

IMPACT

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND SUPPORTERS OF THE LEARNING TREE

Nine ALDOT 5310 Vans Awarded

The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) completed its review and evaluation of The Learning Tree's 2017 Section 5310 Program grant application in April. The grant provides capital assistance under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities transportation program. The Learning Tree was approved to receive nine, 7-8 passenger mini vans; three for Elmore County, three for Calhoun County and three for Mobile County. The grant required a 20% matching funds, with a net value of \$262,842 in vehicle support. The vans have been ordered and will arrive this September. "Program vans are heavily used, the new vehicles will provide tremendous support for our residential and preschool programs across the state," commented Ben Rogers, Operations Director. •



Stirling Properties donates \$26,500



The Learning Tree staff and students were invited to Stirling Properties' 5th Annual "Stirling Olympics" to accept a donation of \$26,500. Stirling Properties is a commercial real estate company with offices in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. The Stirling Properties employees raised a total of \$53,000 to support charitable causes throughout the Gulf South region. Nathan Handmacher, a Stirling Properties employee and team member, school parent, and Learning Tree board member, nominated The Learning Tree for the gift.

The event featured Stirling Properties team members battling one another in quirky competitions and relay races, such as musical chairs, a hula hoop chain, caterpillar races and the funky chicken. The day ended with the "Mane Event," an obstacle course race on hobby horses by the Stirling Properties partnership team. The kids had a great time watching the fun and meeting everyone. We are most grateful to everyone for their hard work and generosity. •

Fuse Grant Awards \$25,000

The Order of Fuse in Mobile awarded a \$25,000 grant to Woody's Song School. A special thank you to Abe and Carl Harper with Harper Technologies for nominating the school and Chase Webster with Emulous Creative for producing the winning video.

The Order of Fuse is an organization that consists of a diverse group of young professionals looking to give back to the community in a different way. The Order's Fuse Project invests in initiatives promoting the health, fitness, education and social responsibility of our children.

Two causes are selected by the members of Fuse each year for the grant. Woody's Song School is proud to be one of their causes. •



The
Learning
Tree

Helping Children Learn and Grow

Established in 1983, The Learning Tree, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to children and adolescents with significant educational, medical, and behavioral challenges; helping them develop and maintain a quality of life expected by non-disabled members of their family and community.

The Learning Tree, Inc. and its programs admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

The Learning Tree is governed by a volunteer board of directors, representative of the primary service areas in the State of Alabama.

Board of Directors
Dr. John Caldwell
Angie Coon
Katie Dougherty
Nathan Handmacher
Allison Kendall
Dr. Sam Perna
Dr. Marcia Rossi
Dr. Jim Siders
Alan Taunton

This newsletter is published by The Learning Tree, Resource Development Department compiled and distributed by coordinating offices located in these Alabama cities: Anniston/Jacksonville, Auburn/Tallassee, and Mobile.

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Operations Director
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Member of the Alabama Autism Providers Network Collaborating, Advocating and Caring for People with ASD
www.al-autismproviders.net



Message from the Executive Director,
Dr. Marc Williams:



Helping children and adolescents with special needs and their families is what we do...our mission. Our educational and residential programs continue to demonstrate a high rate of success in managing the most severe behavior challenges. As I travel between our three regions I am always inspired by our employees who work so diligently to help our students achieve amazing results with their educational and behavioral needs. As a result of our success, the need

for the services of The Learning Tree is growing exponentially. In addition to increasing enrollments in our preschools in each region, our residential programs are quickly preparing to meet the need. And in Mobile, we are in the early stages of expanding the facilities for the Residential School, Woody’s Song School, and add administrative offices, all part of the Able Court project.

In other exciting news we were recently approved for nine new mini-vans by the Alabama Department of Transportation and South Alabama Regional Planning Commission. They should arrive this September to be used by our residential programs and preschools in all three regions. These additional vehicles will be a tremendous support for our programs.

Change and growth can be challenging, then again it can be exhilarating, I choose the latter. With the support of a great board of directors and staff it is just that.

Have a great summer!

