



A VERY Full Table

At the Home, we are extremely pleased that the size of our governing board has increased over the course of 2016. By March of 2017, we hope to be at full capacity. Men and women of God from various geographic regions in both Illinois and Indiana dedicate their time and energy to the oversight of our Home's operation. We are exceedingly pleased at their dedication. Here is a list of those who have pledged to serve the Home in this capacity: Bruce Meade (Rockford, IL), Joe Morris (Olney, IL), Lisa Lee (Terre Haute, IN), Deann Wells (Annapolis, IL), Mike McElyea (Robinson, IL), Leon & Elaine Harris (Albion, IL), Jim & Carolyn Puckett (Geff, IL), Vanessa Midgett (Robinson, IL), Sue Szabo (Bloomington, IL), Joyce Tracy (Oblong, IL), and Mitch & Kaatje Camp (Paris, IL). God bless you for your love for this ministry!

THE BUILDER

A publication of the Oblong Children's Christian Home
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HELP to children.
HOPE to families.
HEALING through Christ.

Winter 2017



THE BUILDER

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE OBLONG CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN HOME

*It's a New Year and
Mickey Celebrates
New Life*



At the Children's Home, we build the ministry on some foundational elements. The teaching of God's truths and the demonstration of God's unconditional love are two of those elements.



The scripture says that God's word will not return in vain. Exhibit A: Mickey! After more than a year on this campus, exposed to the goodness of God and the gift of His salvation, Mickey accepted Jesus as his savior and was baptized. We are so grateful for his decision. Welcome to the family, Mickey!



HOLIDAY PARTY TIME



Many a resident at the Ridgeview Care Center in Oblong enjoyed the holiday visit from one of the boys' homes on our campus. Here, James, Noah, and Negatu share time and smiles with the folks, delivering gifts and spreading Christmas cheer.



At the girls' home (opposite page), a few of the holiday festivities included snowmen pancakes on Christmas morning and a candlelight Christmas Eve service.

We pray that your holiday was a wonderful one, as we all paused to celebrate the birth of our King Jesus!

In Memory

Robert Seed, Art & Shirley Legg, John & Donna Perrott, New Hope Christian Church—Bridgeport, Jose Castro, Jr., William Potmesil, and Kelly & Mary Slater **in memory of Joe Smith** ♥ Warren & Saundra Moore, Nancy Reinhart, Ruth Young, John & Mary Weaver, Vicki Rentfrow, Allen & Crystal Shoger, Reta Horn, Barbara Daniels, Donna Burle, Jill R. Felske and Paul & Betty Corley **in memory of Lucille Corley** ♥ E.H. Baare Corporation **in memory of Bud Martin** ♥ Elaine Waggoner **in memory of Martin & Louise Waggoner** ♥ Friends and neighbors of Porterville, Bill & Carol Farrell, James & Bette Jo Ramsey, Steve & Lori Johnson, and Elaine & Richard Adrian **in memory of Nina Martin** ♥ Darlene Murphy **in memory of James Murphy** ♥ Fred & Shirley Wright, Mr. & Mrs Kent Ubellacker, Mr. & Mrs. Pete Ubellacker, Betty & David Dunlap, David & Sandra Paddock, Michael & Suzanne Jordan, Patricia Thurman, Lesa Ann Bridgett, Nadine Burgoon, Sheila Brandenburg, Sue Ellen Brown, Esther Brumley, Allan & Glenna Engel, Georgina Hudspeth, Edith Miller, Ed & Donna Moan, Gene & Donna Moore, Iva Carter Orr, Janet & Earl Piper, Jim & Sue Schultz, Zane & Dixie Shank, Susan Weger, Anonymous Donors, and John & Lynn Jacobsen **in memory of Harold Grove** ♥ Stan Pool **in memory of Glenda Pool** ♥ Jess Newton **in memory of Roy & Pauline Hill** ♥ Zoah Christian Church **in memory of Dorothy Nicholas** ♥ EH Baare Corporation **in memory of George "Sonny" Yager, Jr.** ♥ Charlotte Bennett **in memory of Grace Good** ♥ Robin & Jan Tracy **in memory of M. Wayne Tracy** ♥ Danny & Kristi Schaffner **in memory of Judy Henry** ♥ Tim & Vicki Ferguson **in memory of Nona Gullett** ♥ Highland Church of Christ **in memory of Tom Fleenor** ♥ Joyce Bogard **in memory of Harry Dale Phillips and Doris Phillips** ♥ EH Baare **in memory of Henry Bice** ♥ Michael Robison **in memory of Debbie Robison and Mike & Judy Robison** ♥ Patrick Keen, Barbara Bailey, Ronald Bailey, Sr., Mr. & Mrs. Keith Sheridan, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Baker, Mr. & Mrs. John Meese, Mr. & Mrs. Sam Robinson, Mr. & Mrs. Delbert Neidigh, Patsy Kirts, Mr. & Mrs. Darrell Meese, Mr. & Mrs. Jay Ping, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Miller, Bob & Carole Kirk, Jerry & Beverly Mouser **in memory of Ilene Kirk** ♥ Stan Pool **in memory of Glenda Pool** ♥ Harold & Donna Smith **in memory of Blake Smith**

