



Religion Youth Education

CELEBRATING \$1.2 MILLION IN CHARITABLE GIVING

Bryan Award Reaches \$250,000 Commitment: Latest Winner is Pitt County Nonprofit

GREENVILLE - Leaders of the Rye Foundation recently shared news on two major developments, one involving the winner of the Bryan Award and the second announcing a significant 3-year extension of the prestigious statewide Award.

Warren Steen, the President of the Rye Foundation, said the Bryan Award is “the highest honor given by our foundation and includes a charitable grant of

\$25,000 to expand and enhance programming.” He explained that the award is named for Goldsboro businessman and philanthropist Ray Bryan, who died in 2016 at the age of 84.

A total of seven winners have already been recognized. With the extension, that number will grow to ten recipients, and the cumulative financial commitment is now \$250,000. This year’s winner is Pitt County’s faith-based Building Hope Community Life Center.

Sandy Williams, the enthusiastic director of development at Building Hope, described the organization as “a Jeremiah 29:11 ministry.” She said their goal is to help children and youth discover and develop their God-given talents. The Center offers after-school programs, summer camps, and a Service Saturday, where participants give back to the community in hands-on activities such as painting and raking leaves.

Rye board member Ingram Hedgpeth traveled to Greenville for an informative and meaningful site tour at Building Hope and came away impressed. “It was uplifting to learn that their mission places an emphasis on academic achievement and spiritual development,” he said. “This is exactly the kind of project we are looking to support.”

The \$25,000 award will be used to:

- Launch a new program for young entrepreneurs.
- Sponsor summer camp field trips to colleges and area businesses.
- Increase technology at the Center.

Previous winners are featured on our website, which can be accessed at ryefoundation.org.



Starting Early - Children at Building Hope receive daily encouragement from positive role models.

Rye Makes \$20,000 Investment in “Meals and Mentors”

WINSTON-SALEM - With its latest philanthropic gift, the Rye Foundation is helping teenaged students turn obstacles into opportunities.

A charitable gift totaling \$20,000 has been strategically directed to the rebranded “Meals and Mentors” program at the Winston-Salem Street School. The popular event brings role models to the school each Friday, and has been successful in improving classroom attendance.

Every Friday, a guest speaker talks with students, and then the entire student body enjoys a meal prepared by a local civic club, business, or church. Past speakers include Police Chief Catrina Thompson, businessman and former basketball star Skip Brown, and nationally - known author Dr. Gary Chapman.

“Before coming to the Street School, many of our students had very poor class attendance,” said Mike Foster, executive director of the school. “We have tried to make Friday a fun day, with a great speaker, student clubs, and a great meal. Now, they look forward to being at school.”

Founded in 2004, the faith-based Street School has produced over 300 graduates. It features small



High Technology - During a site tour, Darek and Deziare met with (from left): Mike Foster and Bonnie Flythe of the school, and board member Ingram Hedgpath of the Rye Foundation.



Ray Owen Scholarship - Each year, the top academic achiever at the Street School receives the award named for Ray Owen. Shown at the graduation ceremony are (from left): Ray Owen, Leslie Alberto-Ayona, Cathy Owen, and Warren Steen. Leslie is continuing her education at UNC Greensboro.

classes, frequent field trips, and a dual enrollment program which allows seniors to learn job skills at Forsyth Tech Community College.

Foster expressed his appreciation to the Rye Foundation for its financial commitment. “It is really encouraging to know that there are leaders in our community who believe in giving teenagers a second chance,” he remarked.

Solid Theology on a Church Sign



Guilford County - God’s Place of Worship and Deliverance offers a clear-cut message of hope: “If you’re headed in the wrong direction...God allows U-turns.”

Crisscrossing North Carolina: Friends, Faith, and Four Restaurant Reviews

By J. Warren Steen

At the current time, the Rye Foundation is involved in child-centered and faith-based projects in 14 towns and cities across our state. Here are some insights and observations gleaned from my travels.

