



# News from the ORCHARD

Fall 2013

The Newsletter of Sipe's Orchard Home

Volume 66

## Sipe's Orchard Home President Retires



*Brian L. Phelps*

Brian Phelps, the President of Sipe's Orchard Home, has retired after almost twenty-five years of service.

Mr. Phelps was hired by the Home's board in 1989. Over the years, he brought about changes which moved Sipe's forward from a boys' home on the verge of closing to a nationally accredited, multi-faceted agency. "We've always tried to offer services that respond to the

needs of the community," said Phelps.

Mr. Phelps focused on the care, safety, and well-being of the children at Sipe's. He taught staff how to use themselves to connect with the children, and he taught children how to deal with their anger, confusion, guilt, pain, and loss in healthy, healing ways.

Mr. Phelps created a facility where children are safe and secure; where children are respected and understood; where children can learn, explore, and play; and where children can move past their troubles and grow into their dreams.

In his resignation letter, Mr. Phelps stated that working at Sipe's has been "the driving force of my life." He went on to express his gratitude to the board members who supported and empowered him over the years. He cited health concerns as the motivation for his retirement.

Drew Dodd, chairman of the Sipe's board of directors, expressed his appreciation for Mr. Phelps' dedication to children. "Brian has had a positive impact on countless youth. We will miss his leadership, insights, and character."

## Sipe's Announces New President



*Jamie Brown, CEO*

The Board of Directors of Sipe's Orchard Home is pleased to announce that Jamie Brown has been named the new President.

Mr. Brown is originally from Western Pennsylvania. He is an adoptive parent of two children; Isaiah, age nine and Hailie, age six. He and his wife, Stephanie, recently completed their move to this area. He says, "I am

thrilled to be here. Sipe's has a 70 year history of serving children in need. The campus is wonderful and has some excellent programs. I look forward to our meeting the needs of children in this area."

Mr. Brown completed his Master's degree in Counseling from Slippery Rock University in 1995 and worked as a counselor for several years. At Gateway Rehabilitation Center in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, he supervised residential and education programs for teens with substance abuse issues.

Mr. Brown moved to North Carolina in 2005 to work for Grandfather Home for Children as Managing Director of their community based programs. He supervised several of the organization's programs that provide services to children. He was promoted to Vice-President in 2011 and supervised the organization's fundraising and physical assets departments. In 2011, he completed his Masters in Business Administration from Montreat College.

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## Sipe's Orchard Home

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Conover, NC 28613  
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www.sipesorchardhome.org

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For more news about Sipe's please visit  
www.sipesorchardhome.org

## Friends of the Orchard,

It has been my privilege to serve as the President of Sipe's for almost three months. In that time I have been learning as much as possible about our programs, history, and the area.

I wanted to share some of the questions I have received so far:

**What does Sipe's do? It used to be an orphanage, right?** Sipe's was founded 70 years ago to provide a caring home for children who were "without adequate opportunities." Over the years the child welfare system changed, and orphanages and group homes don't exist in the same manner today. However, Sipe's still strives to meet the needs of underprivileged children; our Tyndall Center prepares "at risk" preschoolers for success in school, and our Houston Center serves homeless teens and children aging out of the child welfare system.

**Is Sipe's affiliated with a church?** We are not affiliated with any one church. We are founded on Christian principals and view the work of Sipe's as a ministry. I was reading some of the original notes from our first board meetings. When discussing the very beginning of our organization, Dr. Frye, a founding board member, said, "We are compelled to stand in awe before this wonderful manifestation of God's grace." We believed this at our founding and we believe it today.

**Is Sipe's having financial problems?** I am happy to report that Sipe's is in a positive cash position, running in the black. Also, *we are debt free*. This is an impressive accomplishment considering the difficult economic times of the past few years.

**What is Sipe's going to do in the future?** Sipe's will stay true to its mission of serving children in need. Our pre-K program responds to area need for early education for underprivileged preschoolers. The Houston program tackles the overwhelming need for supportive services for disadvantaged young adults. Similarly, future projects will address identified shortcomings in our community's services for children.