In Honor

Zel & Jeannie Adams **in honor of Kyle & Tawyna Bailey & family for Pastor Appreciation Month** ♥ Joan McCarty **in honor of Raymond "Doc" Hutchinson** ♥ Lakeside Bible Study Group **in honor of Ciella Camp** ♥ Anonymous **in honor of Nancy Stewart and Alice Ann Tenyson (Campbell Soup Collectors)** ♥ New Hope Cumberland Presbyterian Church **in honor of Reverend J.B. Gates** ♥ Galen & Maddy Overton **in honor of their grandkids Cobus, Elias, Pearl, Wilsey, and Sunny** ♥ Chris & Audra Spray **in honor of George & Nieta Fewkes for Christmas** ♥ First Christian Church Oblong Co-Wed's Class **in honor of Joe Bayless** ♥ Steve & Bonita Thomason **in honor of Shad & Merilee McKinzie and Jason & Kelley Biggs (Grace's Sunday School Teachers)** ♥ Sproat Insurance **in honor of Dan, Dave and Doug Sproat** ♥ Debra Gayman **in honor of Jim & Carolyn Puckett** ♥ Mark & Lizabeth Jones **in honor of Don & Debbie Jones** ♥ Bradford & Maryanna Smith **in honor of Paul & Joanna Coombs**



You've likely noticed that each issue of *THE BUILDER* includes a section of gifts given in memory or in honor. Perhaps you've given to the Children's Home in this way before. It is quite common that the Children's Home is in receipt of memorial gifts. However, one such gift received recently was quite special. A gift was given in memory of Joe Smith. The donor was acknowledged privately by the family, but that same donor

sent the thank-you card on to us because it was so fitting that we read it. I am honored to share it here because you will see from the words how deeply this ministry affects families:

"Thank you so much for the donation to the Children's Home. It held a special place in Joe's heart. We found out that he helped on the dirt work for the first house foundation there. So very fitting for the circle to come closed at the end of his earthly life, blessing the homes one last time."

Thank you, Joe, for blessing us during your life and also in your passing. May God minister to your family and friends.



Hard Work. . .Hard Play

It is *never* wasted effort to work hard academically. Five of our students were treated to reward day after the holidays! They earned nothing lower than a B at the end of the fall semester, giving them the privilege of spending the day hav-



ing fun. Our counselor enjoys challenging the students here to do their best, and then honors them for their hard work and dedication. These smiles suggest that the hard work paid off. . .wonder if they'll put in the hard work again this semester? I surely hope so.



