



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF THE NORTHERN NECK

Fall 2016 – Vol. 4, Issue 2

# Building Futures

## News from the Boys & Girls Club

### Your Support Does More Than You Know – Read About One Grandmother’s Gratitude



Dianna Carter, and grandchildren Briana and Jonte Savoy, participate in BGCNN Strengthening Families Program.

*People like you have been helping our Club families have peace of mind. How? Because your contributions keep our doors open, and our member families know that here at our Club, their children are safe, engaged, and happy.*

“I don’t know what I’d do if we didn’t have the Boys & Girls Club,” says Dianna Carter, fondly known as Dee. Dee has lived in the Northern Neck for more than 40 years. In her early years here she worked as an accountant, but by 1988 she had earned her Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) certification from Rappahannock Community College and thereafter turned her compassionate nature towards caring for the elderly at Warsaw Health Care Center and Lancashire Convalescent and Rehabilitation.

But her service to others didn’t stop at the end of her workdays.

For 18 years, she also served as the Chair of the local Salvation Army outpost, helping to raise funds and assisting with the Christmas Angel Tree Program for central Virginia.

In addition, she was the very first person in Lancaster County to be elected to the School Board, and, ignoring harassment and even death threats, she bravely and skillfully served on the School Board for the next eight years.

Today Dee lives in an apartment in Kilmarnock close to the Club, but she raised her own five children in Weems and remembers those days as often frustrating and worrisome for a working mother. “I always had to worry about what my girls were up to while I was at work,” she said. “We didn’t have a Boys & Girls Club back then, and our kids were often left unsupervised. We just didn’t have a choice.”

Today, having raised her own children and two of her nine grandchildren to adulthood – one who is currently working on her Master’s and another who is working her way through college – she is again the legal guardian of two more grandchildren. “They are a blessing to me,” she said. “They take care of me as much as I take care of them. And for all of us the Boys & Girls Club is a Godsend. They love being with their friends and playing sports, and Briana has really loved going to the Nature Camp for the past two summers. And this year, Jonte even got elected President of the Keystone Club! I am just so grateful that I don’t have to worry about them and I know that when they’re at the Club, they are learning new things, having fun and staying safe.”

### Boys & Girls Club Helping to Develop Innovative Virtual World Games



Club youth Zach Churchill and Darius Scott play virtual games for REESSI beta testing program

intervention focused on early adolescents, ages 11-14. Twenty Club youth are participating in the beta testing process.

The goal of ME GAMES™ is to support a successful passage into adulthood by increasing academic engagement, motivation, and performance through digital learning activities in a virtual world setting that makes the future feel close and connected to the present. By playing

the games, the children will experience difficult life decisions through common experiences and will learn how to interpret these experiences and create a link between possible future selves and current actions.

The theory-based Edugames are called “My World of Dreams”, “The Valley of Others”, “Disappointments Bridge” and “The Mountain of Hope”. According to BGCNN Program Administrative Assistant and IT Advisor, Becky Smith, one of four Club staff assisting REESSI with administering the beta testing, “What’s really cool about the Edugames is that the kids are learning about the consequences of their choices. As they play and make their choices, the games shift and create new scenarios.” She added, “an exciting outcome is that the children are exploring a side of themselves that they weren’t aware of, and learning in a virtual world what they should either avoid in the real world or do in the real world to create a better future for themselves.”

A mental health professional monitors the children’s progress

and is available to answer questions and give feedback. The children are also encouraged to talk about their experiences with each other in a “Reflection Pool” peer counseling group, which enables them to trust and discuss issues with each other and also pulls them out of the virtual world to interact with each other.

The Club will get to keep the 20 iPads being used during the beta testing process and has also received a grant from REESSI to cover the associated administrative costs.

REESSI, a premier global research and evaluation firm, is based in the Northern Neck with their offices in Burgess, and has received a three-year grant to develop and evaluate the games from the U.S. Department of Health, National Institutes of Health.

The BGCNN is one of only four Boys & Girls Clubs nationwide who have been invited to partner with Research, Evaluation and Social Solutions, INC. (REESSI), to provide beta testing and feedback for ME GAMES™, a digital media

# Thanks to You We Had Our Best Summer Program Ever!

*Your financial support + our committed community partners and volunteers = fun and educational opportunities for our youth.*

This past summer the Boys & Girls Club had a terrific Summer Program. We broke two enrollment records by serving a total of 260 youth and having a one-day attendance record of 173.

That's a lot of kids and a lot of meals – 8541 to be exact!