Marc

HB284 Advocacy “Autism Bill”

Thanks to the lobbying of parents and the support of several key lawmakers, Alabama autism families are breathing a sigh of relief since Gov. Kay Ivey signed House Bill 284, better known as the “autism bill”, into law on May 19, 2017. Parents and advocates attended in large numbers at the State House in Montgomery for hearings and committee meetings, driving home the point that ABA, or Applied Behavior Analysis, is the one therapy that has proven time and time again to be the most effective therapy for children on the autism spectrum. Our lawmakers listened, and beginning in October, many insurance plans will be required to provide coverage for services for children up to age 18. This applies to companies with at least 51 employees, with public insurance plans (including state and education employees, Medicaid, and All Kids) being covered at a later date. •



FACT! The Learning Tree provides assistance to more than 75 school districts to deliver special education services and teacher training.

Employee News

Congratulations to **Heather and Drew Jones**, on the birth of their new baby boy, Silas Andrew, born May 18th, 6 lbs 15 oz.

Anniston/Jacksonville Campus
Kevin Pike was promoted to Lead Maintenance Technician.

Congratulations to **Jessica and Robby Reed**, in the birth of their baby girl, Elizabeth Caroline born on May 8th, 7 lbs. 5 oz.

Terry Pike retired after 25 years of service.

Welcome to **Randy James**, Residential Supports Supervisor; **Rajae Gillispe** and **Chondra Turner**, Quality Monitors; **Teresa Collins**, Teacher; **Shadericka Peters**, Assistant to Adult Coordinator; and **Sarah Sanchez**, Training Coordinator.

Auburn/Tallassee Campus
Congratulations to **Alison Hodge** and **Stewart Rice** who were married on April 8th.

Chris Black and **Kenneth Martin** were promoted to Residential Support Supervisors.

Amber Kinnebrew and **Janelle Johnson** were promoted to Lead Teacher Assistants.

Mobile Campus
Welcome **Melissa Harville**, Business & Communications Manager with the Resource Development team.

Christy McSpadden finished her second master’s degree in Education and is now beginning school to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, (BCBA).

RSS, **Dominique Bernard** is expecting her first child.

Kerriane Castleberry, Regional Director was elected to serve as the Junior

League’s “Done in a Day” Chair; She was also selected for Mobile United’s young adult leadership class, Connect Mobile.

Christy McSpadden and **Jules Starr** joined the Mobile Civitan Club

Jules Starr, Kristy Elderkin, Essence Jones, Abry Stopper, Kim Turner, Jenni Kountz, Kerriane Castleberry, and **Teresa Atkins** attended the March Association of Professional Behavior Analysts conference in New Orleans.

Jules Starr, Kim Turner, Essence Jones, Jasmine McKaskey, Emily Tisdale, Maria Ingram, and Kerriane Castleberry, are all receiving their BCBA supervision under Ellen Taylor.

Teresa Atkins, Resource Development Coordinator, exhibited at the Association for Behavior Analysis International in Denver during May.

Please note: Employee news may be submitted to your regional Resource Development Coordinator monthly.

Statewide Support Continues to Grow

The Learning Tree is grateful for the support of local and state foundations and business and government support from across the state. Thank you to the following for their support in 2017 to date:

- The Junior League of Lee County gave \$1,372 to purchase 4 Radio Flyer balance bikes, 4 Radio Flyer wagons, 2 Silver Riderz taxi trikes, 4 seatbelts and harnesses, 4 bike locks and 2 sets of playground balls with a pump.
- Alabama Department of Transportation granted 6 new vans at Tallassee and Jacksonville Residential Schools.
- The South Alabama Regional Planning Commission and the Alabama Department of Transportation granted 3 vans to the Mobile Residential School.
- Infirmary Health Systems donated \$750 to Woody’s Song School to recognize the volunteer efforts of employee Brenda Wesley, who was selected the IHelp Volunteer of the Year. Wesley selected Woody’s Song in honor of her granddaughter, Gracie, who has autism and is a student at Burrough’s Elementary School.
- The Alabama Power Foundation gave \$500 to support the Mobile Region’s Night at the Races.
- Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church gave \$1,000 to Woody’s Song School from the proceeds of their 2016 Greek Festival.
- In support of the purchase of the new property on Able Court in Mobile, The Crampton Trust awarded \$10,000

and the A.S. Mitchell Foundation awarded \$3,500.

