

october, 2009

# Hope!

the newsletter of southeastern children's home

where the heart is



## A long day's journey into light

Success stories,  
fond farewells,  
letters and more ...

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January 31, 2009 to August 31, 2009

# A journey of a thousand ... begins with a single step.

It was Robert Louis Stevenson who said that "everyone who got where he is has had to begin where he was." Many of the children in our Southeastern Children's Home family have had to begin in very difficult places, making the distances they've come nothing short of remarkable.

In this issue of *Hope!*, we'd like to introduce you to a few of our success stories. The backgrounds and foregrounds differ, but all the journeys began with a first step. And all of the journeys continue.



title, graduated from high school and even attended technical school. One of her most memorable achievements was the purchase of her very first car. Upon completing our residential program, Angela entered our independent living residential program which has taught her many important life skills.

Today, Angela is the mother of a precious baby girl and plans to return to school in the fall to complete a degree in accounting. During her visit Angela said, "This is my only home. I could never have made it this far with out the love and guidance I got while living at Southeastern."

## Heart and home

We were visited recently by two young adults we're proud to say we helped raise. One of them, Angela, is a new mother. She came to introduce us to her child and was accompanied by her child's aunt, Jonell.

These two women have come a long way since their time with us at Southeastern. They entered the foster care system at very early ages and had been moved frequently among placements prior to their arrivals here.

Jonell was the first to enter our care, arriving when she was 16 years old. Her stay was a series of ups and downs, so much so that, some days, she must have felt as though she was on a never-ending roller coaster ride.

During her recent visit she said, "I wish I had taken more advantage of my opportunities here. I would love to talk to the other children who live here now to encourage them to make the most of their opportunities. Oh, I wish...."

Angela was 14 when she arrived, by which time Jonell had left. At first Angela was skeptical of those who tried to provide for her needs, but she soon realized that our staff's concern for her wellbeing was genuine. Many successes followed this realization. She joined the 4-H Club, winning a state

We feel so fortunate to play a part in the tremendous progress these two women have made. We also are thankful that they still think of Southeastern as home – a home where they are always welcome and where their visits are eagerly anticipated.

God will guide Angela and Jonell. Of that we have no doubt. And we'll continue to do everything in our power to make their paths as straight and clear as we possibly can.

## Fond farewells

We'd like nothing more than to live in a world that has no need of the services we provide. But because we're in the business of helping to heal hurt children and families, it's likely that we'll be here for many years to come.

The silver lining to this bittersweet cloud is the work we do in children's lives. On average, thirty-five children are served at SECH annually, some coming, some going, some staying. We're pleased to report that, so far this year, four of our children have moved on to live with parents, extended families or adoptive or foster families. These fond farewells were important milestones achieved by all concerned.

Consider the story of **Chris**. As a young boy, he was removed from his natural home and placed with his grandparents. The subsequent death of his grandfather, who'd become a cherished father figure, had devastated Chris. He was placed with us and remained here for three years, struggling with school, but successfully participating in ROTC. This year he



# miles

returned to live with his grandmother.

When children are removed from their natural homes, grandparents often assume the parental roles. This was true of **Moni**, who after only four months at SECH, left us to make a home with her grandmother.

**Jerry**, who had been adopted by his aunt and uncle, was struggling with anger and the behavior associated with anger when he arrived at SECH two years ago. Today Jerry has learned to control his anger and he once again lives with his aunt and uncle.

**Jonathan** was with us for two years also. He overcame his difficulty with social skills, acquired independent living skills and ultimately was placed with a foster family. He maintains his ties to SECH and will continue to attend Byrnes High School.

Children thrive best in home settings where love and care are in good supply and Chris, Moni, Jerry and Jonathan now have such homes of their own. Southeastern Counseling Center is where we help children and families – whether natural, extended, adoptive or foster – overcome the obstacles they must confront every day. Please consider joining us for a few steps of this sometimes difficult, frequently surprising, always rewarding journey.



## Contact us!

Hope! is a publication of Southeastern Children's Home, **Robert Kimberly**, Exec. Director.

We can be reached ...

