

Where Needs Meet AGAPE Love

November, 2016

CHARITY HOME TOUR NETS \$22,833 FOR AGAPE

By the Numbers Served Served

October 2016

855 Families
2787 Individuals

October 2015

796 Families
2678 Individuals

WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS

Linda Arthur—Clothing
Amy Carroll—Clerk/
Runner
Carolyn Hannabass—
Baskets
Kim Helms—Clothing
Kimberly Hollar—
Clothing
Kacey McCreary—
Clothing
Lin Plumb—Clerk
Mark Plumb—Mentor

Special Donations

- \$22,833 Charity Home Tour
 - \$1550 Ride for Hope
- (See Story page 5)

Executive Director, Sue Lipscomb, accepted a check from the Charity Home Tour after Jan Hogle told the story of commitment to the Getting Ahead Program. (See Page 3.)



A HUGE THANK YOU to all the volunteers from Agape who made this another spectacular event for our community and for those in our community who need Agape's help. Your gracious participation and testimony gave glory to God and helped meet the needs of our clients.

Get Your Angel Gift Tag

Angel Trees are going up in Agape's fourteen partner churches, and shopping has begun for the children's gifts to be distributed beginning the last week of November! Be sure to pick up an Angel Gift Tag, either at your church or at The Agape Center. This year's Christmas season is expected to be the largest ever, and the preparations have been underway for months, so join in now in this last effort to meet the needs of our clients during the holidays.

Special Needs . . .

Construction Volunteers—will be needed as soon as the exterior is completed on the new building. Interior of the new building, and renovations of the existing building will start mid-December. Please contact Jack Lipscomb to help.

Clip the 'coupon' on page 7 to Feed a Family for Thanksgiving.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING THURSDAY, November 24!

Check out www.agapecentersml.org to purchase small items for Christmas Baskets!

Getting Ahead Graduation— 6:30 pm on December 12th at EastLake Community Church in the chapel. All Agape volunteers are invited to show support and encouragement for the clients who have completed the Getting Ahead program, and hear their stories of how this program is impacting their lives. Please RSVP to Jan Hogle - tofinishstrong@gmail.com.

New Names Written in Lamb's Book of Life!

Bob Morse and Tiffany Knight accepted Mentor Bob Stouffer's invitation to accept Jesus into their lives at their October appointment. Both had grown up going to church, but had not really understood what it meant to be 'saved'. Bob walked them through the process of Jesus' life, giving everyone the opportunity for forgiveness from sin and eternal life. This was the first time it made sense to both of them, and they decided they really wanted to go to heaven and be with Jesus. Tiffany has been a client at Agape for several months, while this was the second time for Robert. They both have been involved in other food pantries, but prefer Agape because they feel that the Christian basis for helping others is present at Agape. Robert said, "God said we should help each other, but we don't see many food pantries who actually talk about God and pray with people."



From left, Robert Morse, Tiffany Knight, and Mentor Bob Stouffer.

Gift Basket Volunteers



Russetta's Bible study finished another 184 Christmas baskets! From left, Stacy Schlottman, Judi Patronagio, Dawn Gallogly, Russetta Wright, Allane Harrison, Carolyn Hannabass, and Colene Hall.



Mentor Nancy Stouffer, left, and Janice Payne, who is a client and now also a Volunteer at Agape.

Janice has been a client for about a year, but since her first meeting with mentor, Nancy Stouffer, she says, "I have made measurable progress in my spiritual life, especially in the area of forgiveness. I have been so blessed by the Agape volunteers and look forward to joining them in serving our community."

Flying Chickens Couldn't Keep Her From GA Class

Twelve Agape clients have proven their commitment to Getting Ahead (GA) by participating in three-hour classes twice a week and doing hours of homework since October. Their training will culminate with a graduation ceremony on December 12. Each person will give presentation on the impact the class has had on them and what they have learned. Excitement is already building for the next GA class, which will begin on February 6, with applications being submitted during January.

Coming to every one of the 16 sessions and being on time

are important elements of the class. Melissa Burke, a GA participant, took that commitment seriously. Jan Hogle, GA facilitator, recalled the incident: "One day, Melissa was absent, and everyone was concerned. This was not like her. Finally she arrived, twenty minutes late, flopped into her chair, breathless, her hair still wet, and embarrassed and apologetic for her tardiness. Melissa, clearly agitated, explained her delay: 'I was all dressed for class, and went out to feed the chickens. The cat scared the chickens, who flew into the pig pen. I went into the pig pen to retrieve the chickens and fell down, getting covered with muck! So then I had to re-shower and re-dress for the class.' The

entire class applauded Melissa for her outstanding demonstration of commitment," Jan concluded.