Meeting Interesting People

For frequent travelers, it is not unusual to spot a familiar face in a hotel lobby, restaurant, or meeting venue. Here are some new friends I have met during those trips.

- Jim Phillips, Commissioner of the Atlantic Coast Conference
- Golfer Jennifer Kupcho, winner of the Augusta National Women's Amateur
- Coach Frank Beamer, Hall of Famer and Virginia Tech legend
- World-known saxophonist Branford Marsalis
- Singer-songwriter Jim Lauderdale, a minister's son from Troutman who has written country music songs for George Strait and Patty Loveless

Emerging Trends: Pew Research on Church Attendance

The Associated Press reported on a comprehensive study by Pew, which analyzed in-person attendance at Sunday services. Their survey showed that 20 percent of Americans attend less often now, as compared to before the pandemic.

Only 40 percent of respondents participated in worship during the previous month, either on-line or in person.

Recent Restaurant Reviews

During my travels, these four dining establishments provided great food: the Amish-operated Shiloh General Store in Yadkin County, Cup Crazy Café in Blowing Rock, Dough-Joe's Coffee and Doughnuts at Reynolda Village in Winston-Salem, and TJ's Café in North Wilkesboro.

Estate Planning Tip: Lessons from Aretha Franklin

During the past five years, the late singer's heirs have been battling over her \$4 million estate. Believe it or not, as Mr. Ripley would say, the Associated Press reported that a handwritten will was actually found in a sofa at her suburban Detroit home.

"Friends of Rye" are encouraged to eliminate this kind of chaos, and to work with a Christian financial advisor or attorney. Supporters can help children by including the Rye Foundation as a beneficiary on retirement accounts and insurance policies.

Site Tour in Mount Airy

A delegation traveled to Surry County to learn more about Surry Medical Ministries. Located in close proximity to the boyhood home of Andy Griffith, the nonprofit has filled over 10,000 prescriptions during the past year, and a mobile dental clinic serves children and adults. Executive director Nancy Dixon told our group, "We receive strong support from our faith community, our business community, and our medical community."

A Final Word from Life's Little Instruction Book

In his best-selling book, H. Jackson Brown, Jr. shared this advice, "Never order chicken-fried steak in a place that doesn't have a jukebox."



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

Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry: Partnership Builds New Playground

BLACK MOUNTAIN - Local civic clubs, area churches, and the Rye Foundation combined resources to construct a playground for a mountain ministry aimed at encouraging single mothers and their children.

Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry operates a food pantry and clothes closet. But it was their highly-successful "Hope for Tomorrow" shelter that first attracted Rye's attention.

At the time of their funding request, a total of 6 mothers and 19 children lived at the shelter, where they receive spiritual training, life skills, and encouragement from community volunteers. Leaders delivered an organized proposal to build a playground on a sloping hillside.

Kevin Bates, hired in October of 2022 as the organization's executive director, along with assistant director Savanna Craig, spoke at "Champions for Children Day," the Foundation's statewide event aimed at promoting faith-based children's charities.

"Our team forged several key partnerships to make this dream a reality," Bates stated. "We had great support from our local Kiwanis and Rotary clubs, and the Rye Foundation provided financial resources."

Over 30 local congregations volunteer in some way with the innovative ministry. The Rye Foundation is proud to be part of this life-changing program in the North Carolina mountains.

All-State Choir Attracts Large Crowds



Lincolnton - A delegation from our foundation attended the concert at First Baptist Church in Lincolnton. Rye has provided thousands of dollars in scholarship support for the teenaged singers. Shown in the above photo are: **Phil Campbell, Bethany Jennings, Corwin Stanley, and Caroline Carpenter.**

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.

Angus W. Mercer
Charlotte

Robert E. Black, Jr.
Piney Creek

Charlie Hemrick
Winston-Salem

Dottie Flynt Petree
Bermuda Run

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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