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southeastern  
**children's home**

## Home improvement

Like any conscientious home owner, we take pains to ensure that our grounds and facilities stay attractive and in good repair. This attention to detail extends to our "public face," as well, which is why we recently updated our logo and redesigned our communications materials. The new logo and motto – "where the heart is" – emphasize the home-heart connection. We



want the world to know that SECH really is a place of family, learning, love and growth. In many cases, it's the only real home our children have ever known.

We've also named our newsletter "Hope!" to remind our friends, family and contributors of what we're all working together to achieve – and what we *do achieve*, one child at a time, one day at a time, with the prayers and support of people like you.

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January 31, 2009 to August 31, 2009

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**BUFORD FIELDS**

January 31, 2009 to August 31, 2009

# Dropping out is not an option

There is a strong possibility that students who don't successfully complete high school will lose most of the gains they've made during their stay at SECH. As a result they are more likely to...

- lack minimum skills to function in a complex technological society,
- earn an estimated \$9,000 less per year than graduates,
- contribute only about half as much in taxes as do graduates,
- draw larger subsidies in food stamps, housing assistance, and welfare,
- have a greater chance of landing in prison,
- have worse health and lower life expectancies.

Staying in school is a vital objective, not only for the individual, but also for society as a whole. Some studies show that many youth who drop out of high school eventually earn a diploma or GED, but we know that abused and neglected kids who have no positive support system have little hope of doing that. This is why we do all we can to help our students earn a diploma or a GED before leaving SECH.

Our students attend James F. Byrnes High School, one of the premiere high schools in South Carolina, and we enjoy an excellent relationship with the school. This makes our job easier, but we

recommendations for public education systems to prevent high school dropouts. SECH is not a school and its main purpose is not academic, but we scored well on three of six recommendations in this government study. Recommendations 3-5 are:

- Provide academic support and enrichment to improve academic performance.
- Implement programs to improve student's classroom behavior and social skills.
- Personalize the learning environment and instructional process.

The on-campus classroom and summer instructional program implements all three of these

**"... studies show that many youth who drop out of high school eventually earn a diploma or GED ... so we do all we can to help students earn a diploma or a GED before leaving SECH ..."**

recommendations in several ways. You can read the complete study by going to our website at [sech.org](http://sech.org).

School started for our students August 17 and the campus classroom is now open each day after school. Students stop by first thing for snacks, socializing and a devotional, after which they work on assignments and receive any additional help needed.

We thank you for your concern for

the spiritual, social, physical and educational needs of these deserving young people. Because you make the work of Southeastern Children's Home possible, they have the hope of a better life as productive citizens.



take it a step further by being proactive in the education of our students.

A 2008 study, *Dropout Prevention*, conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Educational Services, made



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 Mr. Hugh Trotter  
 Mr. Ted Trotter & Family  
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 Dr. & Mrs. Ton Zeiss  
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 Mr. Kelly McCoy  
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 BUD WRIGHT  
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 BERNICE YOUNG  
 Central Church of Christ  
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**In honor of**

TERRY & NANCY BAILEY  
 Mr. & Mrs. Fred York  
 JACK & GAYLE COOPER  
 Anonymous  
 JEANIE COOPER  
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Davenport  
 REAGIN, REESE & BO EDWARDS  
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 Dr. Lydia M. Guillot  
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 Mr. & Mrs. Joe Moore, Jr.  
 ROBERT & KIM KIMBERLY  
 Rev. Dr. Jerry Newbold, Jr.  
 CHRISTY NODINE  
 Apache Baptist Church



January 31, 2009 to August 31, 2009

**In honor of**

DANNY & NANCY THOMAS  
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Higginbotham  
HASKELL & PATRICIA YENNY  
Mr. Jerry Satterfield, Sr.

