

February/March 2014

the Children's Voice

A Publication of The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children & Youth • 859-873-4481 • www.kyumh.org

THERAPY DOG BRINGS JOY

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FIFTH SUNDAY IS

MARCH 30TH

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The Children's Voice

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Our Mission

We serve Christ by providing for the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of children and families.

The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children and Youth is accredited through the national Council on Accreditation (COA).

We serve persons regardless of race, ethnicity, economic status, sex or religion.

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President's Message:

Steadfast Faith

As I write today, snow covers the ground and the groundhog has predicted six more weeks of winter. It's cold and I'm ready to move on to Spring. My poor motorcycle sits in the garage on life support. I don't know when it may get to breathe again on its own.

However, it's also Monday and yesterday I preached at a church where the pastor and his wife have been going through some intensive health struggles. I even said to the pastor yesterday, "Are you trying to rewrite the book of Job?"

The amazing thing about this couple is that despite all the hospitals and doctors and surgeries and treatment plans, their faith is vital and alive. They are both quite gifted at writing and they have been sharing their witness through these struggles via Facebook. I'm a peeker of Facebook. I don't have my own account. I live vicariously through my wife's. And so, many nights Denise and I have sat together and read their posts, moved to tears because of their faith in face of extreme discomfort and pain. These are some beautiful people.

Remember that passage from Ezekiel 22 where the Lord says,

"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none."

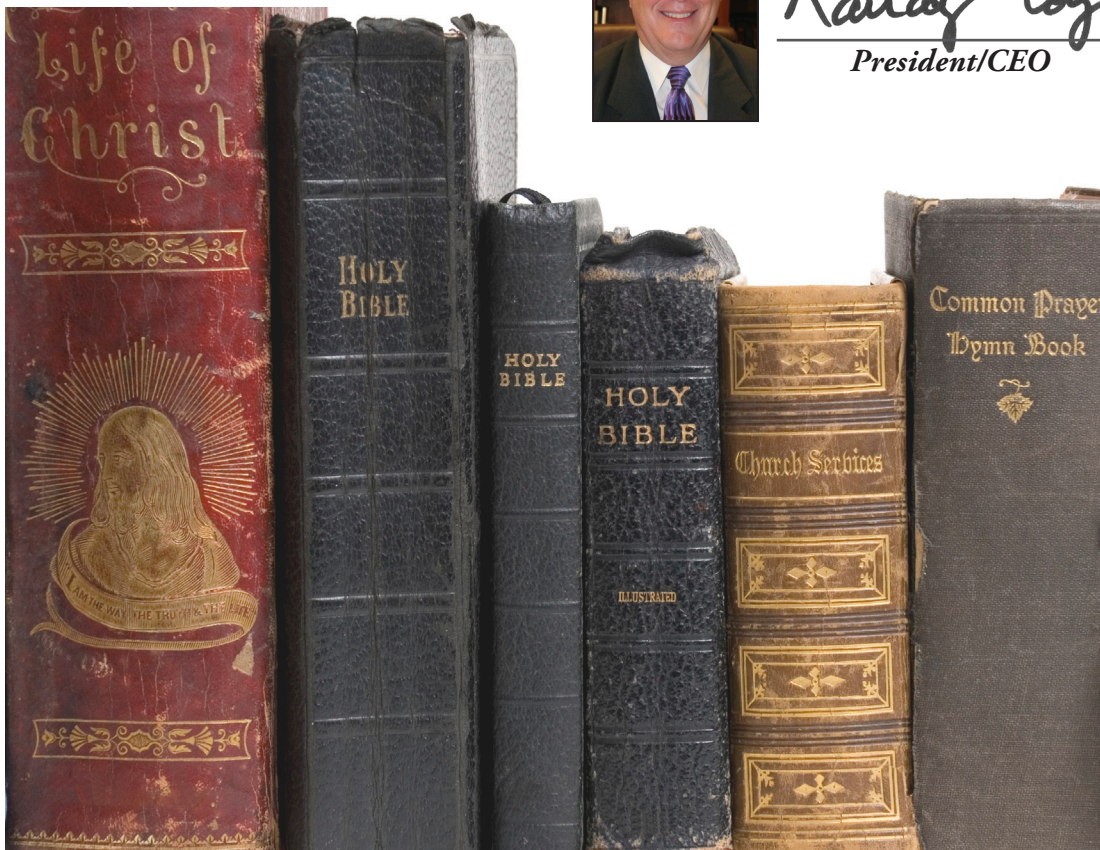
Well I found one on Sunday. My friend could easily stand in the gap. His faith is intact.

