments from our church partners, clients, and volunteers, many changes have already begun taking place. One of the most significant impacts on Agape's operation is the continued growth of clients, the continued increase in donated goods, and the resulting space constraints both in the mentoring and public spaces, as well as in the intake, storage, and pantry spaces. As a result, more space is being created for additional mentor rooms and waiting areas within the existing building.

A new building is being constructed for classroom/ meeting room and furniture drop-off and storage. A pole barn is being constructed for outdoor equipment, such as lawn and snow equipment, as well as bike storage.

The cost of the interior renovations and the two new buildings is estimated at \$300,000. Fundraising is currently underway Jack Lipscomb is the construction manager, and the builder is F & S Building Innovations of Roanoke.

Another aspect of the Strategic Planning process is the introduction classes and programs which are intended to help clients get ahead and achieve their personal and spiritual goals. Closer linkages with the thirteen partnering churches is key to helping clients get involved in a caring, Christian community of believers and promoting the churches in a more substantial way will be taking place through television monitors highlighting our churches' specific programs and outreaches that affect clients.

In addition, a pilot program is being offered beginning in October, where clients will learn how to achieve their personal goals through the coaching and facilitating of Jan Hogle and Pam Sinex during two classes each week for from October through December.

Mark your Calendar . . .

October 7-9 – Charity Home Tour – We still need volunteers. Please call–

Agape Recruiters – Carol Moyer: carolmoyer1960@gmail.com 540-538-6230 (phone or text) **OR Patti Galofaro:** galo_lis@yahoo.com 201-572-3723. *See Charity Home Tour story on page 2.*

October 8 – 3 pm -- Second Annual Barefoot Walk on the Farm – Fundraiser for Agape... Contact: Jennifer Grizzle at 910/477-0072. *See story on page 3.*

November 12 – 1:30-7 pm --Singing for Agape --A benefit concert of Blue Grass/Gospel music is being presented by volunteer Becky Blankenship and her extended family. This concert will provide funds for construction at The Agape Center. *See story on page 2.*

GOD Stories

Tragedies Develop Client's Trust in God

Lynn Williams has had a history of tragedies in her life, and says, "A lot of people don't understand how I keep going. I was born to two alcoholic parents, and my mother died when I was five. I watched my sister get killed by a hit-and-run accident. I was placed in 18 foster homes. I have struggled with bipolar disorder all my life. In spite of all that, I did finish high school, married a wonderful man, John, and have three beautiful daughters."

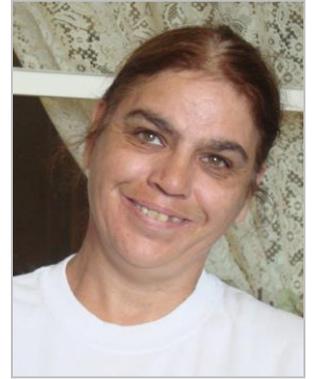
Lynn was ultimately adopted when she was eleven years old by Mary Lou Morgan, the woman she lovingly calls 'mom'. Her mom helped Lynn develop coping skills and introduced her to Jesus. Mary Lou was a Sunday School teacher and taught Lynn the 23rd Psalm and the Lord's Prayer, two passages from the Scriptures that are indelibly etched in Lynn's heart. Her trust in Jesus has brought her through many hard times, including the death of her dear husband John in October, 2012. This interview actually took place on the date that would have been their 25th anniversary, and Lynn was overcome with thanksgiving for the seventeen years they had together, and the love that he brought into her life.

Another big blow to Lynn was this past May, 2016, when she called her mom on Mother's Day and there was no answer. It wasn't until four days later that she learned her mom had passed on to her eternal reward.

Lynn has been a client at Agape for over five years, and she says, "Every mentor

I have had has made me stronger. When I leave the (mentoring) room, I feel peace. The mentors do help make my life easier, by their prayers, and their care for me. Prayers really do make a difference."