Melissa Burke

God's Faithfulness Never Ends



Ellen Richardson

Ellen Richardson overflows with God's love and is anxious to share one of her many stories of His faithfulness to everyone she sees. Her regular mentor is Ellen Beck, and she has such appreciation for Ellen and her encouragement during the months she has been an Agape client.

Ellen Richardson says, "God has worked in my life in tremen-

dous ways. My mother passed away before I was 12 years old, and my dad left at 3 years. My mom had a stroke and could not walk for a long time. My older sister raised all three of us. When I was about 11 years old, my older sister began attending some camp meetings. She asked the preacher to come and pray for mother. He prayed for mom and she got up out of that bed and walked. It was at that point that I put my trust in the Lord.

"I was blessed with five children. My only son nearly died at 6 weeks old and I called the same preacher that prayed for my mother. He came from Christiansburg to the hospital in Roanoke where he prayed for my son. Thank God my son is still with me today. I have had cancer, several heart attacks, lung cancer, and pneumonia. About four years ago, the doctors came into my

hospital room and told me I was dying. I looked at them and I told them that I was not dying because God was not ready for me; I'm not going anywhere until He's ready for me. I could go on with so many stories in my life...blessed me so many times." Ellen told her last mentor, Julia Keep, that she is now ready to see Jesus. "Anytime He wants to take me, I am ready to go!"

Ellen continued, "I want everyone to know God and how faithful he is. Coming to Agape is such an inspiration to me. I am so thankful to have Ellen (Beck, mentor) in my life. I thank God He sent Agape my way when I needed help. My advice to whoever is need to just pray and ask God to help them. He will answer and send them in the right direction."

Shadow Volunteers ~ Kent Daniel



Kent Daniel, from Moneta, grew up cutting wood with his grandfather and dad. He loves being in the woods, and has a servant's heart to serve others. His family started volunteering in Agape's pantry several years ago, and then he learned that Agape needed "woodmen". This is his fifth year of cutting and chopping wood for Agape clients. He really enjoys meeting the people who donate wood as he picks it up at their homes, and then meeting the clients who receive the wood. As Firewood Supervisor, Kent is responsible to coordinate donations of firewood with clients needing firewood.

Kent recalled a particular afternoon a couple of years ago, when the client got lost trying to find the wood storage area. His then-fourteen year old son was with him and was a little impatient with the delay. However, "we waited and eventually the client showed up. The client told us that he was so thankful we had waited, because their wood stove was all they had for heat, and he was so concerned about his newborn baby staying warm enough through the night. That was a definite learning experience for both my son and me; we were humbled to realize what a difference a few more minutes of our time would make for that family and that baby."

Kent, who is a part of Radford Baptist Church, has served in many areas of church life, in the US Marines and for the past 22 years as a Roanoke police officer, currently as a K-9 officer. He also serves on Agape's Safety Committee, which evaluates ways to make the building more secure and safe for the volunteers and clients. Kent is a volunteer serving in the shadows, doing important work for the Kingdom of God!



Kent Daniel, blue shirt above and lower right, and Verne Baker cut and load firewood for Agape clients. Doug Shumaker, lower left, part of the Firewood Team, splits logs.



Gift Basket Volunteers



Nearly 200 Christmas baskets were put together by Liberty University students from Kim Gauthier's Bible study. From left: Ashley, Katie, and Dave.

Ride for Hope Raises \$1550 for Agape

On a beautiful October, Saturday morning, over 100 bikers gathered with their motorcycles to Ride for Hope, raising \$1550 for the Agape building program. The Ride for Hope was sponsored by

Radford Baptist Church and the forming chapter of the Christian Motorcyclists Association (CMA) in the SML area. Pastor Karl Hofheinz

stated, "we immediately thought of the Agape Center, which has the same heartbeat as the CMA, demonstrating Christ's love and sharing the hope of salvation for all. We strongly believe and support what Agape does, and felt this was a good fit for our desire to see our community receive the hope that both CMA and Agape provide."



Pastor Karl Hofheinz (left), Steve LeMay and Rolf Nelson present \$1500 to Sue Lipscomb, Agape Executive Director from the Ride for Hope.

The Great Escape

By Susan Elizabeth Phillips



Diane Davis

This book is a work of fiction but tells of an orphan boy named Toby, a bi-racial child being raised by a distant aunt. He has fears and endures a lot of unfair criticism. Toby meets a woman, Lucy, who befriends him and hires him to do some tasks for her. She takes him special breads and meets his Aunt Bree. They become friends and help each other with a lot of things, as friends do.