2016: A YEAR OF GROWTH

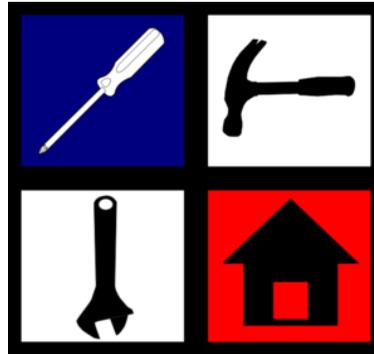
A year ago when I wrote the year-end review for the *Builder*, I said that 2015 had been a year of prayerful plan-

ning. In 2016, God brought those plans to fruition. 2016 has been a year of growth.

PHYSICAL GROWTH

In late summer, World Mission Builders, a group of volunteer retirees, constructed the framework for a new office/welcome center/food storeroom addition to the school building. Local and regional vol-

unteers joined them, and the building is completely weathered in. It is awaiting volunteer work groups to finish the inside in 2017. (Please see pictures and additional information in a related article.)



BOARD GROWTH

For many years, a board very short in number had to do all of the board work. In 2016, God brought many new board members who joined hands with a core of experienced board members. The board members now represent a much wider geographical area in Illinois and Indiana. See a related article detailing the names and locations of these board members. We anticipate that through this larger and more diverse board God will continue growing the ministry.



SCHOOL GROWTH

In August, Keith Kemp began his first year as our school teacher. He has been able to build on the academic foundation set by our retiring teacher, Nancy Moden, and has developed more enthusiasm for learning and a comradeship among the students. This enthusiasm and fellowship are reflected in the students' attitudes. They want to arrive early for school, and they had very good grades at the end of the fall semester.



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

A record five residents at the Home accepted Christ as Savior and were baptized in 2016. We also saw signs of spiritual and emotional growth in those who had already accepted Christ as Savior. Jessica wrote the following note to her houseparents at Christmas time:



*"I remember my first Christmas with you guys. Honestly, I hated you both and I only got to go home (for Christmas) for four hours. Just looking back at that and seeing me now, I've made a lot of improvement—like big time. And I couldn't have done it without you both. I feel I have a better bond. And I'm starting to trust my parents more again. I could have never done this without any of you. And I know my parents couldn't do it without you either. Yes, I know I still have improving to do, but I just want to stop for a second and thank you. You have helped me and my family, and I don't think we could have done it without you.
Love, Jess."*

I am humbled by the way God has blessed us and how so many friends of this ministry have blessed us financially. I want to thank both for making 2016 a year of growth.

-Arvin Moden, Administrator





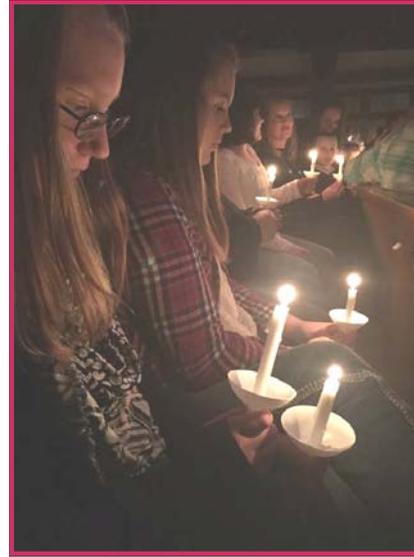
Oh How Pleased We Are at the Progress!

The addition on to our school building, which will become the welcome center for our campus, is coming right along. In the nick of time, we got it “weathered in,” avoiding the

harsh winter elements that are soon to arrive. Little bits of work are done inside daily, including hanging insulation! What a pleasure it will be to usher families into this facility for counseling, placement, and even just inquiries!!

Would you please be a part of this building project right along side us?

We would love to schedule a group from your church or business. Work groups will be welcomed any time, but consider now your involvement this spring and summer. . .young and old, skilled and less-than-skilled. We’ll find a place to use your helping hands. Call Chris Martin (618-553-3315) to schedule your group. Stay a day. Stay a week. Just be a part of something BIG with us!



New Life Academy has been on another road trip. This time their travels put them in Princeton, Indiana at the Toyota Manufacturing plant. What a wonderful way to spend the day learning about careers in manufacturing!