

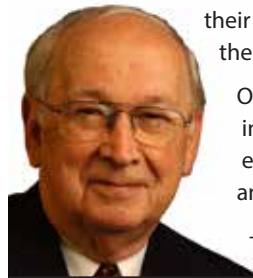
MILK & HONEY NEWSLETTER

Our mission is to deliver educational and cultural programs to children, families, and communities, primarily in Southern Appalachia. We serve by sharing and spreading centuries old traditions of song and story.

"A Taste of Milk & Honey"

It hurts, But I understand when someone turns down our request for financial support with the response, "We give to the poor but to programs that meet their real needs." Meaning, of course, food and clothing, especially at Christmas.

Blessing on those programs; who could deny food and clothing to a child? The Craddock Center has a small emergency fund and not a week goes by without at least one claim on that purse. But that is not our primary mission. We are about the business of enriching lives, of lifting self-esteem, of instilling a sense of self-worth, of affecting socialization so that each child can play and study and grow as an equal to other children. We do this through songs, art, and stories. Studies show that participating in such programs increases a child's success in school and in life in the community.



The records of some charities indicate that they give to children just as they gave to their parents and to their grandparents. Generation after generation the story continues the same.

Our goal is to break the cycle, to change the story. There are 13 million children living in depressing poverty in this country. But we get up each morning believing our small effort is making and will continue to make a difference. And every dollar we receive is an investment in that difference, and, on behalf of the children, we thank you.

- Written by Dr. Craddock November 2004

"New Executive Director"

Earlier this Summer, Pam Colvin, The Craddock Center Executive Director, announced her resignation due to relocation and the need to focus on family matters.

As a result, the Personnel Committee began a search for a replacement. The Executive Director position was posted to several web search sites. Additionally, it was shared with the Fannin County Development Authority's job board and similar sites with surrounding counties.

While The Craddock Center is not a faith-based organization, its Board is composed of people of faith. Each of us has had opportunities to experience God's work in the most unexpected way. When searching far and wide for an Executive Director, we initially did not look in our own yard. Note, I did not say backyard. Rather, on our own front porch, the ideal applicant was waiting. A person who was already committed to The Craddock Center, an individual who has demonstrated not merely ability, but also passion. A person open to God's direction in his life. A person who answered – in the spirit of Isaiah 6:8 – Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And Kirk Cameron said, "Here am I. Send me!"

Kirk shared with the members of the Personnel Committee, individually and in collective groups, that he was responding to a call. The Personnel Committee, after conversation and prayer, enthusiastically recommended Kirk Cameron as Executive Director. At the Board's October 22nd, 2020, meeting additional discussion and prayer was shared and we voted to ask Kirk Cameron to accept the position of Executive Director for The Craddock Center.

Thank you Kirk for listening to God's calling and stepping forward.

Thanks to the members of the Personnel Committee: Milly Hasting, Sue Hriljac, Caroline Carder, Lynn Doss and additionally to Beth Roberts who was asked by the Committee to provide input based on her years of experience with the Center.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING





“The Story Express and Knitted Hats”

During the week of 11/09/2020, volunteers from The Craddock Center delivered over 1,400 new books and 1,300 donated, hand-made, knitted hats to the children we serve. The area we serve consists of nine (9) counties including Dawson, Gilmer, Fannin, Lumpkin, Pickens, Towns, and Union Counties in Georgia, Polk County in Tennessee, and Cherokee County in North Carolina.

The Story Express, although modified this year, delivers hundreds of new children's books to the 60 classrooms and the 1,237 children we serve. Children can choose their own book to take home and love.

In addition to classrooms, during a normal, non-pandemic year, The Story Express visits health fairs, food pantries, community events, and Camp Craddock sites. Last year, The Story Express gave away between 4,500 to 5,000 books!

Due to COVID-19 precautions, we are not meeting with the children at this point, but our volunteers deliver messages of hope and happiness through the children's joy-filled experiences of new books and a warm hat. Our mission of “Happy & Hope. We Deliver” is a mission in action that comes alive each day through the work of The Craddock Center.

