



Religion Youth Education

Fall Newsletter 2026

25th Foundation Anniversary

Dear Friend,

With grateful hearts, we *"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever."* — Psalm 107:1

For 25 years, the Rye Foundation has had the privilege of helping strengthen ministries that serve children and youth across North Carolina. Through camps, mentoring programs, music, sports, faith-based outreach, and countless other efforts, young lives have been encouraged, supported, and introduced to the love of Christ.

None of it Would Have Been Possible Without You

Your generosity has turned compassion into action and helped remarkable organizations reach children at some of the most important moments in their lives. As we celebrate this 25th anniversary, we thank God for His faithfulness and for every donor, ministry partner, volunteer, and friend who has shared in this work.

Remembering the Heart Behind Rye

Over the years, Warren Steen was often asked, "Who is Mr. Rye?" Warren would quickly insist there was no Mr. Rye. Since his passing in 2024, however, those who knew the Foundation best have come to realize just how much of its heart carried Warren's fingerprints.

For Warren, philanthropy was deeply personal. He wanted donors to see the lives their generosity touched. He arranged visits to ministries,

invited friends to graduations and concerts, and brought people together for Champions for Children gatherings where stories of need, faith, perseverance, and hope often moved a room to tears.

But Warren's care extended well beyond the Foundation's work. He remembered birthdays. He called when someone was hurting. He celebrated good news. He showed up. We have missed that presence and leadership greatly.



John "Warren" Steen III

Concluding Activities at the End of 2026

After much prayer and reflection, the Board of Directors has made the difficult decision to conclude the Foundation's activities at the end of 2026. As we enter this final chapter, we do so with grateful hearts for what God has accomplished through Rye and with a desire to finish this work in a way that honors Warren and the mission he loved.

Thank you for believing in this mission. Thank you for believing in children. And thank you for helping carry Warren's legacy forward.

With gratitude and blessings,

*The Board of Directors
Rye Foundation*



A Lasting Legacy for Our 25th Anniversary

To commemorate 25 years of ministry and honor Warren's memory, the Rye Foundation is pleased to help create a new pavilion at Camp Caraway.

It is fitting that this special project will be a place where children can gather, build friendships, grow in faith, experience the outdoors, and make memories for years to come.

Inside this newsletter, you can learn more about the pavilion, see a rendering of the project, and discover how you can be part of bringing this lasting tribute to life.

As we celebrate 25 years and prepare to bring this chapter of the Rye Foundation to a close, we do so with gratitude.



RyeFoundation.org

Champions for Children: A Statewide Impact

The Rye Foundation has funded projects all over North Carolina from the mountains to the coast.



Beginnings

FIRST BOARD MEETING, JULY 1, 2001

On July 27, 2001, the founding board of directors held its first meeting at the Henry B. Shaffner House in Winston-Salem, NC. These leaders adopted a name derived from the first letters of the three focus areas: religion, youth, and education, allowing faith-based programming to take center state.



Champions for Children Forum

Champions for Children, a forum for grant seekers to share information about their programming and needs, has been held annually, beginning September 11, 2001. Leaders of children's organizations statewide came to Winston-Salem to meet with foundation leaders.

Site Visits

One of the hallmarks of the Rye Foundation is its face-to-face interaction with leaders of Christian ministries. Regular site tours have been a way to acquaint supporters with its priority projects.



Camp Tekoa, Hendersonville, 2011



Dining Hall at Caswell, Oak Island, 2012



Matthew 25 Center, Tabor City, 2017

SPORTS & CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT



Salvation Army Baseball Camp, 2012



FCA Baseball Camp, 2007



Cove Camp, Black Mountain, 2001



RYE Projects

The Foundation has directed its charitable dollars to priority areas including: Christian camps, sports and character development, and children with parents in prison.

The mission of the Rye Foundation has been to make life-changing impact on North Carolina children by providing grants in the areas of religion, youth, and education.