- B&B Pet Stop in Mobile donated \$1,755 to The Learning Tree as part of their “Round Up for Charity” program in February.
- The Blues Tavern gave \$2,230 to Woody’s Song School from the proceeds of their Barbecue Cookoff.
- The Joseph Treadwell Charitable Foundation awarded \$15,000 to The Learning Tree to support Kilborn’s Kids in Mobile.
- Poarch Band of Creek Indians awarded \$2,500 to Woody’s Song School.
- The William G. Helis 310 Chapter 310 Order of AHEPA awarded \$1,500 to Woody’s Song School to be used to purchase curriculum.
- Paint The Town Blue, a project of the 2016 Connect Mobile class, donated \$1,300 to The Little Tree Preschool in Mobile from proceeds of their Early Intervention Awareness Fair in April.
- Empty Stocking awarded \$500 for Holiday Helping Hearts for Jacksonville campus.
- Altec/Styslinger Foundation granted \$2,500 for Jacksonville and Anniston locations.
- Mr. Chase Webster of Emulous Creative donated his time and talent to produce the video for the “A Night at the Races” event and the FUSE project grant for the residential program, the preschool, and Woody’s Song School.



On April 29th, guests went ‘all in’ for The Learning Tree children at the 6th annual Aces for Autism Gala. The presenting sponsor was Pediatrics Plus, a local pediatrician office with professionals who are committed to quality pediatric care. The gala is the largest fundraiser in the northern region in support of The Learning Tree school programs in Anniston and Jacksonville. A record \$40,000 was raised through ticket sales, sponsorships, pre-event donations, on-site pledges and donations. A large silent auction featured over 100 items that added to the fun and excitement. “We are very grateful for the growing community support for this event,” said Dr. Marc Williams, Executive Director.

The gala was held at the Buckner Event Plaza on Fort McClellan; a historical venue, with elegant, rustic architecture. Chef David Garfrerick of Garfrerick’s Café in Oxford managed the catering. Guests enjoyed a unique experience with grilled Cajun shrimp served straight from the staged grill. Carved

roast beef was featured surrounded by a variety of fresh salads and fruit. Dessert included a delightful key lime pie and a wonderfully gooey white chocolate bread pudding. Bama Budweiser and International Wines provided the wine and beer libations, and Milos donated wonderful ice tea. Susan and Steve Giles of 2 Wolves DJ Service of Fort Payne provided the music for the evening. Goodfella’s Gaming delivered another fun filled casino night with quality dealers and games. Seth Johnson donated the videography. Z & H Photography, Zack Brown and Hannah Gay donated their time to capture the memories of the evening. Lilypad Florist in Centre provided beautiful flower arrangements.

“An event like this would not be possible without the help of our sponsors and friends,” added Erica Brown, Resource Development Coordinator. Thank you to the Resource Development Committee; Tammy Wigington, Dana Snyder, Jillian and Seth Johnson, Nicole Comer, Jennifer Edmondson, Aimee Spruill, Jennifer Wythe, Patricia Murphy, Tiffany Canady, Jamie Logan, Nicole Dieckow, and Jenny Dooley. Lonna Miller, owner of Buckner Event Plaza, was a great help during the planning and event phases. Volunteers for the evening included Kohl’s employees of Oxford and Alpha Xi Delta sisters from Jacksonville State University. Donna and Ashley Evans came all the way from Rome, Georgia to help out.



Tommy Hammonds donated a Loreley Resort, 8 day-7night stay in Helen, Georgia. High Adventure Company donated the all-inclusive Port Eads Deep Sea Fishing vacation, valued at \$2500. Other silent auction examples included High Adventure Company, Disney World, YETI, Coach, Williams Sonoma, Georgia Aquarium, World of Coke, Baron’s Baseball, Rome Braves, Ripley’s Believe It or Not, Kentucky Horse Park, University of Alabama, Auburn University, Alabama Splash, Agpro, and Windcreek Casino. Local artists, Keith Wahl, JC Morgan, and Jamie Runnells, donated their original works. Other items included Mary Kay, Scentsy, Perfectly Posh, Jamberry, etc.