Lynn says, with great confidence of someone who has considered carefully, "God has a reason for everything. We just have to follow his lead. I have been so blessed! I have three beautiful grown daughters. One is about to graduate from her third college. The Lord has blessed me beyond measure. My mom not only brought me to Jesus; she introduced me to the choir, and I enjoy singing to the Lord to this day. I was so blessed to have her as a role model and as a mother. Losing her left a deep hole. But I know I will join her and my dear husband someday."



Lynn Williams

CHARITY HOME TOUR JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Each year that Agape is blessed to be a designated charity of the Charity Home Tour provides abundant blessings in many ways, in building relationships within the community and with the homeowner, raising funds for our organization, and helping other charities as well. With these blessings also comes a lot of hard work.

We still need additional volunteers to help staff our designated home, Rick and Debbie Cocrane, who are both Agape volunteers. To staff this home, 165 shifts need to be filled, both indoors and outdoors. We still have many unfilled slots. These can be filled by Agape volunteers and family members, but also by anyone you recruit. They do not need to be a part of Agape and they will be trained. **Please contact the Agape Recruiters listed on page 1.**

(CHT Continued on page 4)



When Becky Blankenship first heard that a pole barn might be constructed at Agape for storage, it made her day! She has volunteered at Agape for six years in many different areas, finally finding her niche in the gift/toys/Christmas department. She says, "For two years, I've been tripping over bicycles – ha, ha – and to resolve this problem, I thought, we need a bike shop! We need a place to work on bikes and then to store bikes. I suggested this idea and even offered to help raise money for it. When I learned that a pole barn was coming, I was so excited. Now our bikes will have a good home!"

Becky wasted no time in contacting her extended family, who perform blue grass and gospel concerts in the area. The Glenwood Center was reserved, and the event was rolling. Some Agape volunteers are helping provide refreshments to sell and setting up a Silent Auction.

All funds raised will be donated for the construction of the Bike (Oops!) Pole Barn. The Agape Benefit Concert will run from **1:30 – 7 pm on Saturday, November 12 at Glenwood Center, 2074 Smith Mountain Lake Pkwy, Huddleston, VA 24104.** Come for all or part of the afternoon and enjoy the Family Grass and the Jr Jean and Benny Bands.



RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE

God Prompts Client to Volunteer and Create Fundraiser for Agape

When Jennifer Grizzle arrived in the Moneta area two and a half years ago, her situation was quite bleak. Her husband had left her with two small boys (now 2 ½ and 6). Living in this area was quite a change from the Outer Banks of North Carolina. With a handful of relatives and no friends, she was starting over.

One of the first things she did, at the request of her son, Jamison, was to find a church. She and the boys got ready on a Sunday morning, and began driving from their home toward Highway 122. Along the way, they passed two churches, and Jamison shook his head; these weren't the ones. Then, they came to Radford Baptist Church, and he enthusiastically exclaimed, "This is it!"

Coming to Radford Baptist opened many new doors for her, the first of which was strengthening her relationship with Jesus and entering a season of spiritual growth. Then, someone from the church suggested she visit The Agape Center and enroll her kids in Awana, and soon they found themselves among friends who really cared and were willing to help her and the children.

At Agape, she felt very accepted, and after a few visits, connected with her Mentor, Grace Cooper in a special way. They have become prayer buddies and she says, "I have learned so much from Grace."

Meanwhile, Jamison was learning about missions and missionaries at church, and announced that he wanted to raise money for kids who didn't have shoes or clean water. That started a fundraising effort that Jennifer dove into headfirst. They had the first Barefoot Walk in the SML State Park in 2015, and raised \$1400. This year, they have moved the event to the farm property where they now live. This Second Annual Barefoot Walk on the Farm will be held on Saturday, October 8 at 3 pm at the Three Crosses at 1361 Tuck Road with all proceeds going to The Agape Center.



