

Have a
HAPPY
NEW YEAR



501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization

www.thenestalliance.org

**WINTER
2017**

NEWSLETTER

ASU STUDENTS COME "ON BOARD"

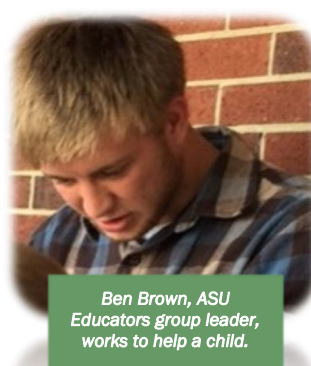
"Their enthusiasm is contagious!"

When ASU college students asked to become involved in working with and mentoring the youth in our NEST Kids program, the answer was a strong resounding "Yes!" They immediately completed the process of background checks (which is required of new volunteers in our program). They came "on board" to volunteer on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month, with some coming every Monday.

From the first time we met the impressive group of ASU students from Appalachian Community of Education Scholars (ACES), directed by

Jan Stanley, the one thing that has stood out is the contagious enthusiasm of this group. They provide lessons that encourage the kids to think about what they want to do in the future; they create and bring craft materials, organize and lead activities, and help with the music program.

In multiple ways, they demonstrate faith turned into action whether it is leading in prayer, singing, or helping the NEST Kids pack boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Their presence provides excellent role models for continuing one's education, to set goals, to graduate high school and to continue on to college.



Ben Brown, ASU
Educators group leader,
works to help a child.

The group learned about The NEST Alliance from Ben Brown, an ASU student who is a leader and member in the ACES. He worked previously with our NEST Kids as a member of the Fletcher Baptist Church Youth group during NEST Camps held in July of his junior and senior years in high school. Ben says, "We have just had the most fun being able to help out and be around the kids! We plan on coming back next semester."

Thank you, ACES!



Some of the ACES
members who came
to NEST Kids on
September 26, 2016
for the first time.

FLETCHER YOUTH EXPAND MENTORING ROLE WITH THE NEST ALLIANCE

In addition to the NEST Camp provided during the month of July by the Fletcher Youth Group and their leaders, the Fletcher Youth have now become involved in a once-a-month mentoring role during our regular NEST Kids meetings. We are in the process of matching each of them with a NEST Kid who they

can help with activities, homework, and reading skills. The Fletcher Youth are also providing help with coordinating movements to combine with the music activities. They, and their leaders, played a very important role in helping with our annual Christmas party for the children and their families.

We are so blessed to have them. A very special thank you is extended to Rev. Cory Halsey and Doug and Tonya Halsey, leaders for this group. What a difference you make on the 2nd Monday of each month!

*"The soul is healed by being
with children." Dostoevsky*



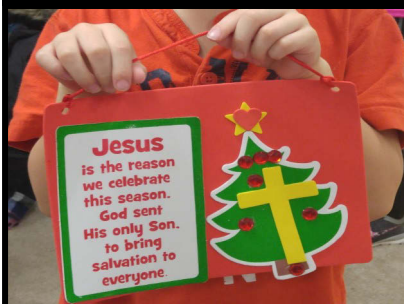
SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ⇒ ASU group - leading and inspiring NEST kids
- ⇒ Fletcher Youth continue to make a difference
- ⇒ "Happy Birthday, Jesus" party filled with blessings
- ⇒ NEST Kids and ASU students pack shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child
- ⇒ The NEST Alliance enters its 7th year
- ⇒ More foster parents needed in Ashe County



CHRISTMAS JOY

Thank You, Donors & Volunteers, for a Blessed Celebration



We extend a special heartfelt thank you to:

Faith Fellowship Church and Staff.

The Fletcher Youth Group and Leaders for helping with our 2016 "Happy Birthday, Jesus" party.

Dru and Linda Thompson for providing a background of wonderful music and songs .

The parents of our NEST Kids who came to be with their children.

All who made it possible to provide gifts and food for each child.



"When children know the love, compassion and grace of God to be clearly evident in the adults around them, they have an amazing hope for the future."

Prayer: May we always remember that, for children, consistency in our lives transmits the miracle of hope that can anchor their lives.