L-R: Jennifer Taylor, Ashley Tucker, Julie Freeman, and Joy Griggs



L-R: Savanna Parsons, Kylee Delozier, Taylor Strain and Nicole Denney



Jim and Susan Johnson with Chef Dave



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

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Dr. Timothy A. Kerper
Downey Drug of Anniston
Hancock Chiropractic



L-R: Gary and Tammy Wigington, Valerie and Joey Wheat



L-R: Valerie Whatley, Jenny Dooley, Nicole Dieckow and Phillip Whatley



L-R: Andrew and Julie Tyson, Misti and Keith Howell



Chase and Emily Thomas



Jeff Steele and Stacy Williamson



A NIGHT AT THE RACES

A record crowd attended the 5th Annual “A Night at the Races,” sponsored by HPC Specialty Pharmacy. Nearly 200 guests attended, raising more than \$26,000. The guests arrived at The Pillars of Mobile in their finest Derby attire and were treated to delicious hors d’oeuvres by Clark’s Kitchen and entertainment by James Patterson. Chip Herrington performed the “call to post” for each race. Onsite Entertainment provided a video gaming experience in the courtyard and aired the videoed horse racing. Magic Memories photo booth offered a fun keepsake to commemorate the evening.

This event would not have been a success without the help of our amazing volunteers! Thank you to everyone who worked tirelessly behind the scenes securing sponsorships, auction items and helping to set up our venue. Harper Technology’s Abe and Carl Harper donated all of the media equipment and their expertise to make sure that our races ran smoothly. We’d also like to thank Chase Webster with Emulous Creative for producing a wonderful tribute to the mission of The Learning Tree.



The Pillars of Mobile



L – R: Brandy Strickland, Dana Terry and Scootie Dabbs.

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Autism Society of Alabama
The Karavokiros Family
USA Autism Diagnostic Clinic



Billy and Angel Loewen



L – R: Chase Webster, Kerrienne Castleberry and Whitney Watson



L – R: Veronica Pines, Audra Harper and Jessica Wofford



L - R: Lisa Taylor, and Boyd and Blanche Whigham



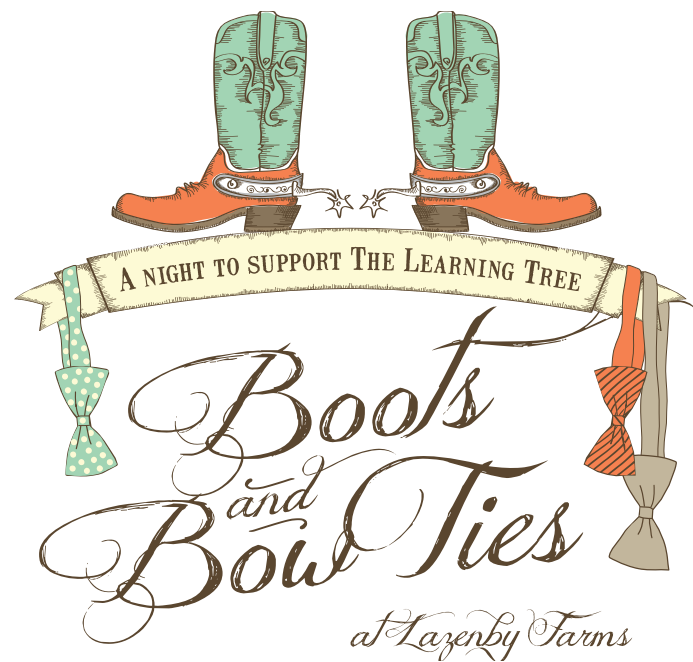
HPC’s Ron Cieutat and Janet Bryan



L – R: Erin Wofford, Christy McSpadden, Marc Williams and Phyllis Reile



The Pillars courtyard after dark



The third annual “Boots and Bow Ties” was a huge success for the Tallassee/Auburn region. The event was held at Lazenby Farms in Auburn on February 17th. The evening was filled with lots of good food, music and friends. There were more than 200 guests in attendance to enjoy the silent auction and gaming tables. Troubadour BBQ provided the catering and Mr. Don Darby provided the piano music for the night.

Board President, Dr. Marcia Rossi joined the fun along with other distinguished guests, Mayor of Tallassee, Johnny Hammock and Tallassee City Council member, Sarah Hill. A big thank you to one of Tallassee’s residential parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bates, for their heartwarming testimonial about their family. The event raised over \$17,000.