I also know that there are countless others out there. There are hundreds, thousands, and yes, millions who believe that God's power is able to redeem and save. We count on that at The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children and Youth (KYUMH). We have been blessed by friends who continue to believe even when our faith has been tested and tried. God has proven abundantly faithful through your incredible witness and friendship.

Thank you again for making a hedge around us as we continue to reach out to those who have been left behind.



Randy Coy
President/CEO



A LEGACY OF LOVE

By Melinda Ryles-Smith,
Vice President of Advancement



I met Ruth Roland twenty years ago while speaking at her church, Epiphany

UMC. I was there to speak about our mission during the service and hoped to recruit a Methodist Home Representative (MHR). Our MHR's are vital to our communication with each local congregation and I noticed Epiphany UMC did not have one. Ruth approached me after the service and, as we talked, she shared that she and her late husband, Weldon, always had a special place in their hearts for young people. Knowing that the best indicator of a good candidate for an MHR is a love for children, I asked Ruth if she might consider it. She humbly responded, "I don't have much to offer, but I guess if you can't find anyone better, I'd be happy to do it." That was the beginning of our friendship and Ruth Roland's new calling.

Ruth was a beautiful woman inside and out. I soon learned that this 70-year-old woman was a talented seamstress who made her own clothes. She dressed impeccably and her beautiful white hair was always perfectly done. Each outfit was color coordinated, oftentimes in bright, cheery colors that matched her inner beauty. Back then, I had no idea what an incredible Methodist Home Representative I had just found. Obviously God had led us to one another.

Ruth lived modestly and tithed generously every Fifth

Sunday in memory of her beloved husband, Weldon. For twenty years, she passionately challenged others at Epiphany UMC to participate in our mission and help care for our children. Because of her example and passion, Ruth successfully recruited many others to come alongside her to give of their time, talents, and financial support towards our mission, including the Epiphany UMC Quilters, who donated many beautiful quilts to our children and sold others to support our services.

At Ruth's 80th birthday party, I had the chance to meet many of her friends. It was apparent that the kindheartedness that had blessed me and so many of our children had extended to many in her church as well. Her many friends gathered to celebrate her 80th birthday and time and again they told me how much she loved "The Children's Home" and how she reminded them every time a Fifth Sunday offering was approaching so they could remember to give. She also helped organize many honor and memorial gifts from people in the church who wanted us to help them remember or honor loved ones.

Ruth shared with me one day that she planned to include our mission in her final plans. However, when she learned about our planned giving program, she decided to invest that portion of money in charitable annuities instead. The ability to help support the children while also receiving a reliable return every quarter, which paid better than what

she was currently receiving, was exciting for Ruth. She was able to care for our children and see to her own financial needs simultaneously.

On October 15, 2013, just thirteen days shy of her 90th birthday, Ruth passed away. A few of her friends had planned to surprise her by taking her to lunch to celebrate. Instead, we all agreed, it appeared God had a more spectacular party planned for her.

Ruth Roland left a wonderful legacy behind. Through her work as a Methodist Home Representative, she helped educate and inspire others about the important work we do so that they too could participate. Through the investment of her time, her talents, and her financial resources, Ruth has helped many young people served by The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children and Youth to have a new hope, a new start, and a new life. Twenty years ago, Ruth told me she didn't have much to offer us. Yet today, her loss is felt deeply as we remember a woman whose life made a true impact and difference to each of us, as well as to our children. ■



RUTH WELLS ROLAND
1923-2013

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**CHARITABLE ANNUITIES
&
WILLS/BEQUESTS**

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Name _____

Birth date _____

Address _____

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State _____ Zip _____

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I want information on giving through my will

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Mail to Melinda Ryles-Smith
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Be the liaison between
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Become the "voice for
our children" to the
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Name _____

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Mail to Ken Proctor in
the enclosed
business reply envelope

meet PHEDOR

By Heidi M. Weaver,
PR & Communications Coordinator



Fifteen-year-old Sarah had just received a difficult phone call to her cottage in the residential treatment program at The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children and Youth. Laying her head down on the table, she cried quietly. Matt Hind, Versailles Campus Resource Coordinator, sat at a respectful distance with his German Shepherd, Phedor, a therapy dog in training. Trotting calmly over to Sarah, Phedor nuzzled his nose up underneath the hands Sarah was using to cover her face. She drew back and, as Phedor licked her tears away, Sarah couldn't help but smile at his adoring face. That night, as Sarah prepared for bed, Phedor instinctively knew she needed some extra love. Finding her room for a special visit to say goodnight, he made sure that Sarah didn't feel so alone.