Each child also got to go on at least one of the almost 20 field trips offered. Some of the highlights for our elementary aged children were trips to the Children's Museum of Richmond, Kidsburg Playground in Williamsburg, and bowling at Village Lanes in Gloucester.

Our Middle School kids visited the Paragon Theatre in Newport News, the Aquarium in Norfolk, the Science Museum in Richmond, and more.

The teenagers visited the Black History Museum in Richmond, the Hampton Center Bistro for bowling and a movie and more than 30 even got to take an exciting and educational trip to Atlanta, GA. For some, it was their first trip outside of Virginia!



Chanel Taylor, staff member Clarence Thomas, Xavier Gaddy, Antonio Tomlin, Nore Smith, Sania Smith, and Staff member Santese Ball enjoy a full day of fun and games during Project Play Day, sponsored by Northern Neck Chevrolet

All ages enjoyed Project Play Day sponsored by Chad Rice of **Montross Chevrolet**, and our end of the summer picnic at Camp Kekoka. Sheriff McCranie and members of his staff at the **Lancaster Sheriff's Office** provided the grill and the cooking skills for our picnic and Sargent Jimmy Smith also put on a police dog demonstration.

Other community partners continued to offer fun programs both at the Club and on location throughout the Northern Neck.

Staff from **Abilities Abound Physical Therapy** and **Carousel Physical Therapy** stopped by weekly to get the kids really moving! They taught calisthenics and stretching exercises, organized relay races, and taught fun skills like the crab crawl and wheelbarrow walk.

**Empowering Youth for Positive Change (EYPC)** offered mentoring and counseling services weekly. The Club reciprocated by offering scholarships to EYPC youth clients, which enabled them to attend our Summer Program.

**2nd Chance Ministries** came by the Club to present a program on bullying to the teenagers and a program on substance abuse to all ages.

Again this year, the **Northern Neck YMCA** made their pool, swim instructors and lifeguards available for fun field trips.



Jasir Smith shows off an oyster during a TOGA field trip.

The **Tidewater Oyster Gardner's Association (TOGA)** once again taught Club members all about oysters during each of our sessions this summer. The children also helped add to a reef being built out of oyster shells at Camp Kekoka, which will benefit the local marine environment.

The **Lancaster Players** offered scholarships to attend their Summer Theatre Workshop. Three of our young ladies took advantage of the offer and had a great time learning about acting.



Bob Kammerer, Xavier Sutton, Tyus Clayton, Jakeem Redmond and Tariq Beane review construction plans for the Habitat for Humanity house.

Four to five teenagers per session worked on the current **Lancaster/Northern Neck Habitat for Humanity** house build. All of them learned the value of volunteering and gained carpentry skills along the way.

The **Lancaster EMS Explorers** trained our summer staff in CPR, enabling them to earn their CPR certifications.

The **Northern Neck Food Bank** provided snack foods for us at a significant discount.

With financial support from the **River Road Concerned Citizens** group, made up of individuals plus **Yankee Point Marina, St. Mary's White Chapel Episcopal Church and Queen Esther Baptist Church**, the Club was able to offer a dedicated bus service to 23 youth from the upper county who otherwise would not have been able to attend.

The **Steamboat Era Museum** waived their fees so that each week five Club children could attend their Friday children's programs.

During every session this summer the **Rappahannock Garden Club** put on a terrific



Our younger boys loved learning all about frogs and being good stewards of the environment thanks to the wonderful Frightened Frog program taught by our volunteers from the Rappahannock Garden Club.

program called the "Frightened Frog" for our 1st-4th grade boys. Through storytelling and crafts projects, the boys learned all about frogs and how climate change is endangering their habitats.

Thanks to the **NN Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society**, each summer two of our Club members receive full scholarships to the Nature Camp in Rockbridge County where they experience two weeks of fun and educational outdoor activities.

With support and assistance from the **NN Wild Turkey Association**, our kids are helping to restore a field at Belle Isle State Park to its natural state as a forested environment that will encourage the growth of the wild turkey population by providing natural sources of food and shelter.

**Susan Delano** stopped by weekly to give piano lessons.

Longtime volunteer **Linda Enders Bailey** brought in friends and supplies and once again engaged our young ladies with jewelry making. The children fondly call it the "Bling Bling Club."

The Good News Club – a bible study group led by representatives from many area churches, including **Beulah Baptist, Mt. Olive Baptist, Sharon Baptist, Grace Episcopal, St. Andrews Presbyterian and Willie Chapel Baptist Churches** engaged Club youth and met weekly for six weeks this summer.