Sponsors for the event included:

Magnolia Sponsors

AES Industries and The Hudson Foundation

Cotton Blossom Sponsors

Alabama Power Foundation, Jeffcoat Trant Funeral Home and Crematory, Mike’s Merchandise, Patterson and Duke, P.A., Tallassee Power and Equipment, and The UPS Store

Bow Tie Sponsors

Auburn Bank, Auburn Psychology Group, Auburn University Club, Berney Office Solutions, Clinical Psychologists, P.C., Community Hospital, Crain Landscape and Design, LLC, East Alabama Medical Center, East Alabama Pediatric Dentistry, Franklin Tire and Auto, Hodges Vineyards and Tasting Room, LuLaRoe Kaitlyn Willing, Machen McChesney, Primesouth Bank, Southeastern Land Group, Sprayberry Orthodontics, Turenne PharMedCo, Walmart Logistics, Whippoorwill Vineyards, Will Power Fitness, and Wind Creek Wetumpka.

A special thanks to Anita Sears for her design work, Dawn Lazenby of Lazenby Farms, April Rapp, Jessica Zevac, Carmen Rodgers for the photography, Brittney Hornsby, Alpha Xi Delta, Junior League of Lee County, Priscilla and Steve Hammonds, Teresa Atkins, Erica Brown, Dallas Weldon, Vicky Hudson, Louann Moore, and Emily and Jesse Rollins.



L- R: Sarah Hill, Laura & Klay Peters, Jake & Jennifer Crain, Rusty & Erin Smith



L - R: Phyllis Reile & Marc Williams with Heather Jones



L - R: Erin Wofford Pat Murphy and Valerie Whatley



Jim Sears & Gail Sims



Dana Price and Brittney Hornsby



Phyllis Reile gives auction item to teacher Kristen Davis

Nurses' Week Celebrated

Nurses' week was celebrated May 6th – May 12th. The nurses at the Tallassee campus monitor the general health of the children while at school and in their homes. They routinely monitor all medications, conduct assessments, and monitor vital signs. If a child has a scrape, cough or congestion, the nurses assess them to see if a trip to the doctor or ER is needed. Many times they are called on for jobs beyond their normal scope, and must frequently take night and weekend calls. They are always ready to help . . . 24 hours a day seven days a week! Our nurses make the appointments for the children to see a physician and also go along for the appointments. But the most important thing about our nurses is how much they love their job and love the children!



L-R: Medical Assistant Erin Carter with Ryan



L-R: Tyler with nurse Ginger Robinson



L-R: Marian with Nurse Cindy Jones

Junior League of Lee County supports the Little HAPIE Tree Preschool

The Junior League of Lee County (JLLC) awarded a grant for \$1,327.00 to the Little H.A.P.I.E. Tree Preschool in Auburn to fund the project "Pedal Your Way to Fitness". The JLLC is an organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women, and improving community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. The JLLC strives to promote health and wellness among elementary and middle school children of Lee County by providing and assisting with access to food, nutritional education and physical education.

The JLLC has graciously supported the preschool for several years. This year's donation will purchase 4 Radio Flyer balance bikes, 4 Radio Flyer wagons, 2 Silver Riderz taxi trikes, 4 seatbelts and harnesses, 4 bike locks and 2 sets of playground balls and pump to promote physical fitness within the preschool. Jessica Zevac, Assistant Program Director of the preschool and teacher Alison Rice attended the awards ceremony to accept the grant May 16th at the Moore's Mill Club Pavilion.



L-R: Brooke Kastner, JLLC President, Jessica Zevac and Alison Rice

First United Methodist Church Builds Ramp

The Men's Club from the First United Methodist Church recently built a ramp at one of the Learning Tree group homes in Tallassee. The Men's Club is a group of men that voluntarily builds ramps around the Tallassee area for people in need. The men's group members are Mr. John Wayne Bradford, Dr. Jim Jeffers, Mr. Sam Johnson, Mr. Herbie Mason, Mr. Spencer Manson, Mr. Bob Reed, and Mr. Bob Taunton. They worked very fast and did a great job. They built the ramp in one day while the children were in school.



New ramp at a Learning Tree group home in Tallassee.

Training Events Held in Tallassee

The Tallassee Campus hosted two training events during the last quarter. The first event was held on February 23rd and 24th for the Professional Crisis Management Association's (PCMA) annual instructor recertification program. This training has consistently been an opportunity for members from each campus to get together and know each other a little better. We are especially thankful for the instruction of Miquel Avila from PCMA. His instruction on managing crisis behavior and various techniques was beneficial to all involved. This was his first training visit to The Learning Tree and we look forward to his return in future years.

