

Happy Holidays, Seasons Greetings and Deepest thanks from The Henry and William Evans Home for Children 2019, and into 2020!

For 70 years, The Evans Home has provided love, laughter and a place to dream for children living beyond their original homes. Founded October 24, 1949, the original Board of Directors included Carke T. Cooper, Sr., Chairman; Garland R. Quarles, Vice Chairman; Charlotte DeHart, Secretary; Mrs. Joseph Hodgson, Treasurer; Robert E. Aylor; Sara Clowser; Lee Miller; Leonard Sirbaugh; Helen Leigh Smith; and ex-officio members Howard Holland; and Harry Benham. Their goal was, "sensing the acute need in the community for a home to create a safe home for orphaned or neglected children could go for shelter and guidance in time of need," and they succeeded!

Over time, our mission has extended its nuance to capture the most vital current needs in our community, and this year marks the birth of another distinct chapter: Following Decades of partnering with welfare agencies in order to find successes for children failing to thrive in foster care, we are becoming completely private. Federal and state initiatives now officially rule out the use of group homes for children by public agencies, instead working hard at keeping children in families with an array of newly funded services to prevent removals.

We have been preparing for, and assisting our partner agencies in this transition. And we support the prevention of foster care any time possible! To this end, we have opened our capacity to a new group: homeless and otherwise needy families in our area. Our primary focus has become one of co-parenting with families who are unable to safely care for their children. Children may be placed with us by parents, while those parents retain the right to remove them at any time. Our children's parents are in regular contact, have visits often, and participate in all triumphs and struggles of their children while with us. They can then use this opportunity to improve their own circumstances, whether by more hours at work, substance abuse treatment, or whatever is most important, and then reunite their families when ready.

Nothing else about what we do has changed. We are very much like a boarding school, although our children attend wonderful local public schools for education. We provide academic



**Henry & William Evans
Home for Children, Inc.**

330 E. Leicester Street, Winchester, VA 22601



support at home, encouragement and facilitation of extra-curricular involvement, community service, gainful employment, and every “first” we can think of to kindle every one of our children’s dreams and abilities. And much like a boarding school experience, our children also benefit from the richest resource of all, each other. According to Forbes’ Magazine, “(Boarding School) students are stimulated intellectually in ways they never were before, . . . and tend to be more motivated when surrounded by success-oriented peers. Living with students from diverse backgrounds informs the dialogue in the dorm, at dinner and in the dining hall.” Former Boarding School residents report life-long support from friendships developed in that environment. And that is also so in spades for Evans Home residents! We have networks of literally hundreds of former EH kids who are in contact, and are keenly aware and supportive of each other’s life stories.

Following is a description of some of this year’s happenings in our home, all made possible by you, our patrons. Please know that many of our blessings are not chronicled here, and if I did mention everyone’s gentle touch that makes our world possible, I would never end this! My intent, instead, is to give all of you a glimpse into the magic you have helped to create. The opportunities and joys of our home, and mostly, that when you think of our children you will smile.

Last year’s December events included: A Chorale concert at Grace Lutheran Church; SU’s Holiday Gala; A special Men’s Volleyball tournament at James Wood High School; a winter concert at Millbrook; a Caroling group at our front door; a sponsored outing where we shopped for younger children from local pre-schools followed by our own gifts and party; a Holiday Open House here with invited teachers and others; Shopping with the Sheriff; a Holiday Concert at the Museum of the Valley; a Rotary party with pizza, singing and gifts; gingerbread house decorating with a Sunday School class; countless trips to Alamo and other places of fun and mayhem; and a surprise visit from Robert Duval and his family with a gift!

We had a girl who had been with us for 6 years graduate from high school a semester early, and move in with a dear friend who is helping her prepare for college. And we had a cigar tree out front removed and chipped, saving us from some very exciting gutter cleaning. January brought a discharge from our graduate, and the admission of a new child. Two of our kids had to fast for medical lab work (bleh), and we had workshops presented by counselors



on self-esteem, respect for others and other topics. We also had a Studio Flute performance! Our staff had day retreat, working on goals needs and training plans. We had a furnace repaired in our alumni house, the Lloyd House, and had fire-alarm tests, health department inspection, Fire and Safety inspection, and made preparations for our license renewal.

February started with Groundhog Day. Followed by licensing renewal the next week. A church who has adopted us did complete room make-overs! They bought the furniture, tv's, shelves, etc., and then they came in and installed them! I don't usually mention general fundraisers, because there are so many, but two in February were very special: our friend Grace turned 14 and celebrated by having her friends bring us supplies, for the 6th year in a row! And our former resident Ashley, living in Baton Rouge, raised thousands of dollars from her company by doing volunteer tax service work.

In April, some of our kids participated in the After-School Honk Fest. (You guessed it, that's when middle-school students test new band instruments!) Others were in Apple Blossom rehearsals with the High School Chorus, we had a gazillion health and therapy appointments including individual, family, speech, occupational, and orthodontal. We went to an independent living open house, a middle school solo and ensemble concert, The WIZ at SU, a Spring Concert at Handley, and an open mic night after school. One child had an interview at JC Penny, and we were invited to an Easter Egg *Glow-in-the-dark* Hunt with a church, and another at SU. We did community service projects including Rise Against Hunger, and hosted a bunch of church and corporate groups helping us with Spring cleaning and gardening.

