



Religion Youth Education

CELEBRATING \$1 MILLION IN CHARITABLE GIVING

All-State Youth Choir Performs Again: Rye Provides Scholarships for Singers



After a two-year hiatus due to the global pandemic, the All-State Youth Choir held concerts again this summer. The talented group, selected by audition, performed in Asheboro, Albemarle, Greensboro, Kannapolis, Thomasville, and Winston-Salem. Over the years, the Rye Foundation has given thousands of dollars in scholarship support for the teenaged musicians.

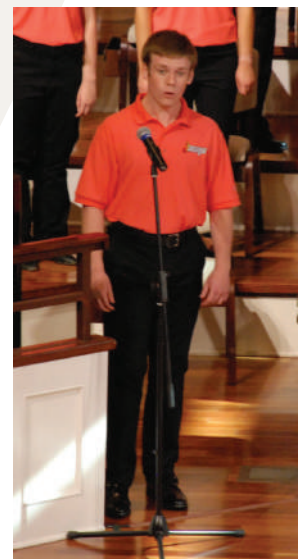
In the past, the group has performed in Duke Chapel and aboard the Battleship USS North Carolina, as well as in churches and retirement homes throughout the state. This summer, Camp Mundo Vista provided meals and lodging.

Phil Campbell, the minister of music at First Baptist Church in Lincolnton, is the long-time leader of the All-State Choir. He expressed his appreciation to the singers, their parents, volunteer leaders, choral director Shane Stephens of Lincolnton, and accompanist Michael McKnight of Greenville.

The theme verse was Psalm 104:33, which says, "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live."

"This has been an emotional summer," stated Campbell. "Our singers have brought hope and encouragement to many people as they lifted their voices in song."

Since the Choir was established, over 1,000 singers have participated in the ministry. Leaders of the Rye Foundation firmly believe that their gifts are investments in the future.



Bryan Award Funds Johnston County Projects: Total Commitment is Now \$175,000

CLAYTON - The Rye Foundation has named the latest recipient of its annual Bryan Award, and the winner is The Woman's Club of Clayton. It is the highest honor given by the Foundation, and includes a charitable grant of \$25,000.

Ingram Hedgpeth, a member of Rye's Board of Directors, said that 19 percent of children in Johnston County face food insecurity. The Woman's Club has forged partnerships with several faith-based organizations that are providing food, including Clayton Area Ministries, Backpack Buddies, and Serve the Need of Johnston County.

Clayton Area Ministries operates a food pantry which serves over 500 families each month. The popular Backpack Buddies program has great support from area churches, and Serve the Need sponsors a free Thanksgiving meal for 2,000 children and adults.

Betsy Grannis, President of The Woman's Club of Clayton, said that six organizations have benefited from the Rye gift. To date, five of them have attended a club meeting and reported on how the funds are being utilized. "We take our stewardship very seriously," Grannis stated.

Summarizing the importance of the gift, Grannis said, "The Bryan Award helped our club to greatly increase

our impact in the community. In a time of heightened need due to the pandemic, we were able to pass on the blessing of funds to several organizations which helped benefit citizens of all ages, but primarily children."

Warren Steen, the President of the Rye Foundation, said the annual award honors the life and legacy of Goldsboro businessman and philanthropist Ray Bryan, who died in 2016 at the age of 84.

When Hedgpeth and Steen traveled to Johnston County for a site tour, they were given a book which chronicled the history of the Woman's Club. Imagine their surprise when they reviewed a listing of past presidents and learned that Warren's mother, Dorothy Lipham Steen, served as club president during the 50th anniversary year. She now lives in Brentwood, Tennessee and was delighted to learn about the club's current activities.

Previous winners of the Bryan Award have come from Morehead City, Ayden, and Hertford. The Foundation recently extended the award for an additional three years, with the total amount to charity set to reach \$175,000. This year's winner will be named soon, and announced on the Rye website and in future newsletters.

Past Winner - At Camp Cale in Hertford, children participate in Bible study, music, and a variety of outdoor activities. Camp director Matt Thomas reports that funds from the Bryan Award launched "Leaders of Tomorrow." Students from Manteo, Nags Head, Elizabeth City, and Hertford received specialized training in leadership skills, and many will return to the camp as counselors.



Crisscrossing North Carolina: News, Notes, and Restaurant Reviews

By J. Warren Steen

Although the global pandemic has presented many challenges, our faith-based philanthropy can point to numerous achievements.

Did You Know?

