

THE BOYS APPEAL



News from Boys Home of Virginia

Winter 2021

Looking Forward to the Next Minimester

What is a minimester? This year, Boys Home students attend nine weeks of classes followed by a two-week "minimester." During the minimester, those who need a little extra academic help spend the mornings working on math, language arts, and science. In the afternoons, all students participate in new and exciting enrichment activities.

During the first mimimester, students learned golf skills, practiced letter writing, and participated in the equine program. Four students took part in a 105-mile hike through Shenandoah National Park! (Yes, you read that correctly - 105 miles!) In their free time, students competed in basketball, fishing, card games, and pool tournaments. There was an activity to interest every student!

The next minimester is scheduled to take place in March. Activities haven't been finalized yet, but in addition to academics, the proposed activities include another long hiking trip, participating in the equine program, volleyball, basketball, board game tournaments, and the senior challenge. Students are looking forward to it already!



Right: Bereket practices his swing with instructor Gregg Brelsford.

Below: The hikers take a break, and Finn appreciates an incredible view.



Dr. Donnie E. Wheatley
Litterarum Humanarum
Executive Director

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From the Executive Director **Donnie E. Wheatley**

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Antarctica! It sure is cold here, but it's far from COVID-19, and the penguins are keeping me entertained.

This year has been an exercise in resilience for everyone. As we've gone through so many changes, the most inspiring thing to witness has been the grace that our students exhibit every day. The limitations on sports, off-campus activities, and on-campus gatherings have been challenging for them. But amid the challenges, the students continue to excel in school, enjoy time with friends, and model kindness and concern for all around them.

In this edition of *The Boys Appeal*, we'd like to showcase some of the students' leadership and volunteer activities, a story from an alumnus, and Christmas at Boys Home. As always, you're welcome to visit www.boyshomeofva.org and click the *News* heading for more updates as they happen.

Lastly, I'd like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who called, sent a note, pledged an amount, or made a donation to celebrate my 35 years as executive director. I'm happy to announce that we met our fundraising goal of \$35,000! Looking beyond my own experience, I know Boys Home is the real reason for the incredible response to an unusual event. I'm happy to know that current and future students will have the same opportunities that made such a positive difference in my life.

I hope you are well, and I hope this new year brings you an abundance of blessings.

Sincerely,



Donnie Wheatley

Executive Director



Our mission: to help each student strive toward becoming a productive member of society, by developing his spiritual, mental, physical, and social potentials.

Our vision: to be a community that inspires young men to positively impact those around them.

The Boys Appeal is published three times each year by the Boys Home Development Department.

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Christmas at Boys Home

The celebration of Christmas brought light and joy to the Boys Home community. Boys Home was fortunate to be able to continue many of our holiday traditions. On Thursday, December 10th, all the cottages held their annual Christmas parties, complete with pizza, wings, gifts for each student, and wrapping paper flung far and wide! The houseparents did a spectacular job of selecting and purchasing gifts, making sure each young man felt special and loved. The following Monday was the cottage decorating contest, with Brown cottage taking first place and Whitehead in second. After that, most students began their travels home for Christmas. Those remaining at Boys Home, however, got a special visit! It began with a poem:

“Santa Claus will be coming by Boys Home on Christmas Eve to give out goodie bags and cheer.
He will be social distancing, so don't get too near!
He has been given his instructions not to tarry,
But he will leave his bags of goodies for all to be merry.”

Students on campus were happy to see Santa and receive an extra little bag of goodies!

No matter what kind of celebrations we can or cannot have, or what gifts we give or receive, all at Boys Home are thankful for the real meaning of the Christmas season. At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, born into our world in a time of darkness to bring us a great light.



Davin models his new hat



Whitehead residents decorate their Christmas tree



Students in Brown cottage open gifts in their pajamas



Holiday Matching Grant Success!

Many, many thanks to all who contributed toward reaching the 2020 holiday matching grant goal, and thanks to the Jessie Ball duPont Fund for making it possible!

Match funding is a fun and energizing way to encourage generosity! Boys Home would welcome any businesses or individuals willing to give in that way. For more information,

Looking ahead!
What are Boys Home students looking forward to in 2021?

get rid of all negativity
Getting more in Shape
learning to swim

Ways to Help:

- Join us in prayer and charity by participating in our Lenten prayer calendar
- Donate at www.givetoboyshome.org during the months of March and April to participate in the donor appreciation raffle
- Join the Carpenter's Crew, Boys Home's monthly giving society
- Stay in touch! Sign up for the monthly newsletter at www.boyshomeofva.org

For more information, contact the development office at (540) 965-7715 or sfscruggs@boyshomeofva.org

New Events 2021!