May started with all things Apple Blossom! We had armbands at the Carnival, and we went to Coronation, Kids Bloomin Mile, parked cars in our yard for the parades, went to the parades, and Sunday in the Park. One of our kids celebrated a birthday later in May with a surprise party in an escape room! We also were represented in Handley's Academic Team, and a Pops Concert. We loved the Medieval Times Festival in Maryland, and a 16-year-old girl got her learner's permit!

In June we attended graduation at Handley (one of us singing in the choir, the rest whooping), and a promotion ceremony from Daniel Morgan Middle. Hershey Park is a favorite and never disappoints. And our early summer camps included Pioneer Camp in Sharpsburg, MD and Pro-



ject Write, at SU. We had an Independent Living Skills seminar at home, and our teens attended a presentation from Virginia Career Works.

July brought Half-blood camp and Chalk Art camp at the Discovery Museum; and Camp Merri-mac in Sharpsburg. The summer was short, so we had to jam in a trip to my brother Lances for river fun and Lenny's Royals game in the first couple weeks and then Discovery Camp at the Discovery Museum; Bethany Beach sleep-over camp; and Mad Scientists camp back at the Discovery Museum. We also went to see the Sound of Music at Shenandoah University!

One last camp in August, Camp Robotics (at the Discovery Museum). Then we made art projects here with Maria, and then settled into our routine of school, after school stuff (including Hero's club, Latin club, Academic Team, and play and band practices) , work (two local restaurants), Dr/Therapy appointments, and all the community and family fun we could manage (board and video games at home, movie and pizza nights, including The Lion King at the Alamo.) School started August 8! New supplies, clothes and haircuts all around, of course. We also celebrated at a local auto sales event including car painting(!)

Most of these shenanigans continued into September, and we opened new student savings accounts, one girl sold concessions at a volleyball game, and we all went to Apple Harvest Festival. A local corporation sent their national leadership team for a day of service and painted, and fixed bunches of broken stuff. (They had to come back with reinforcements.)

October's school activities included High School Soccer Practice, and all of the others. We played bingo and made crafts at a senior center, and our newest tutor started, . . . a SCIENCE tutor! We admitted 3 new children, ages 5, 6 and 9. Three of our older kids took the SAT's. We also had our first house parent working retreat! They were hosted at a local hotel and treated to meeting rooms, dining, and even a movie. While the kids were treated to house parenting wonders of LaMishia and me! (All survived, everyone feels entitled to boasting tee-shirts.) A church group has begun the process of refinishing our home-made dining room tables. They were hard at it in the parking lot when the kids came home, and our 7-year-old said, "what the heck are they doing out there?" I explained, and he said, "can I please go thank them?" We did trick-or-treat early with SU students in their spooky dorm, and then the real deal outside on a very cold and wet evening!

November started with two ER visits in two days, and we saw a former student there working at 3 in the morning! Then we had to manage a 10-year-old's sprained foot, everybody just stop, ok? The kids celebrated Thanksgiving with family and then with both sets of house parents, hosted at April and Nile's farm. We played Bingo with a Bible Study group, and one of our children auditioned for District Chorus and made it!

Our home continues to be filled with love, laughter, a baby and dogs! We are a place of security and brilliant possibilities for our children. We currently have 13 of them, with room for one more. Our house parents, Nile and April, and Paul and Katie (with 1-year-old Fox), bring unparalleled comfort, guidance vision and passion to our home. LaMishia, our program director, assimilates hundreds of community offerings and state regulations with individual and over-all needs. Izzy is our welcoming voice, our comptroller, our personnel manager, our fund raiser coordinator, and a bunch of other things I haven't spelled out on her job description. I am blessed by my association with each of them, as well as an absolutely fabulous board of directors, dearest friends, donors and other charity directors with whom we partner.

Someone close recently asked me how we will fare without reliance on Federal and State funding. Through the years as we have relied less and less of this support, seeing this coming. In the last decade our reliance on government funding has diminished from 50% to less than 10, and we have shrunk our budget by more than 25% (not counting inflation). We have not replaced a number of positions including maintenance staff, a housekeeper/cook, a recreation assistant, a program manager, and an independent living coordinator. All of the duties of those individuals are now managed by a combination of existing staff, coordinated family chores, and community volunteers! We continue to build our endowment, under the guidance of an independent advisory board, with the expectation that the income from it will also help us compensate for this change.

As we begin our 71st year, please know now deeply we appreciate your help. Whether your contributions have been through your time, talent or treasure, you are allowing us to keep this vital resource for our community thriving!

On behalf of the adults and children of the Evans Home, I wish you the happiest of holidays and a wonderful New Year!

Sincerely,



Marc Jaccard
Executive Director





**Henry & William Evans
Home for Children, Inc.**

330 E. Leicester Street, Winchester, VA 22601

www.evanshome.org

540-662-8520

evans@evanshome.org

Non Profit Org
US Postage
Paid
Winchester VA
Permit No. 299

Evans Home Board of Directors:

James DuBrueler, Chairperson; Dan Martin, Vice Chairperson; Ridge White, Treasurer, Jean Barch; Paul Frank; Donna Jenkins; Mari Kofalt; Sheriff Lenny Mullholland; Elizabeth Minor; Kathy Nerangis; Barbara Savidge; Beverley Shoemaker; Jonathan Snowden; Ann Wallinger

Evans Home Staff:

Marc Jaccard, Executive Director; LaMishia Allen, Program Director; Izzy Brenner, Administrative Assistant; Nile & April DeShong, Houseparents; Paul & Katie Williams, Houseparents