Jennifer Grizzle's bright smile is a reflection of Jesus within her.

Meanwhile, Jennifer continued as a client at Agape, but recently felt God lay on her heart to begin volunteering. She began her training as a Runner in September and is very excited for how God will use her in this role.

Jennifer works from her home as a marketing/public relations representative for a North Carolina construction company. She has started the enrollment process to take business and theology at Liberty University On-Line.

Quilters Guild Donates \$500 to Agape



Karen Jones, Agape's Assistant Director, accepts a \$500 donation from the SML Quilters Guild President, Stephanie Schaefer, along with co-chairs of the Gift Shop Janet Sellers (back left) and Eileen Hawkins, back right).

RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE

CHT (continued from page 2)

Another aspect of our participation is the development of Sponsors for the event. Each participating charity is expected to solicit a minimum of \$5000 for the event. This year, Agape's Sponsorship Team was headed by Kris McKenzie, and included Renee Thomas, Phyllis Johnson, and Robbie Hallock. **The Agape Sponsorship Team has far exceeded its goal, raising over \$13,000! Congratulations to this team for their hard work.**

Gift Basket Preparation in Full Swing for Christmas

The Gift Basket Ladies never really stop, as they are preparing baskets throughout the year in anticipation of the Christmas demand. Now that fall is upon us, the team shifts into high gear. So far, they have been able to put together about 700 baskets; normally by this time of year, they have close to 2000 prepared, but this past year, Agape began providing birthday gift baskets for all clients during their birthday month, so the ladies are very busy catching up.

Barbara Mullins says, "I have worked in several departments at Agape before I found my niche here. I love to do floral arrangements, any type of decorating. It is a special blessing to work with these ladies. They have lifted me up after my grandson was killed a year ago, and I absolutely love being here at Agape as often as I can."

Karen Fusaro comes twice every week to build creative baskets for birthdays and Christmas. Her favorite, though, is Baby Baskets. She says, "I love finding unique, necessary gifts so that new moms have the opportunity to have a few new items for their little ones."

Kim Gauthier, Team Leader, comes from Lynchburg several times a week to work on the baskets. She says, "I love making baskets. I love to pamper the clients and make them feel special for themselves. We realize this may be the only gift they receive for their birthday, as they use all their resources for their families, children and grandchildren, usually putting their needs and wants to the back burner. We have had several small groups (PDFs from EastLake, VBS programs, and Bible study groups) come in to help, and they have provided a tremendous service for us."

If you have a group of friends, family or neighbors and would like to help with baskets, contact Eileen Hawkins at e_m_hawkins@yahoo.com.



From left, Barbara Mullins, Karen Fusaro, and Kim Gauthier are a close-knit team working to bring love in a unique and personal way to each client at Agape.

You Can Help Provide Needed Gift Items That Many Consider Basic Necessities!

Especially needed are men's items: deodorant, shampoo, shaving cream/disposable razors, body wash/soap, winter hats, gloves, ball caps, flashlights/batteries, Bibles/New Testaments, coffee, coffee mugs, snacks, sox, and belts. Other items needed for our male clients are packages of t-shirts (especially XL to XXXX), sweatshirts, hoodies, sweat pants (XL to XXXX); tools of all types; card games; tarps and ropes. (For a complete list of ongoing needs, check out the Agape website at <http://www.agapecentersml.org>).

RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE

Agape Open Raises Over \$20,000

The 12th Annual Agape Open Golf Tournament was held September 10 at Mariner's Landing Golf and Country Club, raising over \$20,000 for The



Bob Winters, Agape mentor, also chaired the Agape Open.

Agape Center in Moneta.

The Agape Open team included: Bob Winters, Chair; Bob Stouffer, Sponsors; Phyllis Johnson, Sponsors, Prizes; Kellie Wisotzkey, Event Day Luncheon; Becky Blackman, Program Development, Prizes; Roger Blackman, Event Day Signs; Carol Moyer, Event Day Mariners; Teresa McCain, Golfer Registration, Promotion.