**In honor of birthday**

BLAKE ABEL  
Dr. Lydia Guillot  
LOUISE BACON  
Dr. Lydia Guillot  
JIM CAIN  
Ms. Karen Cain  
HANNAH CHESNEY  
Dr. Lydia Guillot  
JOHN CONNELL  
Mr. & Mrs. William Primm  
JIM & CAROLYN CREEL  
Ms. Rebecca Willis  
J. C. FARLEY  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Farley  
ANDY HOOD  
Dr. Lydia Guillot

**In honor of graduation**

KIA JAMES  
Ms. Kitt C. Brown

**In honor of anniversary**

MR. & MRS. CHAD EDWARDS  
Mr. & Mrs. James B. Edwards  
MR. & MRS. WILLIAM WILSON  
Mr. & Mrs. James B. Edwards

**In honor of 50th anniversary**

MR. & MRS. WALLACE BEASLEY  
Mr. & Mrs. James B. Edwards

**In honor of 63rd anniversary**

J. C. & JANE FARLEY  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Farley

**In honor of 65th anniversary**

KIRK & CLARA COLE  
Ms. Donna Cole

**In honor of Mother's Day**

CLARA COLE  
Ms. Donna Cole  
JO HANNAFORD  
Dr. & Mrs. Mike Billings  
PANTHA POWELL  
Ms. Glenda Farmer

**In honor of Father's Day**

KIRK COLE  
Ms. Donna Cole  
J. C. FARLEY  
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Farley  
BRUCE HANNAFORD  
Dr. & Mrs. Mike Billings

**In-kind gifts**

A Classic Salon  
Apalache Baptist Church  
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Mr. Paul V. Bell  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Blackshear  
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Ms. Lisa Briggs  
Mrs. Gail Bright  
Mr. Brian Brockman & Family  
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Mr. Gerald Kelly  
Ms. Susie Kimbrell  
Mr. & Mrs. Louis Kunz  
Martin's Hair Cuts  
Lake Norman Church of Christ  
Mrs. Jackie Leatherwood  
Lexington Church of Christ  
Life Song Church  
Lyman United Methodist Church Ladies Class  
Mr. and Mrs. Michael R. Morton  
Mountain Island Church of Christ



January 31, 2009 to August 31, 2009

# In their own words ...

**Finding a family**

Thank you so very much for all that you've done for me and given me. My life at Southeastern will always be treasured in my heart and I'll always remember those with whom I shared it. As much as anyone wants to be a part of a family, I couldn't have asked for a better one. No matter how much trouble I caused, you never left me without the assurance that you would be there for me. Most would say living in a children's home is not family-like, and I too would have said the same before living at Southeastern, but nothing gets more family-like than that.

Robert, you're the parent I never had and so are those who have been my houseparents throughout these years. I only hope that I will be as encouraging and loving to the young when I'm your age. Maybe I will be one of your houseparents in the future. Who better to understand what those teens are going through!

Being eighteen and inexperienced to the real world, I feel like I have come a long way - grown up - and even though I've had a rough past, I understand that God gave me this life for a reason and has put me through so much for that same reason.

**Learning to grow up**

I found your website today and it brought tears to my eyes. As I looked through the pictures of the new developments at SECH, I was taken back to a time when SECH was still new and the Lyman house was a dream that was slowly becoming a reality. I remember the tears that I shed when Lyman house was opened and the only person

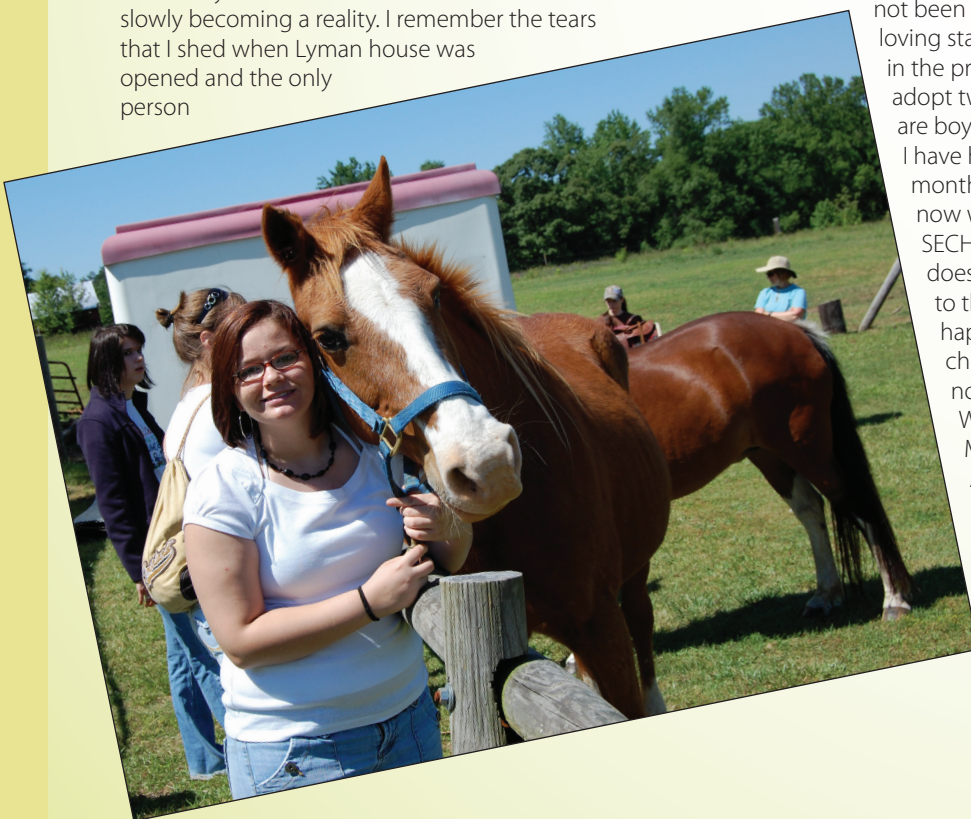
I truly could call Mom was moving into it. I was afraid I would never see Momma Nora again. All of this caused me to strive harder to complete the program in my cottage so I could move into the Lyman House.