The Library Reading Club, led by **librarian Ms. Tonya**, met weekly at our new community library.

And last, but not least, the **Bank of Lancaster** once again provided almost 400 t-shirts for youth and staff participating in our 2016 Summer Program.

As always, we are eternally grateful for our community partners and volunteers, whose generous gifts of talent and time enrich the lives of our youth, and for our donors who make it all possible.



Abbey Jones and Chyna Wormley enjoy each other's company at the end of Summer picnic.

# Club Board of Directors Receives High Performance Board Team Award

At a Fall meeting of the Virginia/D.C. Area Council of the Boys & Girls Club of America, the Board of the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Neck (BGCNN) was honored with the Council's 2016 "High Performance Board Team Award" for their exceptional board leadership, said BGCNN executive director, Phillip Mumford. The BGCNN was chosen for this honor from a field of 19 traditional BGCA Club organizations ranging in size from a single Club serving 100 youth members to umbrella Club organizations made up of 15 unique Club sites serving more than 5000 youth members. Overall, these 19 traditional BGCA Club organizations manage more than 90 Club sites throughout Virginia and D.C.

According to Lauren Hammond, Director of Organizational Development for Virginia Boys & Girls Clubs, "the High Performance Board Team Award is designed to recognize the Board of Directors of a Boys & Girls Club organization for achieving excellence as a team in the areas of Planning, Resource Development, Outreach to Underserved Youth and Marketing. This 2016 High Performance Board Team Award goes to a Board of Directors that takes their responsibilities very seriously, and I'm proud to give this to the Board of the Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Neck."

When accepting the award on behalf of the BGCNN Board of Directors, Board President Donna Anderson said, "I deeply appreciate the hard work by our



From left are Board member Dr. Merthia Haynie, Board President Donna Anderson, Director of Organizational Development for Virginia Boys & Girls Clubs Lauren Hammond, BGCNN Executive Director Phillip Mumford and Board member Ed Fuehrer.

staff this past year and the strong team that we've created of Board members, staff, parents, volunteers and community partners. Along with our Board's leadership, this team has created the environment and quality programs that have

attracted an expanding number of club members. Our Board has been proud to serve both the Boys & Girls Club and the community, which has helped us to have such a positive impact on the lives of so many youth."

# Sheriff Department's TOPS Program Helps Club Kids

Sheriff Patrick McCranie really cares about kids. For more than a decade he has made it a priority to help as many children as he can both as a mentor and as a provider of the school supplies, new clothes, shoes and warm coats they need.

He began TOPS (Troopers on Patrol for Students) in 2004 for the Lancaster County students who attended the alternative school, which was a mandated program for kids with discipline problems and poor grades. He visited the school weekly and organized inspirational speakers and educational field trips. School officials at the time credited the program as being a significant influence on student's improved grades and attitudes.

Though the alternative school is no longer operating, the TOPS program continued, and in 2008 it expanded to include "Back to School Shop with a Cop" in partnership with the Boys & Girls Club. Club staff recommend the children based on good behavior and need and Sheriff McCranie and his team take them on a shopping spree.

"It's all about having positive interactions with the kids," says McCranie. "We want the children to know that we are here to support them in all that they do. We want them to know that law enforcement officers truly care about them, their educations and their futures."

The TOPS program also provides for students throughout the year. School staff let the Sheriff's Department know when students are in need of a warm coat, or a pair of cleats, or caps and gowns for graduation, and TOPS delivers.

Funding for TOPS comes from contributions and occasional grants from local organizations such as the Kiwanis Club. To help support the program, send a check made out to TOPS to the Lancaster County Middle School.



According to Sheriff McCranie, "this year's Shop with a Cop kids were truly some of the most appreciative and respectful children we've worked with." Pictured from L to R: 1st row - Sheriff's Dept. Admin Assistant Ally Ward, Isiah Gibson, Cintez Gibson, Jayden Hill, Cincere Gibson, Andre Canada, La'Nazja Thompson, 2nd row - BGCNN Volunteer Jeff Rosenfeld, Deputy Phil Shahan, Sheriff McCranie, State Trooper Joey Thompson, former Kilmarnock Police Officer Ann Phelps, Assistant Commonwealth Attorney Maggie Ransone, Lancaster Middle School bookkeeper Kathy Deihl.



