



VICCC's Messenger

Safety, Love, and Learning
for the Very Young Children of Working Families

Businesses • Faith Communities • Families • Teachers • Volunteers

Valley Interfaith Child Care Center • P.O. Box 926, Blacksburg, VA 24063
www.valleyinterfaithchildcarecenter.org • 540-558-8652

Winter 2009

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Three hollies and one Japanese maple planted in the playground at VICCC honor two deceased Board members, Freda Blecher and Derek Myers.

Memorial Trees Honor Blecher and Myers

Two of VICCC's original board members, Freda Blecher and Derek Myers, helped establish the center and worked tirelessly to implement the vision, "safety, love, and learning for the very young children of working families."

In their memory, and to establish a living and permanent memorial of their dedication to that vision, trees have been planted in the playground at the VICCC center on Heather Drive.

A Japanese Maple, planted in memory of Freda Blecher, is a "Shin Deshojo." A small tree, its leaves will be fire-engine-red in the spring and will turn to a burgundy/green mix in the summer. The maple was purchased by the VICCC Board and was planted by Lacie's.

The three hollies, purchased and planted by Jeanne Roper for the Board in memory of Derek Myers, are "Sky Pencils." They will stay slender but will

grow to about 10-15 feet high. Jeanne sees these as sentinels, looking after the kids. Plaques identifying the trees and the honorees will be mounted on the fence this spring. — Jeanne Roper



Lutheran Students Move Mulch

Campus pastor Joanna Stallings, Heather Priestly, Stephanie Hay, Kevin Boyer, Bob Pheiffer, and Gary Mortonsen. Not pictured: Becky Ruschman and Johanna Reckenbeil — see story, page 3.



From the Executive Director —

A very special thank you to everyone who continues to support Valley Interfaith Child Care Center, Inc. through all of your efforts for the children. These past three months have been an exciting time at VICCC. A special thanks to the Events Committee for a great “Under The Stars Event.” What a perfect evening... Thanks to all of our donors who attended and toured VICCC. We continue to provide a vital service – childcare and education for the infants, toddlers, and preschool children of the low-income working families in our area.

VICCC stands for the most important principles in community care and education:

- All children are valued
- All children need the care and embrace of the community
- All children have a chance when they are nurtured and encouraged from the youngest age

As always I would be delighted to come to your civic organizations, faith communities, workplace, or home to talk about VICCC.

You can reach me by email – viccc2@verizon.net or telephone – 540-558-8652. — Linda Moody

More Donors, from page 4

- Christiansburg Presbyterian Church
- Church World Service, Inc.
- Community Foundation of the NRV
- Northside Presbyterian Church
- Shelter Alternatives
- Steve Jacobs, O.D., P.C.

Foster-ing Early Education in the Arts

Elizabeth Foster believes that all children are born with gifts and a creative imagination that should be nurtured. That’s why she helps advocate education in the arts for the children enrolled in VICCC. Foster, a member of the Board of Directors at VICCC, says she has been with the organization “since the get-go” when it was founded 6-7 years ago. She was drawn to the cause because she recognized a need for a low-cost childcare center in the Blacksburg area that would provide children from low-income families with a strong educational foundation to prepare them for kindergarten.

In addition to her position at VICCC, Foster is the Director of Christian Formation at Christ Episcopal Church, where she helps with child education through Sunday School programs and other events. Her talent in art, especially calligraphy and ornamentation, is often directed in ways that benefit one of these organizations through signage or decoration.

An artist herself, Foster wants to provide the children at VICCC with opportunities to exercise their creative talents, whether through art, music, or literature. She shared her own artistic gift with the children by painting a caterpillar on the wall of a room at the center — now fondly known as “the caterpillar room” — so they can learn and play in a fun and inspirational setting. Foster also personally organized

and funded a music teacher who visited the children once a week to give them an introductory education and spark their interest in music. Fortunately, the music program has continued and was funded for this year.

One of the most critical matters in early childcare education is for children to be read to, and Foster explains that hours in front of the TV are no replacement for a child’s exposure to fairy tales, poems, art, and music. Hearing imaginative stories or poems sparks creativity and requires children to develop critical thinking skills, which will help them succeed once they reach public school.

Foster’s passion for children’s education in the arts is evident in the energetic way in which she speaks about her work at VICCC. She strongly believes in its mission to provide children with a broad educational foundation, and she is dedicated to inciting and preserving the creative imagination that is inherent in children.