In recent months, the Rye Foundation has:

- Provided musical instruments for children, through our Lavonn Bell Music Fund.
- Announced another winner of the Bryan Award, and expanded the program with a total commitment of \$175,000.
- Honored a student at the Boys and Girls Homes of North Carolina with the Rye Leadership Award.
- Received two significant gifts from long-time supporters, who listed Rye as a beneficiary in their estate plans.
- Hosted an uplifting “Champions for Children Day,” with participants coming from Greenville in eastern North Carolina to Black Mountain in western North Carolina.
- Built the Edith Slate Watts Memorial Prayer Garden at the North Carolina Baptist Assembly at Fort Caswell. Mrs. Watts, along with her husband Jack, operated the popular O. Henry Country Kitchen in Greensboro. She died in 2019 at the age of 89.

Emerging Trend: Churches Build Tiny Houses for Homeless

According to the Associated Press, local churches across the country are constructing tiny houses to help combat homelessness. The news article cited examples in North Carolina, Tennessee, Minnesota, and California. Most of the cabins are built on church property, usually near parking areas which are mainly used for Sunday services.

Media Spotlight Shines on Rye

We continue to receive positive publicity in magazines and newspapers. Three feature articles on Rye philanthropy have been published in Smithfield's Johnstonian Times, Whiteville's News Reporter, and the Winston-Salem Journal.

Chance Encounter with Branford Marsalis

We had attended separate events in the same venue, met in the parking lot, and had a 15-minute visit. Known worldwide for his skill as a saxophonist, Branford has been involved in several philanthropic endeavors.

After Hurricane Katrina, he helped develop “Musicians’ Village” in his hometown of New Orleans. A focal point is the Ellis Marsalis Center for Music, named for his father.

Estate Planning Tip: Lessons from Halftime

Best-selling book *Halftime* is not about sports. Author Bob Buford says most of us spend the first part of our lives striving to be successful. Then, many pursue a different goal and strive to be significant.

You can become significant by including the Rye Foundation in your will, and by designating Rye as a beneficiary on retirement accounts and insurance policies.

Memorable Meals

During my travels throughout North Carolina, I have enjoyed excellent meals at these dining establishments: Ocean View Restaurant in Kure Beach, Phil's Barbecue in Black Mountain, and Midtown Café and Dessertery in Winston-Salem.

\$20,000 for “Meals and Mentors”

As this issue goes to the printer, the Rye Foundation has finalized a \$20,000 charitable gift to the faith-based Winston-Salem Street School. To increase attendance, every Friday features club activities, guest speakers, and a meal for the entire student body. After failing in traditional school settings, a total of 280 students have embraced this second chance and graduated from the Street School.



J. Warren Steen is president of the Rye Foundation in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He provided leadership as Chairman of the David Richards Memorial Polio Campaign, and as Founding Chairman of the Parents Council at the UNC School of Medicine. A graduate of Wake Forest University, he has served on the Board of Directors for the school's Deacon Club.

Leaving a Legacy

Throwback Thursday



2007 Photo - In this photo from the Rye archives, ground is broken for the Parker-Wyrick Lodge at Camp Mundo Vista. Shown (from left) are Ruby Fulbright, Shannon Wyrick, Monica Vaughan, Dr. Edwin Vaughan, Sara Parker, Warren Steen, and Mary B. Hunt. A charitable grant from Rye totaled \$56,850 and served as the lead gift for the project, which provided space for girls to learn about worldwide missions.

Rye Responds to Massive Fire at Fertilizer Plant

WINSTON – SALEM - When a raging fire destroyed the Weaver Fertilizer Plant in Forsyth County, the “Today Show” and other national outlets reported on the devastation.

Due to high levels of ammonia inside the plant, over 6,000 citizens were evacuated from their homes.

A charitable gift from the Rye Foundation to a start-up organization provided food to many of those affected. Amber Harris established SPARK in 2020 to “share peace and rekindle kindness.” In the aftermath of the fire, she utilized Rye funds and delivered bottled water, sandwiches, and fruit to neighborhood families.

“The air quality was terrible,” Amber recalled, “so we knocked on doors and delivered food and other supplies. Everyone was so glad to see us, and they all thanked us for coming.”

North Hills Elementary School was closed for the week, and the SPARK response team dropped off books to many of the students.

Although the plant was completely destroyed, there were no casualties and area residents realize that “somebody cared” during their time of need. Rye leaders are grateful that their funds to SPARK were used efficiently and effectively during the community crisis.

In Loving Memory

This issue is dedicated to four special “Friends of Rye”, who supported the Foundation through their encouragement, prayers, and financial gifts.

Today, we remember the “life and legacy” of each one, and hope that their example serves as a challenge to others.

Marie Wellborn Blevins Wilkesboro
David C. Braswell, Sr..... Wilkesboro
Dottie Flynt Petree Bermuda Run
Bruton Smith Concord

Mission Statement

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



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