**What can people do for Sipe's?** 1) Pray for our children and the staff. 2) Volunteer for an activity here. 3) Donate money, food, household items, school supplies, etc., all of which helps us take care of the children.

I look forward to meeting Sipe's friends and supporters in the coming weeks and months. Please feel free to contact me at (828) 256-5056, extension 310.

Thank you,

Jamie Brown  
President

Over the years, a few people who believed in our mission have left a part of their worldly treasure to Sipe's after they no longer needed it. These estate gifts are a significant and treasured source of support for us. If Sipe's is to continue serving children on solid financial footing, we need more such gifts. There are many planned giving choices available, and planning a gift now can have advantages for you as well as for Sipe's. If you believe in our work with children and families, and you want to support it, please discuss the options with your attorney or financial planner.

***Sipe's Orchard Home is grateful for the following donors who have supported us for the past year:***

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# We Are Grateful For Volunteers

Sipe's has been blessed by the work of volunteers from nearby churches, businesses, and civic groups this year. They have provided goods and services we would not have otherwise. Though space is limited here to a few words and pictures, our appreciation is immense and heartfelt.



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***BB&T** volunteers painted our dining hall, landscaped around the pond, and replaced old picnic tables with five new ones. They provided a wealth of supplies and yard work for the Houston program. The **Highland Baptist Church Youth Group** painted the interior of the Tyndall Center, making the classrooms, hallways, and offices look like new.*

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***Hickory Christ Fellowship** hosted a Labor Day picnic for Sipe's clients and staff, complete with food, inflatables, and music. HCF began their volunteer efforts this summer by cleaning up the outside of the Tyndall Center, readying it for the new school year.*

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*A group from the senior class at **Tri-City Christian School** is restoring the landscaping in front of our buildings for their Senior Project. Wheelbarrows full of mulch have been shoveled already, and plans include replacing flowers and other plants.*

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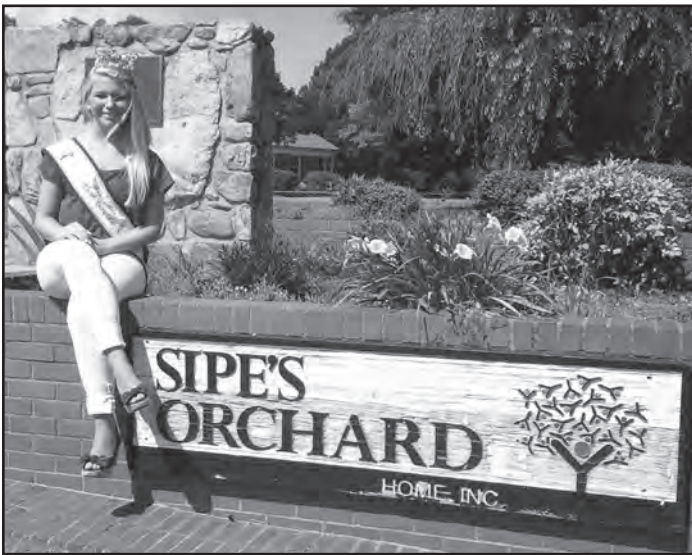
*Suzette Jett, our volunteer Volunteer Coordinator, keeps volunteers busy taking care of projects around our campus that our limited resources cannot always accommodate. If you, your church, your club, your business, or your friends want to lend a hand, give Suzette a call at Sipe's.*

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*Brownies collected and distributed books for the Tyndall Center.*

## **Volunteers Raise Money for Sipe's**



*Katie Kleeberger, 2012-2013 Teen Miss North Carolina, organized a benefit concert for Sipe's.*



*The Catawba Valley R/Cers held their second annual Fun Fly and donated the proceeds to Sipe's.*



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*Blue Ridge Harley Davidson used their annual spring event, the Bunny Run, to raise money and in-kind donations for the Tyndall Center. Blue Ridge Harley Davidson is also funding the Blessings in a Backpack program which provides a backpack of food to every child in Tyndall Center every Friday afternoon.*

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## They Came, They Saw, They Approved

The Council on Accreditation (COA) reaccredited Sipe's Orchard Home for another four years.