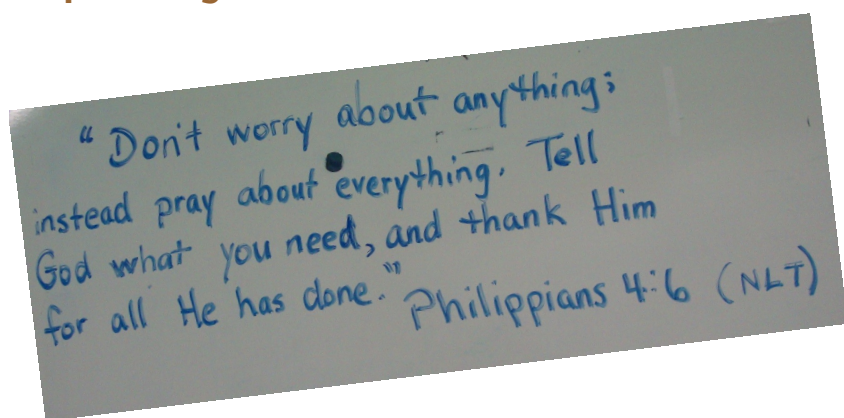
As these women and their eventual husbands go through life and have more

children, Toby becomes a part of a real and loving family in which he becomes an older big brother to them all at age fifteen.

I think this is a beautiful story and one that fulfills the words of our Lord and Savior in Matthew 19:14: *But Jesus said, "Suffer little children and forbid them not to come until me, for of such is the Kingdom of heaven."*

Editor's Note:

Diane Davis has been volunteering in clothing since 2015 with her husband Dave. She soon met Bonnie Fiori, Book Director, as they discovered their mutual interest in books and reading. Diane added book reviewing to her volunteer duties, doing this part of her work as a "Shadow Volunteer", reading the books that have been donated to Agape to determine whether they are suitable to be used in a Christian ministry. We decided to share Diane's insights, and also to make all volunteers aware of the incredible task it is to provide the very best to our clients. Volunteers are invited to borrow any books in the book department!



God's Continued Faithfulness in Pantry

Just when the Pantry shelves were looking a little sparse, Judy Harper, Pantry Director, posted this verse as a reminder of God's faithfulness. Now, we recently unloaded 500 pounds of pumpkins, and tons of food for the Thanksgiving baskets for Agape families. Yes, He is faithful!

Agape Held Dear in Mentor Paul Hyde's Heart



Paul Hyde

Agape Mentor Paul Hyde entered into his heavenly home on October 26, 2016, leaving his dear wife, Debbie, Agape Receptionist, and his family until they meet in their eternal home. Paul's death came quickly after a month of illness, but his life's legacy took years to develop. He is known as a man of faith, a man who loved Jesus, and loved sharing the Good News of Jesus with anyone who would listen. He loved his role of mentoring the male clients of Agape and was looking forward to adding additional hours to his volunteer schedule when God took him home.



Joy In Serving

John Batwinas passed from this earth to his heavenly home on October 19, 2016. One of his final acts on earth was particularly touching when his church's cell group came to Agape and created Christmas baskets. He was so thankful to have the opportunity, as he said, "to help those in our community who have so little." Joan, his precious wife of nearly six decades, said, "he was so thankful and happy to be a part of this project, and he was encouraging everyone else. Even though his eyes were nearly blind, they sparkled with joy. John was hard of hearing and legally blind with macular degeneration, so he was limited in what he could do." He helped with the Agape Christmas gifts last November as well, and found a special joy in knowing he was helping needy families in his adopted community. John and Joan moved to Moneta in 2003 from New Jersey. They often passed EastLake Community Church, and noticing the overflowing parking lot, decided to check out what all the excitement was. Once they heard the Gospel, realized they could be a part of God's family and know their eternal destiny, they were committed to following Jesus the remainder of their lives. Agape is so blessed to have special volunteers on specific occasions to help with specific projects.



John and Joan Batwinas



We have reached the half-way point of getting 3000 baskets ready for Agape clients. If you can help, or are a part of a group, schedule a time to help get more baskets assembled for Christmas!

Gift Basket Volunteers



Nearly 200 Christmas baskets were put together by Liberty University students from Kim Gauthier's Bible study.
From left: Ben, Lauren, & Jillian.



Dinner for Thanksgiving 2016 - \$25.00 per Family

Each Thanksgiving Dinner includes Turkey, Green Beans, Corn, Potatoes and Stuffing

I would like to sponsor _____ families.

Total amount \$ _____

Send your tax-deductible check payable to the Agape Center, Box 573, Moneta, VA 24121

OR go online at www.agapecentersml.com to make your tax-deductible contribution.

OR Donate online at: www.agapecentersml.org



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