Thanks to the following volunteers for making this wonderful event a success: Milly and Steve Hastings, Beth Roberts, Carolyn Lakes & Larry Brannan and the Ladies of Big Canoe.

“Hats off to our knitters”

Winters in the mountains can be cold, and many of the children we serve do not have adequate clothing for the cold, winter months. A warm, knitted hat helps tremendously in preventing loss of critical body heat in the very young. During the week of November 9th, and just in time for cold weather, our volunteers delivered cozy, hand-made knitted hats to all the children we serve. What would we do without our talented supporters who knit these wonderfully colorful hats with lots of love and care?

Thanks to the following for donating over 1,600 hats

Ann Grant from Atlanta, the Prayer Shawl Ministry from the Lutheran Church By the Lake in McCormick, South Carolina, and the Fiber Art Group of the Blue Ridge Mountain Arts Association.



"Santa Returns in December"

In December, Santa and Mrs. Claus and an un-named elf will make the annual sleigh ride to visit our children to deliver hand-made, wooden toys. As with our visits in November, we will not be able to physically meet with our children, but efforts will be made for the children to see Santa and his entourage.

Santa Jack and Mrs. Claus are an amazing couple who are loved by all! You should see the faces of our children as Santa speaks to them in English, Spanish, and even American Sign Language. It is a sight of love and care to behold. Many parents have reported that their kids insist on sleeping with the wooden toys for weeks after their visit with Santa.

We are most appreciative of our generous and talented toymaker "elves" from: Toy Makers of East Lake in Palm, Harbor, Florida, St. Luke's United Methodist Church Houston, Texas, and Gary Padgett in Woodstock, Georgia, who send cases of hand-carved, wooden toys each year as gifts to children.

In the box from St. Luke's we found the following message: "These wooden toys were lovingly made by the St. Luke's Methodist Church Woodshop. The wood was once nothing but scraps. These scraps become toys for children. In the same way, in the hands of Jesus the Master Carpenter we too are changed into something of worth and beauty."



"From the Executive Director"

Needless to say, I am humbled and honored to have been chosen by the Board of The Craddock Center to step into the role of Executive Director.

I think about all of those who have served this wonderful organization before me: our founders Dr. Craddock and Nettie, volunteers, artists and Board members. I also think about the thousands of children who have been touched and enriched by the work of The Craddock Center.

It goes without saying that the pandemic has impacted what we do. We could not have imagined how our lives and those institutions we serve would change.

But, The Craddock Center remains open!! As you will see in this newsletter, our volunteers delivered over 1,200 new books and hand-made knitted hats to the children we serve. And in December, Santa will deliver donated wooden toys. Neither of these two events will allow us to interact with the children. The events will be different from previous years, but the children and teachers will know we care, and The Craddock Center is still carrying out its mission.

The Living Room, our furniture outreach program, continues to provide used and occasionally new furniture and household items to families who are in crisis, recovering from fire, eviction, or domestic violence.

Craddock Cares is a new outreach program sponsored by The Craddock Center. Craddock Cares was formed in 2020 to support children, women, and the elderly who find themselves in emergency situations, displacements, and other significant crisis events. The Fannin County Sheriff's Department placed an order for 30 kits, and we delivered! One Craddock Cares kit includes: Lightweight tote bag, Blanket, Bottled water, Stuffed animal, Toothbrush and toothpaste, Hand towel, Hat and gloves (winter months).

Even with the adversity of this year, we continue to plan for a better future when we can resume the Children's Enrichment Program, The Story Express, Camp Craddock and Songs & Stories.

In conclusion, at this time we are focusing on Sustainability. Sustain means to strengthen and support. Please think of ways you can help strengthen and support The Craddock Center during this time to ensure a better and brighter future for the children who need what we do!

"Get to know Kirk"

Kirk Cameron has a degree in Healthcare Administration from Georgia State University. He is retired from a 28 year career with the McKesson Corporation and has lived in Cherry Log for the last six years. Kirk is passionate towards helping and serving others in each of the communities he has lived. He remains active in local non-profit organizations and is on the Board of the Blue Ridge Community Theater. Kirk is a Deacon and active member of Cherry Log Christian Church. He looks forward to bringing his creativity and enthusiasm to his new role as Executive Director.