As Richard Klarberg, the President and CEO of COA, says, "Reaccreditation is a tremendous achievement that demonstrates that your organization is recognized as a provider that continues to successfully implement high performance standards and, as such, is delivering the highest quality services to all of its stakeholders."

The COA standards and the on-site reviewers thoroughly evaluated all aspects of the programs and operations of Sipe's. Sipe's has maintained COA accreditation continuously since 2001.



# A Life Turned Around

Success comes in many forms. Sometimes it's getting a job. Sometimes it's graduating from high school. Sometimes it's allowing others into your life.

With "Asia," it's all of the above. A year ago Asia came to us angry and distrustful. She had attended several high schools and had lived in several different places. She had much to learn about herself and about life, but when she entered the Houston Transitional Living Program, she said she was up for the challenge.

Some days were difficult because Asia had a hard time trusting others, especially adults. But after many long discussions and many teachable moments with supportive staff, teachers, and a great counselor, we are proud to share Asia's accomplishments. She graduated from St. Stephens High School in May and is gearing up to attend CVCC in the spring. Throughout her senior year in high school she maintained two part time jobs. She earned her driver's license, and she bought her first car just a few months ago. Her anger has subsided and is often replaced with hugs and fist bumps to demonstrate her affection and appreciation. The staff agrees that she is a whole new person and is an absolute joy to work with. She states that nothing makes her happier than "to just get in my own car and ride around. I feel like I'm doing something with my life." She vowed that she would not turn out the way that most in her family did -- on drugs, in jail and/or homeless. And she has stuck to this plan.

Asia shares that coming to the Houston Transitional Living Program was the best thing she did for herself. "The staff helped me to grow up and learn to be independent. Without them, I would have never had some of the experiences I had...like my first party...with a cake just for me!" The staff at Houston is very excited to be sharing these firsts with her and to watch her grow into a wonderful young lady.

---

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## Dr. Charles Kiell

Mr. & Mrs. John A. Hulin

## Dr. & Mrs. Charles S. Kiell

Dr. & Mrs. Peter H. Bradshaw

# Classroom Dedicated

This summer, Sipe's dedicated the classroom in the Odom building as the Anthony Wright Classroom. Anthony was a young boy who was killed in a car accident about a year ago; his family made a generous donation to Sipe's in his memory and in support of underprivileged children. A portion of their gift was designated for summer camp scholarships which enabled many children to participate in our program this year.



*Laura Jo Hopson, summer camp director, gives Anthony's grandmother a thank you card from the campers.*



*The dedication was followed by an ice cream social. Here, board chairman Drew Dodd (striped shirt) visits with members of Anthony's family.*

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**Ron & Anita Knedlik**  
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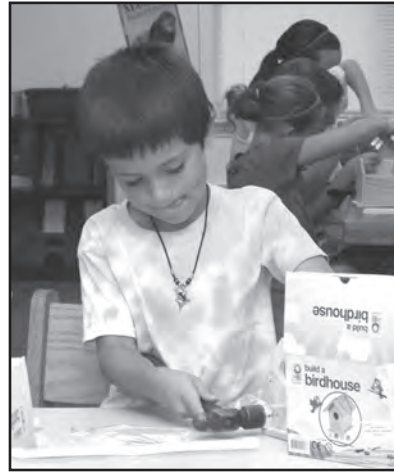
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*The Tyndall Center at Sipe's Orchard Home closed the 2012-2013 school year with a record 51 graduates. The NCPre-K program prepares at-risk four-year-olds for success in school at no cost to the families.*



*Sipe's Summer Camp served forty two children with a host of activities that included swimming, fishing, field trips, games, crafts, good food, and friendship building. With generous donations from the United Way Youth Council and the Anthony Wright Fund, scholarships were available for many needy families in our community.*

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*Maintenance supervisor Steve Cline and business manager DeLane Bowman check out the Toro mower which local hardware store Killians made available to Sipe's for the grass mowing season. "This donation," Mr. Cline said, "makes it possible for a one-man maintenance department to keep the grass cut." Sipe's is grateful to Killians which has been donating a mower to Sipe's for decades.*