**"... By no means do I say my life has been a bed of roses, but I truly would hate to see how it would have turned out if it had not been for the caring, loving staff at SECH ..."**

I remember the painstaking details of the planning. How you were against green being in the house and how Missy Thigpen assured you it would be alright. It's way better than alright ... it's perfect!

I learned how to grow up under your care. I learned how to mow the lawn and re-mow the lawn because it wasn't done right the first time. I learned how to work hard for what I believed in and how to earn what I wanted. I can remember the days doing odd jobs just to be able to go to camp an extra week.

I am 28 years old now and have been out of the "system" for almost eleven years. By no means do I say my life has been a bed of roses, but I truly would hate to see how it would have turned out if it had not been for the caring, loving staff at SECH. I am in the process of trying to adopt two children. They are boys ages 11 and 6. I have had them for 18 months and I know now why the staff at SECH does what it does. I cannot bear to think what would happen to these children if there was no one in their life. We go to court in March of this year. Adoption is just a few steps away. Please keep us in your prayers.



# Influences

Shannon's decision for baptism at Palmetto Bible Camp this summer was the culmination of much time and thought. She's that kind of person – quiet and unassuming, a good student.

Palmetto Bible Camp helped to influence her decision, as it has for over 100 young people who've been baptized while at Southeastern. Bible Camp, in addition to her congregation and youth group, has been a part of her faith development during her two years here.

Shannon came to the Children's Home because her adoption was not working out. She has come a

long way in overcoming challenges in her young life, and one result is a better relationship with her adoptive family.

School is another one of the bright spots in Shannon's life. She has her sights set on college, which is two years in the future. Though she doesn't know what her major will be, she enjoys math and does well in it.

Serving young people who must be placed out of their natural homes depends on many different influences. These influences — houseparents, counselors, teachers, mentors, and others — first must overcome negative influences before the positive influences can show results.

All of our loyal and generous supporters, through prayer, encouragement, and financial gifts, are an important part of the circle of influences for the young people served at Southeastern. You make it possible for Shannon and many others to achieve excellence and realize dreams.

As Shannon continues her spiritual development as a new Christian, she has a wonderful quality that many mature followers of Christ find difficult to develop. Shannon loves to befriend those no one else would — a curiosity to her peers, perhaps, but an undoubted joy to behold.



## In-kind gifts

- Mr. and Mrs. Travis L. Nodine
- Northwood Baptist Church
- Mr. and Mrs. Frank Nurt
- Ms. Julie Nutting
- Ms. Rita Ochiltree
- Mr. and Mrs. Roger J. Page
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- Upstate Muscular Therapy - Pam Coppes
- Upstate Muscular Therapy - Tammy Gilbert
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- Mr. Sam Bingham
- Officer Danny Blackwell

January 31, 2009 to August 31, 2009

# HOPE!

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where the heart is

southeastern  
children's  
home