CHILDREN OF PRISONERS



Children's Room at Matthew 25 Center, 2019

OTHER AREAS



*All-State Youth Choir, 2019
(Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of NC)*



Watts Prayer Garden at Caswell, 2021

CHRISTIAN CAMPS



Camp Corral at Camp Hanes, 2018



Oak Ranch, Sanford, 2001



Boys & Girls Club of Robeson County, 2001



Mundo Vista at Caraway, Asheboro, 2006

Grant Recipients 2025

- All-State Youth Choir, *Winston-Salem*
- Caraway Conference Center, *Asheboro*
- House of Hope of North Carolina, *Clayton*
- Mount Sinai – McCreary Community Center, *Catawba*
- Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club of *Davidson County*
- The Vineyard, *Westfield*



PO Box 25333
Winston-Salem, NC 27114
336-760-2260

Quick Facts

- **Founded:** March 2, 2001
- **Location:** Winston-Salem
- **First Grant:** \$25,000 to the Billy Graham Training Center in Asheville
- **Largest Grant:** \$65,500 to help build the Rye Foundation House at Camp Caraway in Asheboro
- **Cumulative Grants through 2025:** \$1.3 million
- **Leadership:** A dedicated and energetic Board of Directors makes policy and funding decisions.
- **Geography:** Gifts are limited to charitable organizations based in North Carolina.
- **Mission:** The mission of the Rye Foundation is to make a life-changing impact on North Carolina children by providing grants in the areas of religion, youth, and education.



Board of Directors

CURRENT

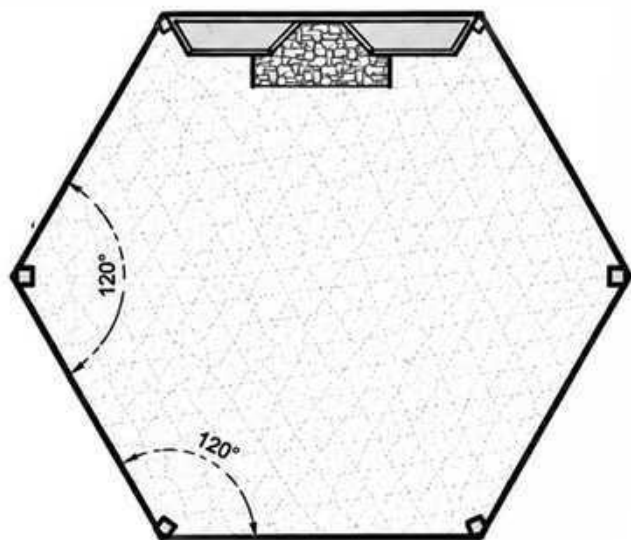
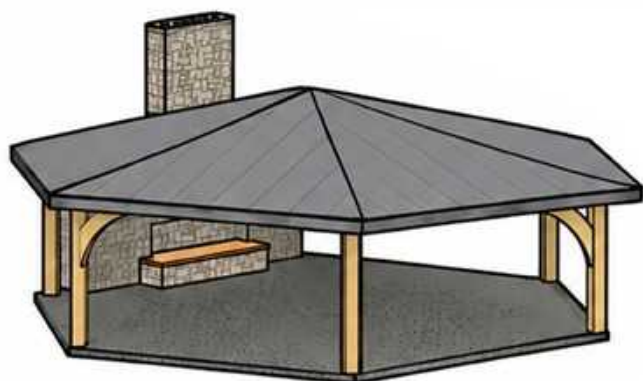
Pam H. Cash, Winston-Salem
Ingram P. Hedgpeth, Winston-Salem
Christa H. Warise, Advance

LEGACY

*R. A. Bryan, Jr., Goldsboro
*Ronald E. Deal, Hickory
Melvin R. Lutz, Jr., Boiling Springs
Jacque Pennell, Winston-Salem
David B. Todd, Lewisville
Jay D. Westmoreland, Charlotte
*denotes Honorary members

All gifts to the Rye Foundation must be received by December 31, 2026.

RyeFoundation.org



The Rye Foundation Pavilion *at Camp Caraway*

At the heart of camp, the Rye Foundation Pavilion will be a welcoming gathering place where campers and their leaders come together each evening for Bible study, refreshments, sing-alongs, fellowship, and the simple moments that make camp so memorable.

Designed to complement the Rye Staff House, the pavilion will serve as a lasting tribute to Warren and his love for this ministry. Each day, his memory will live on as children, counselors, and staff gather beneath its roof to share their faith, build friendships, and create lifelong memories.

As a board, we believe there could be no more fitting place to honor Warren. His heart and spirit will be felt at the very center of camp life—among the children and leaders who meant so much to him.

*To support the Camp Caraway
Rye Foundation Pavilion Project in
honor of Warren, please send
your donation by year end to:*

**Rye Foundation • PO Box 25333,
Winston-Salem, NC 27114**