From: The NEST Alliance Twig Collection

Entering Our Seventh Year

"Seven is the number of completeness and perfection (both physical and spiritual). It derives much of its meaning from being tied directly to God's creation of all things." www.biblestudy.org

"God's creation of all things." The NEST Alliance for children did not exist before God created it. 2017 will be the beginning of our 7th year. We were literally brought into existence through Scripture and Prayer, and we have been sustained by Scripture and Prayer. All meetings of the NEST Alliance Board begin by joining together to pray the Scripture found in Ephesians (Ephesians 1:17-23 and 3:14-21). We began studying one Psalm as our devotional during every meeting a few years back, and in our first meeting in January of this year, we will be studying Psalm 100. It will be our 100th meeting since beginning this study. Scripture and Prayer come before any planning or business is conducted because they are the rock foundation on which we build. God has blessed us with time and energy to meet weekly with children, to meet twice each month to plan and implement our outreach programs, and to meet once each quarter to conduct our Board of Directors business meetings.

We know these things to be completed as we enter our 7th year. Thanks be to the Creator and Sustainer of all things!

NEST ALLIANCE DIRECTORS SEEK TO STRENGTHEN FOSTER/ADOPTIVE CARE OUTREACH MISSION

The seven members of the Board of Directors of The NEST Alliance have hearts that seek to learn more about concrete ways to strengthen our outreach to foster/adoptive children in Ashe County. Recently, one of our board members made us aware of webinar training programs available to our board by Jason Johnson who is a foster and adoptive father and regular writer and speaker on issues that relate to orphan care. He conducts seminars throughout the nation in which he raises awareness about foster/adoptive children's needs and answers questions for those currently fostering or considering fostering or adopting. He says, *"We are all called to do something, even though not everyone is called to adopt or foster, but we are all called to help in some way."* He helped co-found The Orphan Care Network, a non-profit committed to serving, supporting and equipping foster and adoptive families.

"In 2013, with the combined church ministry and foster and adoptive experience, Jason began working for an organization helping church leaders implement structure, strategy and sustainable mechanisms of orphan care ministry within their churches. This ultimately led him to his current role as the Director of the National Church Mobilization Initiative with Christian Alliance for Orphans. Jason Johnson is the author of *ALL IN Orphan Care*. He has a deep passion to see the gospel catalyze a movement of orphan care within the Church around the world." www.cafo.org

Our board is interested in learning more about the structure, strategies, and sustainable ways to work with church leaders in our community to meet the needs of foster or adoptive care for children in our county. We believe that each church has within it individuals who have a heart for this type of ministry, but often do not know very much about it, how to become involved, or if there will be a support system within their church family and community.

As we learn more, we hope to provide updates in our future newsletters.

If you have ever considered providing a safe place for a child and would like more information, please contact The Ashe County Department of Social Services at 336-982-7811.

"Every child needs a safe place to grow."

Ashe County DSS and The NEST Alliance



Pictured are children who are in the families of some of our directors. Running, in joy, toward the next, most exciting thing in childhood is what The NEST Alliance desires for all children.

***"We are all called to do something,
even though not everyone is called to
adopt or foster, but we are all called
to help in some way."*** Jason Johnson

DID YOU KNOW?

January is National Mentoring Month.

1 in 3 young people will grow up without a mentor according to Mentor: The National Mentoring Partnership.

9 million at-risk youths will turn 19 without ever having a mentor leaving them less likely to graduate from high school or college.

Studies have shown that at-risk youths who have mentors are 55% more likely to go to college and to be volunteers in their communities.

Quoted in *Real Simple* - January, 2017 Issue

Board of Directors

Stephanie Baker, *President*

Kendra Graybeal, *Vice President*

Autumn Cline, *Secretary*

Michelle Dix, *Treasurer*

Theresa Church

Jan Hershner

Pam Payne

Kari Truax—A Founder and Former Board Member

The NEST Alliance

PO Box 684

West Jefferson NC 28694

Contact: Michelle Dix, Treasurer (919) 632-5242

We welcome ANY donated amount, and on-going donations are greatly appreciated. The NEST Alliance is a local 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and all donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. Please make checks payable to The NEST Alliance or donate online at www.thenestalliance.org.