The second Professional Crisis Management Association training event ran the last four days of March. Eleven employees from across all three campuses participated in the course, to achieve instructor status in PCMA's Everyday Behavior Tools Course. Lisa Schmidt with PCMA did a great job presenting the material. The course is designed to teach ways for developing stronger relationships between the employees and the students at The Learning Tree. "Everyday Behavior Tools is now being taught to all employees as part of their initial training," said Ken Atkins, Director of Employee Development.

FACT! The Learning Tree provides a 24 hour care home for more than 100 children and adolescents with severe behavior challenges.

Tallassee Employee Anniversaries Recognized

Congratulations to the Tallassee residential school and preschool employees who have celebrated a work anniversary since the beginning of the year!



Corinthian Gable
6 years



Dana Price
6 years



L – R: Gail Sims and Shannetta Daniels, 10 years



Beth Hornsby, 8 years

Pint Night Raises Funds

Martin's Family Clothing partnered with Cheaha Brewery Company in Anniston to host a Pint Night to benefit The Learning Tree in March. Martin's Family Clothing donated concert tickets, t-shirts, hats, gift certificates, and more. Door prizes included concert tickets for Gladys Knight, Chris Rock, Journey, and Lonestar. Souvenir pint glasses were etched with The Learning Tree logo, Martin's logo, and Cheaha Brewing logo and given to each guest with their first pint purchase. They also received a door prize ticket for a chance to win. Local Marc Womack donated his time and acoustic set music for entertainment. Pints were \$5 each, and 100% proceeds went to The Learning Tree, raising more than \$700. Many thanks to Bill Wakefield for arranging this night and supporting The Learning Tree!



Seth and Jillian Johnson



Mark Hearn and Judy Myers



Holiday Helping Hearts

Holiday Helping Hearts is a program designed to provide the children in The Learning Tree residential programs with holiday gifts. Sponsorships are accepted every year to fulfill children's specific wish list items that includes clothing, toys, video games, and recreational supplies.

In the Jacksonville area, the wish lists for 36 children were fulfilled for the 2016 Christmas holiday! Families and businesses from across the Northeast Alabama region, including as far as Birmingham, sponsored all of the children.

Before Christmas day the children enjoyed their annual party and performed a play, 'Cirque De Learning Tree'. Each child had a role in the play, portraying their character's acrobatic skills, strength, baking skills, art skills, singing talents, and more. The decorations included a 3-D Ferris wheel, old world circus posters, a brightly colored circus tent, balloons, and more. The school cafeteria provided a festive holiday dinner followed by a visit from Santa Claus! The children received the wrapped gifts at the party and then on Christmas morning. What better way to make a child smile than through these special gifts on such a special day!

If you would be interested in sponsoring a child for the 2017 Holiday Helping Hearts program, please contact Erica Brown at ebrown@learning-tree.org.

FACT! The Learning Tree employs over 500 employees across the state.



Laura and Ben Wood



Journey Ticket Winner



Bill Wakefield and Clayton Angel

Love is in the Air at Little Tree Preschool

When 4 year-old Waylon Turner came home talking about his friend, Harper, his mother had no idea that a special relationship was developing. Employee, Kim Turner explained, "Waylon came home day after day telling me what his friend Harper had said. It was several weeks before she realized that Harper was nonverbal and on the spectrum. Waylon always discussed their interactions with no hint of any "differences." Since that time, Waylon and Harper consider themselves boyfriend and girlfriend. Waylon explains that "Harper tells me she loves me in her own way." Harper's mom, Constance Rice, even had shirts made for them that say "Harper's Hunk" and Waylon's Girl."

The Little Tree Preschools are inclusive programs where children with developmental challenges are served alongside their typically developing peers. The typical children act as peer models for their classmates. Waylon takes his role as peer model to heart. "When his mom asked him if he was bothered by Harper's not talking, he said that's just Harper." He stays by her side and helps her calm down when she's having a bad day.



Waylon and Harper at LTP graduation

Harper, also four, has a twin sister, Stella. Constance describes Harper as her shy twin and says Harper rarely allows others to touch or interact with her on any level. She explains, "To see her giving Waylon hugs and smiling and laughing with him was and is the best gift I could receive. This genuine love and acceptance by the sweetest little blonde boy gives me so much hope for my girls and their future." Harper's dad, John Rice, echoes these sentiments. "Waylon enjoys and admires Harper's abilities and strengths just as she presents them. That shows a maturity well beyond his years and can also teach us adults a valuable lesson in showing grace and humility. Waylon and Harper have a bond that embodies the acceptance I long for people of all abilities and differences to experience in their life," he said.