Lenten prayer calendar: February 17 - April 3rd

Available at
www.boyshomeofva.org

Donor appreciation drawing: May 5th

Donate online at www.givetoboyshome.org during March and April to participate. All online donors will be entered to win a beautiful tea box, kindly made and donated by Gary Woods.



Dates to Remember:

February 17 - April 3rd: **Lenten prayer calendar**
March 9 - 19th: Minimester
April 2 - 5th: Spring Break
May 5th: **Donor appreciation raffle** and quilt raffle drawings
May 26th: Graduation
June 1 - 18th: Summer enrichment
November 6th: **Boys Home Harvest Hustle**

Winter Wish List:

- AAA, AA, and 9-volt batteries
- Jump drives
- Composition notebooks
- Pencils and pens
- 3-ring binders
- Expo markers
- Shampoo and body wash
- Hair grease/moisturizer
- Combs and hair picks
- Liquid body wash
- Body lotion
- Deodorant
- Shaving cream
- Chapstick
- Toothpaste
- Hand soap - small bottles
- Fingernail clippers
- Kitchen towels
- Hand sanitizer
- Disinfectant wipes, spray
- Laundry detergent
- Dryer sheets

Boys Home and COVID-19

Like so many things this year, COVID-19 continues to affect activities and plans at Boys Home. Luckily, many students were able to visit family over the Christmas break. Upon returning, small groups were self-contained in each cottage for the recommended time period in order to minimize potential risks. During that time, students completed schoolwork packets in their cottage rather than attending class in person. Teachers were available online to help when necessary. Daily sanitizing of common spaces, mask-wearing, and distancing continue as before.



Here's to better days ahead!



Boys Home Harvest Hustle

On Saturday, November 7th, Boys Home of Virginia hosted its 4th annual fall fundraiser, the Harvest Hustle 5K, 10K, and Half Marathon, at the Intervale Trailhead of the Jackson River Scenic Trail! COVID-19 has presented many challenges, but amazingly this event turned out to be the most

successful year ever! More than 135 participants gathered to compete on this exceptionally beautiful fall day. Runners and walkers came from all over Virginia, West Virginia, and as far away as Minnesota, Missouri, Indiana, North Carolina, and Maryland.

All pre-registered participants received a long sleeve t-shirt with race logo, and everyone received a one-of-a-kind participation medal as they crossed the finish line. The top three male and female finishers in each age group won a collectable pint glass, and first place finishers received a gift certificate to Lex Running Shop. The overall top male and female racer for each race won a collectible, acrylic Boys Home house trophy.

As an extra safety precaution, Boys Home students did not participate in the race in 2020; however, we're looking forward to having them run and volunteer again in 2021!



Save the Date!

November 6, 2021

Join us for our 5th annual Harvest Hustle on the beautiful Jackson River Scenic Trail!

• 5K • 10K • Half-marathon



www.runforboyshome.org



In 2021, we are looking forward to:

going home for summer

getting into the airforce and my graduation.
Also getting my drivers license

Leadership News

Article by Anita Proffitt

Student Council

The Boys Home Student Council (BHSC) was established in September 2020 and has met six times. The BHSC is comprised of cottage proctors, elected representatives from each cottage, and mature students who have an interest in serving. The purpose of the BHSC is to demonstrate that there are specific procedures in implementing change. Council members are required to meet with their cottages for input

regarding the Boys Home community and then bring legitimate issues or concerns to the entire council for discussion. Requests or concerns are then presented to the staff for approval or further discussion. A sampling of approved requests includes changing work program hours, extending bedtimes on Fridays and Saturdays, and allowing students to ride bicycles and scooters to class.



Students at a recent student council meeting



Students helping set up a festival of lights

implemented this year, the Boys Home Key Club has had limited volunteer opportunities. Members assisted our sponsoring Kiwanis Club with updating the local YMCA playground. Several members also helped set up an outdoor festival of lights for the Clifton Forge School of the Arts. Members are anxious to begin volunteering in our community as soon as it is safe to do so!

Key Club

Due to safety restrictions

Celebrating 35 Years of Donnie Wheatley!