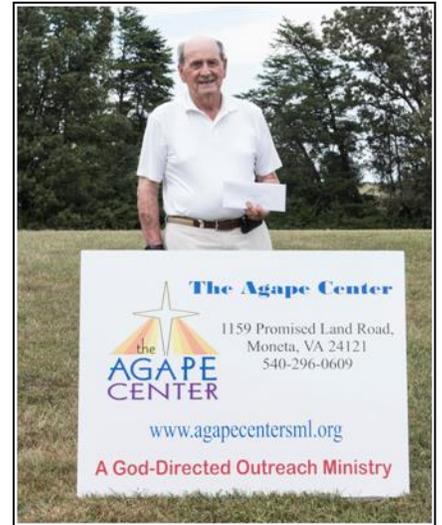
All 96 slots for golfers were filled and eight Tournament Sponsors led with contributions totaling \$8000. These included Re/Max Lakefront Realty (Phyllis and Casey Johnson), Runk & Pratt, Edward Jones (Carl Grove), Distribution Specialists, Inc., David James Homes Lakewatch, Shumaker Industries, Bob and

Lynn Winters, and Bridgewater businesses Gifts Ahoy, Bridgewater Sportswear, and Fun N Games Arcade. Eight Gold Sponsors, 22 Hole Sponsors, 20 Program Sponsors, and 34 Friends of Agape rounded out the supporting companies, organizations,



First Place Team Winners: Wil Childress, Jessie Pierce, Vida Parker, Bill Parker.

Third Place Team Winners: Al Beamer, Charles Waybright, Ken Hitchcock, Noel Nicely; Longest Drive, Men, Jack Doyle; Longest Drive, Women, Charlene Jones (not pictured); Closest to the Pin, Noel Nicely.



Jack Doyle was the winner of the Longest Drive.

and individuals.

First Place Team Winners: Wil Childress, Jessie Pierce, Vida Parker, Bill Parker; Second Place Team Winners: Aaron Walters, Brent Jenkins, Corey White (not pictured - Early Page);

God Continues to Provide – Month by Month

Judy Harper has been volunteering at Agape for over five years, and she is continually amazed at God's provision in the Pantry, just when food is needed. She says, "This summer, we have blessed with thousands of pounds of food – apples, corn, peaches, squash, zucchini." **Right: Mac McIntyre and Roger Blackman pick up over 4000 pounds of watermelon for our Agape clients from our partner, Feeding America Southwest Virginia.**



RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE

Agape Reorganizes for More Efficiency

Several new departments have been created in order to provide more attention and focus in all the related areas. The former Store/Clothing Department has been separated, forming separate departments for the Store, with Kris McKenzie continuing as its director and responsible for clerks and runners, and Clothing, Co-directed by Monica Bergman and Stephanie Childress. Stephanie continues to also serve as a mentor.



From Left, Monica Bergman and Stephanie Childress, Co-Directors of Clothing; Kris McKenzie, Director of Store, Clerks, Runners.

The Housewares Department, directed by Sheila Saunders, has spun off the newly created Linen Department, directed by new



Sheila Saunders and Sandy Gravley clean donated dishes in Housewares.

volunteer, Sue Childress. Sue first learned about Agape while taking a tour with her pastor from Huddleston Church of God of Prophecy, about two years ago. She had run a clothing outreach at her church, but eventually it became too much, so they discontinued the clothing ministry and began referring clients to Agape. "I felt God pulling me back into this type of ministry, and I am really excited to become a part of something so important to God and to our community," Sue says.