Waylon and Harper



WOODY'S SONG SCHOOL

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7TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2017

AZALEA CITY GOLF COURSE • MOBILE

**FOR SPONSORSHIP
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or

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Senior Bowl Players Visit

The Residential School and Woody’s Song School in Mobile enjoyed some very special visitors in January. Four Senior Bowl team players visited the schools and played football with a few of the students. Ryan Switzer (North Carolina), Taywan Taylor (Western Kentucky), Sefo Luifau (Colorado) and Nate Gerry (Nebraska) spent several hours with the kids, signing autographs, and playing. Ryan, Taywan, Sefo and Nate took time out of their busy schedules to come by the schools leaving a lasting impression with a few new fans . . . who will be watching for them in the NFL!



Senior Bowl players with Miss Emily’s class



Ryan and JD



Sefo Luifau plays with the kids

Community Support Makes Holidays Bright

The children in Mobile Residential School were overwhelmed with support from the community during the holidays. We are grateful to everyone that went out of their way to make sure that each child had a wonderful holiday. Thank you!

- Christ United Methodist Church Youth hosted a party for the kids at the church, including playing games and hanging out with the teenagers.
- The Mobile University Lions Club hosted a party at the school with pizza and a special visitor from the North Pole.
- The Labor Council of United Way of Southwest Alabama provided new bedding and blankets for the Residential School.
- Gulf Distributing provided gifts for all of the 33 kids’ making sure their wish lists were filled.



Mobile Campus Mourns the Loss of Long-time Employees

Two valuable employees passed away within six months of each other. Pam Todd, Administrative Coordinator of Residential Services died on October 3, 2016 and Manford Howard, in Maintenance, on March 30, 2017.

Pam is remembered by staff as being kind and caring to both the children and staff. She is also remembered for her sense of humor and strength. Yolanda Bush remembers Pam as “always telling it like it is.” Marthea Gibney remembers her as someone who could brighten anyone’s day with her wit when times were rough and move you with kind words on other occasions. Frank Snyder misses Pam’s positive attitude and energy. Annie Boykin values her friendship with Pam and the times they shared comparing their weekends. “Pam was always there for the staff and kids when needed, she reminisced. Devlon Waver, Pam’s supervisor, valued the advice that he received from her and appreciates how much she cared about the children. “Pam would use her own time to decorate the student’s bedrooms and homes. She refused to be paid. She was a strong and proud woman with a great spirit and a big heart. She is still loved and missed, He said.” Pam worked for The Learning Tree’s Mobile Campus for eight years.

Manford worked in the maintenance department. He was responsible for maintaining the schools, ten houses and a fleet of vehicles. His supervisor, Sonny Vise remembers him as a person who made you feel good when you were around him. Sonny said, “Manford had a certain charisma and a bright personality to compliment others.” He was a hard worker, but always took time to talk and share a joke. Sonny added, “Manford understood the value of a good day’s work and knew how to make his time count. He took pride in his work and had a hard time settling for less than his best. Manford has left a lasting impression through his good works here at The Learning Tree and will be missed.” Manford was employed at The Learning Tree for six years. Both Pam and Manford have left their mark on the agency and are sorely missed.

Kilborn’s Kids

Thanks to the charitable work of some really great folks in the Mobile area, the residential kids and students at Woody’s Song School enjoyed a wonderful Christmas party that included lunch, snow cones, inflatables, a gaming truck, train rides, and a visit from Santa. As a service project, they made stockings for Waterfront Rescue Mission.

Their next outing was a water and land tour via a unique vehicle called the Duck Boat, where they went into Mobile Bay, through the streets of downtown, and around the Battleship with Gulf Coast Ducks. This interactive tour taught the kids about 3,000 years of Mobile history from colonial times to the present day. They had a blast riding through the city and splashing into the waterways surrounding the city.

Their most recent trip was to Eastern Shore Lanes where the kids enjoyed pizza, bowling, the arcade, laser tag, and even

a ropes course, which was as high as the ceiling! It was a fun sensory experience full of lights and sounds that was enjoyed by everyone, including the adults!

All of these activities are made possible by Vincent Kilborn, the founder of Kilborn’s Kids, and the Joseph Treadwell Charitable Foundation, which provides funding, and volunteers who help the staff and support the kids during these fun events. The Learning Tree would also like to thank Angie Cieutat, who volunteers her time to coordinate this program. This group allows our kids to experience some really exciting activities at no cost to the families.