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P.O. Box 564  
517 North Main Street  
Kilmarnock, VA 22482  
Tel 804-435-9696  
Fax 804-435-9292  
www.bgcnn.com

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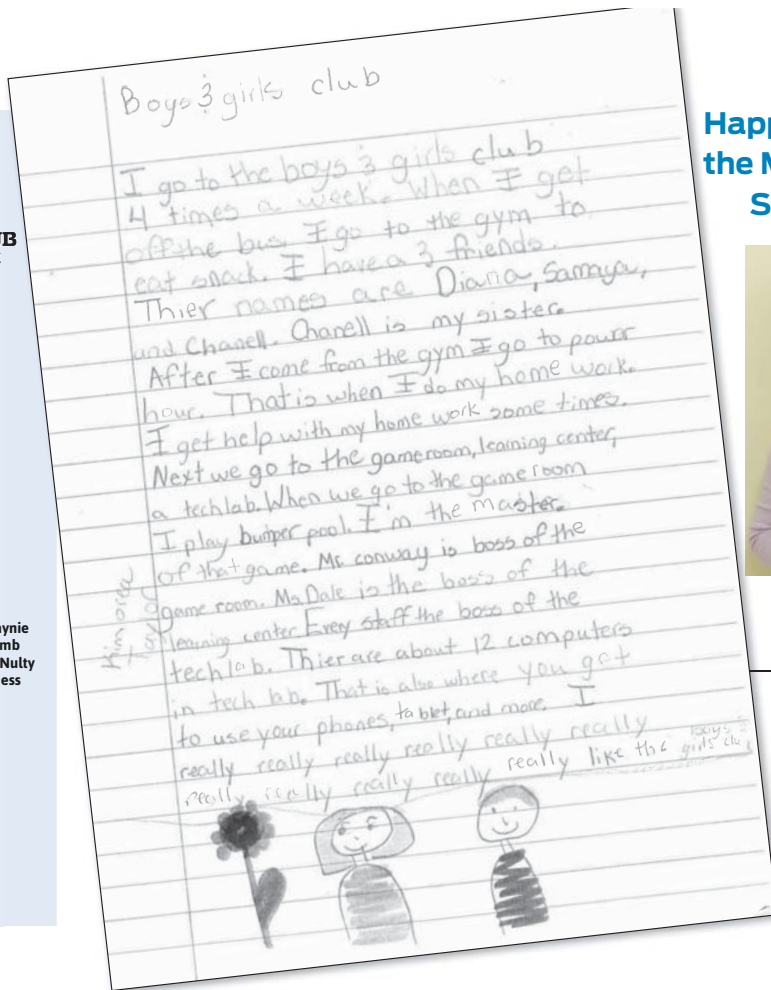
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**Happy Memories in  
the Making at After  
School Program**



Kimoria Taylor proudly shares her letter about her fun afternoons at the Club.

**Wish List**

- Working Pickup Truck
- CD players and MP3 players
- Musical Instruments
- Professional sound equipment
- Sports Equipment



The Rappahannock Art League (RAL) worked with approximately 20 Club kids during the summer of 2015 to create "Bubbles," a beautiful mosaic inspired by a NY City subway mosaic of the same name. "The project took about 10 weeks to go from concept to creation," said RAL instructor Sukey Starkey. She added, "The kids owned the project and were quite proud to see it evolve."

"Bubbles" was mounted outside the entrance to the Club during the winter of 2016 and last summer the sign was added, beautifully made by Sandy Mathews of Creative DeSIGN, White Stone.

Stop by anytime to appreciate this wonderful piece of art created through our valued partnership with the Rappahannock Art League.

**Valuable Volunteers!**

Our Club volunteers continue to make a HUGE impact on our Club youth and the programs we offer them. Come join our volunteer team and make GREAT FUTURES happen.

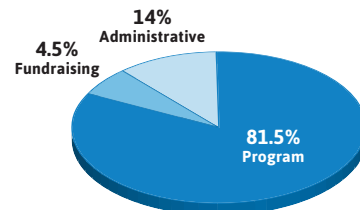
**Volunteer Opportunities:**

Learning Center, Tech Lab, Teen Center,  
Field Trip Chaperones, Mentoring Program,  
Game Room and MORE!

Want to join our volunteer team?

Contact Operations Director, Patrick Creed, at  
pcreed@bgcnn.com or (804) 435-9696.

**How Your Donations are Wisely Used**



**Thank You for Caring!**

**"I love everything. I like the volunteers and the staff. I like getting help with my homework. And I really like the tech lab."**

Dakarai Walters, age 11