Interactions like these are why we recently made Phedor a part of our team at KYUMH (he even has his own ID badge)! Carol Loose, a therapist at the Versailles Campus says, "Not all therapy is done with words...it's worth being quiet and just being with people. Dogs get that." Mr. Hind, Phedor's owner and Resource Coordinator for the Versailles Campus, says that the sweet-faced dog has been successfully journeying through the various stages necessary to become officially certified as a therapy dog. Phedor has to continually succeed at temperament tests to determine if he can remain calm and non-aggressive in a variety of situations. He is also learning manners, how to navigate all kinds of environments (e.g. doctor or hospital environments), and how to remain controlled in crowds and around

other dogs. Phedor attends classes once a week and is constantly being trained and evaluated to ensure safety and helpfulness in a variety of situations.

Here at The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children & Youth, we have always been dedicated to finding whatever means possible to restore a sense of safety, laughter, and comfort for kids in need. For children who are missing their own pets, feeling lonely or fearful, or having a hard time trusting people, an animal like Phedor can make a big difference. "Having Phedor in the cottage is so therapeutic...his presence there - it's really sweet. He's aware of who needs him and who doesn't...he's at work when he comes here," says Mrs. Loose who has used in him several of her counseling sessions. Mrs. Loose explained how, from a recreational standpoint, the kids enjoy having Phedor around. He brings a sense of fun and playfulness to the Versailles Campus when he is allowed to just play. But when the playing is done, Phedor has work to do. Mr. Hind explained that many clients feel more able to be vulnerable and to open up to their therapist when there's an animal in the room. Petting him and paying attention to him helps them to feel comforted while they talk about very difficult things from their pasts. Mrs. Loose described an instance with a resident who was crying in a counseling session. Phedor came over, laid his head in her lap and let her pet him. When she was done giving him attention, he would calmly walk a safe distance away and lay down quietly, while continuing to keep an eye on the client. "He really gives the perfect amount of attention,"



What started with tears ended with smiles thanks to Phedor.

Mrs. Loose says. "It changes things when he comes into a therapy situation. It's amazing! I'm pretty excited about it."

Because of the great reception from the children, Mr. Hind has instituted "Phedor Phridays." "The kids get excited when he visits on Fridays," Mr. Hind explained. "He smiles and loves on them." The staff love Phedor as well. "Everyone receives him well," Mr. Hind said. "He's a morale booster." Even kids who used to be afraid of dogs enjoy having Phedor around. "He brings joy...they've all adopted him," Mr. Hind says. "I've just seen positives." Mrs. Loose agrees, "I'm in awe of how perceptive a dog can be...he is so in tune with the kids...there's a real therapeutic benefit." ■



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kygivesday
april 9, 2014 24 hours of giving

The Kentucky United Methodist Homes for Children & Youth will be participating in Kentucky Gives Day, a 24-hour online giving blitz for charities across the state. From 12:00 am to 11:59 pm EST on Wednesday, April 9, charities across Kentucky are asking for online donations. **Cash bonuses of up to \$2500** will be given awarded to charities who bring in the most donations in a variety of categories during the day.

Please help us make this day a success and win some extra monetary support! Visit www.kygives.razoo.com and search for KYUMH. Make your donation today - it will count towards our total goal! Even a gift as small as \$20 can provide an allowance to a child for a month!

For more information, visit <http://kygives.razoo.com>.

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Mary Kendall ANNUAL DAY 2014

Saturday, May 17th, 2014 (Begins at 8:30 AM)
193 Phillips Court, Owensboro, KY

Come join us for a live auction, silent auction, and bake sale.
Free lunch provided!

We Need Auction Items:

Hand crafted items	Tools
Small Furniture Items	Sports Items
Baked Goods	Home Decor
Gift Certificates	Plants
Quilts	Small Appliances
Large Themed Gift Baskets	(i.e. new Crock Pots, toasters, etc.)



Schedule A Speaker!

Are you looking for a guest speaker for your organization, church or group? We bring biblically based, inspirational messages with stories about our kids! **Call us at 859-879-4034 or toll free at 877-887-4481 to reserve a time!**

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