Kilborn’s Kids duck boat tour



Kilborn’s Kids bowling



Kilborn’s Kids Christmas

The Honor Roll

Thank you to our friends and supporters.

FUNDING PARTNERS AND OTHER SUPPORTERS

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Autism Speaks
Davis Direct, Inc.
Lake Martin United Way
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United Cerebral Palsy
United Way of East Central Alabama
United Way of Southwest Alabama

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Ms. Dieckow and Ms. Logan
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Exile Armory
Extreme Auto Spa, LLC
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Zoe's on the Lake

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AgPro
Alabama Splash Adventure
Angry Octopus
Auburn University
B & B Pawn of Gadsden
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The Cocoa Exchange
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Comer
Disney World
Ms. Jenny Dooley
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Evans
Fit and Tan Gym of Jacksonville
Ms. Wendy Freeman
Georgia Aquarium
Girl Scouts of America
Greene's Jewelers
Mr. Tommy Hammonds
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High Adventure Company
Ms. Jade Jennings
JC Morgan Art Gallery
Nick's Kids
Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies
Rome Braves
Summer Slaughter
Tara's on 3rd
Tony's Fireworks
TriState Products
University of Alabama
Walmart
Miss Erin Washowich
Wind Creek Casino
World of Coke
YETI

In memory of Mr. Jim Day
Mr. and Mrs. Van Lockridge

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A-1 Employment
Academy Sports and Outdoors
Mr. Tab Adams
Mr. Wade Adams
AES Industries
Mrs. Shelley Aistrup
Alabama Shakespeare Theater
Alabama Power Company
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Academy Sports and Outdoors
Alabama Shakespeare Theater
Auburn Marriott Opelika Hotel and Conference Center
Auburn University Club
Blooming Colors
Create A Spa
Donna Higgins
Georgia Aquarium
Hodges Vineyard
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Six, Two, and Ten
Tallassee Jewelry and Gift Shop
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The Home Depot
The Hotel at Auburn University
U.S. Space and Rocket Center
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Whippoorwill Vineyard
Wind Creek Casino
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IN-KIND GIFTS

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The Battle House Hotel
Big City Toys
Claude Moore Jewelers
Mr. Jake Coker
Cream & Sugar Café
Ellen Jay Stylish Events & Sweets
Ernulous Creatives
Flour Girls Bakery
G. Harvell Men's Clothier
Goldstein's Jewelry
Gulf Coast Beads
Gulf Distributing Company
Lotus Boutique
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McCoy Outdoors
Mobile ATA Martial Arts Academy
Mobile Symphony
Mobile Toile
Noble South Restaurant
Old Shell Growlers
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United-Johnson Brothers of Alabama, LLC
United Cerebral Palsy of Mobile, Inc.
University of South Alabama
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Mr. Lewis Beville
Ms. Colleen Kastelic
Mr. Harry W. Mattei
Thames Batre Insurance

In memory of Mr. Robert S. Weil

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In honor of Mr. William

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Mr. and Mrs. Harry Asman
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In honor of The Guitierrez Family

Mr. John Craig Barker

In honor of Mr. Dan Hogan

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Handmacher

In honor of The Sykes Family

Mr. John Craig Barker

Listing reflects donations

made December 1, 2016

through June 1, 2017.



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205 Lambert Avenue, Suite B
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2017 CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

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THE LEARNING TREE
AND
THE LITTLE HAPIE TREE
PRESCHOOL

CHIP IN
for
children

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2017

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY
GOLF CLUB**

1650 Yarborough Farms Blvd • Auburn, AL 36830

For more information, please contact **Stephanie Weldon** at **334-415-9372**

SAVE THE DATES!

August 5th

Autos for Autism Car Show
Jacksonville

August 5th

Woodstock 5k
Anniston

August 10th

Chip in for Children Golf Tournament
Auburn

September 20th

Chip In for Autism Golf Torunament
Mobile

November 1st

Holiday Helping Hearts
Anniston

November 11th

Run for HOPE 5k/10k
Anniston

November 18th

Angling for Autism
Alex City

Anniston/Jacksonville
256-447-9349

Auburn/Tallassee
334-252-0025

Mobile
251-649-4420

Resource Development
251-331-2633