Thank you to everyone who called, sent a note, pledged an amount, or donated in honor of Mr. Wheatley's 35 years of service! We exceeded our fundraising goal of \$35,000, and succeeded in taping him to the wall! Everyone had fun putting a stretch of tape on Mr. Wheatley; when all the tape had been placed, the bench he was standing on was removed, and he was suspended about 18 inches off the floor, stuck to the wall! Laughter filled the gym and our hearts.

The afternoon wrapped up with a presentation of a special quilt made by Mr. Wheatley's sister, Phyllis Gibson. He was also presented a stainless steel award created by Tony Williams at Williams Fabrication Jenfab Inc.



Navigator's Society and Alumni Corner: featuring Jim Miller



Jim Miller in 1966

When Jim Miller speaks of his early years, he doesn't sugar-coat the truth. "I was a lost child," he says. Born in 1947 to an impoverished family in Waynesboro, Mr. Miller developed Perthes disease, which damaged his hip bones and made him unable to walk. As a toddler, he became a ward of the state and lived in a home for disabled children. At age 10, his hips had healed enough for him to walk, and he spent a year at the Blue Ridge School before coming to Boys Home.

When he arrived at Boys Home in the fall of 1959, Mr. Miller had never played sports or even seen a football. "**I had just learned to walk, but Boys Home taught me how to run,**" he says. He learned quickly, playing football, competing on the wrestling team, developing his Christian faith, and excelling in school. When he graduated in 1966 as the president of the class, Director Bob Burrowes encouraged him to go to college.

Mr. Miller graduated from Eastern Tennessee State University in 1971, with dual degrees in physical education and health education. Most of his career was spent teaching and coaching high school sports; later, Mr. Miller began working in the insurance business. It was then he realized he could become a member of the legacy giving society by naming Boys Home as the beneficiary of an insurance policy. Mr. Miller is thankful to be able to give back, even in a small way, to an organization that means so much to him. Even after nearly 50 years, he remains proud to be a Boys Home alumnus. "I could have been in a lot of trouble," he says. Instead, he repeats, "I was blessed to be a child at Boys Home."



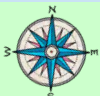
Mr. Miller and wife Nancy at the Hall of Fame banquet in 2017

Legacy Giving through Insurance

Article by David Shields,
Campbell Insurance

Naming Boys Home as beneficiary on a retirement account or life insurance policy allows you to give a major donation without a big cash outlay. There are two ways to do this. The first is to **make Boys Home the owner and beneficiary of your life insurance policy.** This earns you a tax deduction, and Boys Home can either take the cash value, or pay the premiums and let the policy grow. Another option is to **make Boys Home a sole or partial beneficiary of the policy,** but retain ownership yourself. This doesn't earn you a tax deduction, but you maintain the flexibility to change the beneficiary or use the cash value yourself.

Giving through insurance is simple. Ask your accountant or life insurance agent about making a **beneficiary designation,** and they can coordinate everything for you.



Why "Navigators?" Because they are the ones leading the way!

Exclusive membership in the Navigators, our Legacy Giving Club, is offered to those who include Boys Home in their estate plans. To learn more about planned gifts and how to make one, please contact Mr. Wheatley at (540) 965-7704, or via email at dewheatley@boyshomeofva.org.

Looking ahead for 2021! Students are looking forward to:

Straight As

In 2021 I am looking forward to watching my favorite football team play!!

covid 19 go way!



Boys Home
of Virginia

414 Boys Home Road
Covington, Virginia 24426
(540) 965-7700
www.boyshomeofva.org

Change Service Requested

Boys Appeal - Winter 2021

A successful man has to start somewhere...

2021 Boys Home Quilt Raffle

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

(_____) _____
Phone

At \$5 per ticket or
\$45 for ten tickets
Drawing is May 5th, 2021.

I enclose \$ _____ for Boys Home.

Mail to: Boys Home of Virginia
Attn: Quilt Raffle
414 Boys Home Rd.
Covington, VA 24426

Boys Home Quilt Raffle 2021

Tickets are \$5 each or 10 for \$45. The drawing will take place on May 5th, 2021

Made by Executive Director Donnie Wheatley's sister, Phyllis Gibson, it follows an Around the World pattern. The quilt is made of blue, white, and purple flower prints with a white back. It fits a queen-sized bed.



Good luck winning this year's beautiful quilt!

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