To convey her passion for art and her belief in its ability to heal and inspire, she quoted from Madeleine L’Engle’s *Walking On Water: Reflections on Faith & Art*: “In art we are once again able to do all the things we have forgotten; we are able to walk on water; we speak to the angels who call us; we move, unfettered, among the stars.”

— Kristen Walker, VaTech

VICCC’s Wish List
Art supplies (paint, stickers, construction paper)
Crib sheets, Outside toys
Teacher resource books

A Special Thanks to
Blacksburg Community Strings
for their donation from the
All Saints Day Family Concert
on 11/1/09

VICCC’s phone number: 540-558-8652
Email: viccc2@verizon.net
www.valleyinterfaithchildcarecenter.org
Editors: Mary Holliman, Brian Ivasauskas

Treasurer's Main Focus is Kids, Not Money

After growing up in the Texas city of Houston and working internationally in Singapore and Australia, one would think that moving to the small, quiet town of Blacksburg is a major change of pace. For Andrew Stanaland, though, while the town of Blacksburg may be a bit more subdued than the international energy industry, life is just as busy and involved as ever.

Andrew, his wife Andrea, and their three children moved to Blacksburg in the summer of 2005. When Andrea accepted a position as assistant professor in the Marketing Department of Radford University, Andrew left the energy industry to stay at home with their three children, ages 10, 8, and 6. To get further involved with his children and in the community, Andrew signed up to coach his kids' soccer, baseball, and basketball teams. Since then he has coached more than 20 teams. His involvement in the community, however, does not stop there.

Andrew enjoys volunteering four or five hours per week at Kipps Elementary School. On the weekends, he and his wife lead a children's Sunday School at Blacksburg Methodist Church. He is an active member of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and in his downtime, he enjoys spending time with his family. All of this activity has led Andrew to discovering his primary focus in life: kids.

In 2006, Andrew decided that he wanted to make more of a difference in the community than simply coaching sports teams. He talked to Andy Morikawa at the Community Foundation of the New River Valley, and in turn, Andy directed him to VICCC.

Andrew started working with VICCC as a Community Adviser in 2006. In the summer of 2007, he joined the Board and began his work as Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee. In these positions, Andrew is in charge of developing a budget for Board approval based on VICCC's historic performance and its forward planning. Additionally, he must monitor and report to the Board how VICCC is performing in relation to its budget and in a financially efficient manner.

In addition to these responsibilities, Andrew attends Board meetings and Finance Committee meetings every month and reviews and signs checks for the center every two weeks. While some weeks require only a couple of hours of work from Andrew, others can demand many more, depending on the number of special projects being undertaken by VICCC at that time.

In the last nine months, Andrew has helped VICCC to obtain a better and more complete control of

the Finance and Business side of the center. With his assistance, VICCC now has a better budget in place, and planning is more developed, with an emphasis on the future.

However, the projects the center encounters are not without their challenges, and one of those challenges now is community awareness and involvement. Andrew hopes that VICCC's positive image reaches more and more members of the community. Thus, VICCC can ensure quality care for its patrons long into the future.

What keeps him motivated and encouraged through all of these responsibilities? The answer is simple: a strong belief in and dedication to achieving VICCC's mission. "I understand the difficulties of parenting, even in the best of times," says Andrew. Spending time at the center, seeing the children, and understanding the comfort felt by the children's working parents make this effort more than worthwhile for Andrew.

— Brian Ivasauskas, VaTech

Virginia Tech Students Move Mulch for VICCC



From left: LDSSA members Bill Hines, Miriam Pohlig, Geoff Widdison, Amy Lambert and Patrick Bales stand with shovels in front of two piles of mulch just waiting to be moved.

Two student groups, the Lutheran student group (pictured on page 1) and the Latter-day Saint Student Association from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDSSA), recently helped VICCC by moving mountains of mulch from the parking lot to the playground. Regulations require that we maintain a six-inch depth of mulch on the playground to ensure safety for the children.



Valley Interfaith Child Care Center
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 Blacksburg, VA 24063

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From left: Bob Rogers, President of Architectural Alternatives, Darlene Reach, Shelley Sewart, and Amy Dellinger.

Architectural Alternatives Staff Donates to VICCC

On October 20, a Baha'i Holy Day (Birth of the Bab), Bob Rogers, president of Architectural Alternatives, closed his office to observe the holy day and gave his employees half a day off.

The other half of the day they volunteered for VICCC by cataloguing about 200 children's books at the Center. The Excel file they prepared lists the books and the topics they touch so that teachers can search the spreadsheet for books related to their weekly lesson plans.

— Cosby Rogers

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