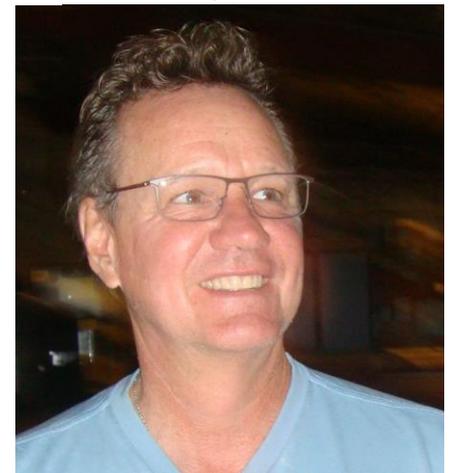
Sue Childress, Linen Director

Another new department to Agape, Acquisitions, is under the direction of another new volunteer, Jeff Mangold. Jeff lives here at the lake and first heard about Agape when Sue Lipscomb, Executive Director, made a presentation to his church, St John Lutheran in Roanoke, earlier this year. He began volunteering in June working 2-3 days/week. As the owner of WasteStream Solutions, Inc., he assists medical

manufacturers in the reuse of their production waste, by processing and re-selling to other businesses who can utilize the repurposed waste materials. Jeff says, "I have worked in and around warehouses for the past twenty-four years, and I am so impressed and excited to be working here at

Agape. The warehouse is amazing, well-organized and clean. I am blown away by the caliber of volunteers. Because there is no monetary incentive at Agape, tensions between individuals and departments don't exist. I love it here. It is good for my soul!" In addition to serving in furniture, Jeff identifies some of the items Agape buys on a regular basis, such as paper goods (toilet paper, paper towels, adult and baby diapers), laundry soap, and other commodity items and is focusing on procuring these in bulk at discounted prices.

(New Continued on page 7)



Jeff Mangold is the Director of the newly-formed Acquisition Department.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE

New (continued from page 6)

And finally, the USDA Department has been created to comply with all government reporting requirements. A new director is being sought for this Department.

Congratulations and a BIG THANK YOU to all who have accepted more responsibilities!



***To All Agape Volunteers,
Jack and I are so blessed
to be a part of our Lord's
ministry at the Agape Center
with each of you.***

***Your prayers, flowers,
cards, food, donations to
Agape and yes, even
presence at the Memorial
Service in PA meant so much
to us and have helped us get
through and reminded us of
the goodness of our heavenly
father. Amazingly 8 of our
Agape volunteers made the 6
hour (one way) trip to
support us at the Memorial
Service. There are no words
to describe our gratitude to
each and every one of you
for holding us up during a
difficult time.***

***We will miss Amy every
day of our lives but give God
the glory for her life and
how she continues to make
a difference in the lives of
those who knew her. God
bless you and thank you so
much,***

Jack & Sue Lipscomb



“Getting Ahead” Classes Getting Ready to Start

God has put many different things into place, from Agape's strategic planning and the client focus group, to community classes, to funding, so that a new program will be offered clients beginning in October. “Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin' By World” is being organized by Jan Hogle, Debbie Griggs and Pam Sinex. These three women have taken extensive training, and have invested hours of prayer, planning and organizing to kick this program off on October 10.

Nearly fifty clients applied for the class, and after extensive interviews, fifteen clients who were willing to invest their time and energy into attending the twice a week class, plus homework, were accepted.



Jan Hogle met with Joy Sylvester-Johnson, Director of the Rescue Mission in Roanoke, for additional ideas on providing client programs.

The class is also being offered by Lake Christian Ministries and Bedford Christian Ministries. Childcare is being coordinated by Stephanie Childress and Food Hosting is being coordinated by Karen Baker. Funding for the program is provided by grants from the SML Rotary, Moneta Medical Services and Centra Health Foundation. Depending on results additional classes may be considered.

September 2016

Volume 7

Issue 9

The Agape Newsletter is a monthly publication produced by The Agape Center for volunteers, sponsoring churches, and other interested individuals and organizations.

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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

Published by The Agape Center, 1159 Promised Land Road (PO Box 573), Moneta, VA 24121 (Phone: 540/296-0609) www.agapecentersml.org