



CHAMBLISS CENTER FOR CHILDREN

GROWING YOUNG LIVES 24•7•365

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SPRING 2017

We have the best foster parents! They sacrifice so much to give children who have been removed from their families due to abuse, neglect or abandonment, a safe, loving, healing home. We also know our foster parents get a lot in return as well. Below, a mom with one of our newer foster families shares her feelings about a recent placement, only the second one for her family. She beautifully expresses her love for these children and her hope for their future.

He says "I love you" with his precious lisp and I feel the warmth rise from within as I smile and say, "I love you too, handsome."

My boys are just that – mine. It's only been five days and I'm already head-over-heels in love with these two little souls. Brothers that are inseparable and care for one another with comfort and wisdom that far outweigh their age. They know how to keep the peace and are quick to agree. They haven't yet found their voice.

I wonder if it will come in time as the honeymoon period fades or if this is how they have adapted to life. Simpler to say nothing at all rather than disagree.

The little one lets me know when he isn't pleased as any toddler would, but unlike any other toddler I know, he is stoic. Strong. He pushes away his emotions at times and fights back tears with a defiant shake of his head.

They don't call me mommy.

I wonder if my name will change over time with the comfort that comes from having someone answer to that powerful name and hearing my three biological children say it too. Most times they call me nothing at all. This is a stark difference from our first placement that called me mommy within the hour of us getting them, which both made my heart flutter and break at the weight of the responsibility at the same time.

We talk about their mom and dad and brothers at bedtime when saying nighttime prayers. The oldest has begun offering them up when we pray, which only just began happening tonight. The little one still shakes his head and does not want to pray for them, but he yields and bows his head to join silently as I ask the Lord to protect these children, keep their older brothers safe, and help their parents understand how their choices are affecting who they are responsible to care for most. My heart pleads and breaks, but my spoken words are soft, simple and full of love and hope for their little ears.

My boys know hurt. They know separation. This isn't their first time in care. I pray it will be their last.

When we first began foster care training, I knew that the most challenging part for me would be how to build a bridge with the birth parents. To somehow look past their poor choices and help them to prepare for reunification. To always speak kindly to their children in my care about them, knowing full well that I do not want to harm the fragile relationship that one day may be repaired. I knew that I would not always agree with how a judge ruled. I may be fighting mad at how a parent could possibly neglect or abuse their own child. I may think that my home was a safer place – a better place – for a child and be angry while having to let go.

This is a feeling I know.

This time, however, is different. The Lord continues to teach me and remind me humility. I could be in many of these situations myself. Fallen down on bad times and just not able to make ends meet despite my efforts. I could make bad choices that put me in their shoes. So, this time, I earnestly pray for them. I remember that they are hurting a pain that I never want to imagine – being stripped from their children, having to say goodbye knowing that their choices have been what drives a wedge between their families, and to know that some other woman would be filling in the role of mom for a while. Being the one who has the intimate job of wiping away tears, kissing boo-boos, and tucking them in at night. Comforting them when they have a nightmare or are scared of starting a brand new school.

Being the one who wipes their bottoms when they go to the bathroom or bathes them when they have an accident and are embarrassed.

My heart breaks for that mom.

The mom to my boys has done a good job in so many ways. Her work is apparent in their 'please' and 'thank you's.' In the way they graciously accept a gift and grace us with a rare hug. They tell me about her at times and how much they miss her, their daddy and their brothers.

These children need someone to stand in the gap for them. To love them so hard that it hurts an incredible pain to say goodbye, but that it leaves a lasting imprint on them of safety, security and hope for a different kind of ending for their stories. Foster care is a journey full of ups and downs, unbearable pain and intense joy like nothing I've felt before. It's a sobering experience and a calling – one that I never thought my family would be asked to do. I'm thankful we aren't in it alone, but have our God who leads, our church and community who supports, and a lot of opportunities to say 'yes.'

by Rachael Welch, Chambliss Center for Children foster parent

*Hope
and
Love*



Board & Staff Holiday Brunch



Nita Terrell (left) has spent 15 years here caring for children.



President & CEO **Phil Acord**, pictured here with Vice President **Katie Harbison** and Board Chairwoman **Catharine Bahner Daniels**, was honored with a statue for his 45 years with the agency.



Board Chairwoman **Catharine Bahner Daniels** congratulated **Ikeko Bass** on 15 years with the agency.



Board members, from left to right, **Cathy Dorvil**, **Dr. Tonia Cox** and **Julie Stowe** wait for staff to arrive to the party.

The annual Board and Staff Holiday Party was held on December 13th in the gymnasium of Chambliss Center for Children. Every year staff members are treated to a delicious buffet compliments of our gracious Board members, and service awards are presented. This year, we recognized **Ikeko Bass** and **Nita Terrell** for 15 years of service and President and CEO **Phil Acord** for his 45 years with the agency. We also honored six board members who rotated from our Active Board to our Sustaining Board – **John Coffelt**, **Lauren Hunt**, **Paul Jacobs, Jr.**, **Michael Jobe**, **Leigh Ann Yates** and **Chris Young**. We want to thank our Board and staff for their commitment to this agency and for all they do to improve the lives of children and families in our community!

Fun Times at Pin Strikers

Thanks to the **Chattanooga Chapter PGA**, those in our Residential Program once again enjoyed a holiday party at **Pin Strikes**. Our youth and their foster and adoptive families had a great time bowling, playing arcade games, and eating pizza. Each child and teen also received a gift card for holiday shopping, and the **GPS Lacrosse Team** prepared stockings filled with candy and other goodies for each child in the program. We greatly appreciate the Chattanooga Chapter PGA for helping us continue this annual party, and for helping make the holiday season special for our children in foster homes and the group home!

Rebecca had some very special wishes to share with Santa.



Residential Program Case Manager **Ericka Holmes** is pictured here with Group Home Direct Care staff **Willie Richardson** and **Roland McClendon**.



The **Quarles** family always has a great time at our holiday party. Pictured at left, from left to right, are **Frances**, **Kalob**, **Fran**, **Lacy** and **Abby**.



We are so thankful for the staff in our Residential Program. Left to right are **Jennifer Davis**, **Melissa Hand** and **Liz Blasbery**.



Jeff Craig (right) with the **Chattanooga Chapter PGA** came out with his wife **Betsy** and daughter **Caroline** to join the fun.

We love to party!

We have many local companies, schools, and associations who hosted parties for our children during the holidays. Thank you to **Cheeburger Cheeburger, Collegedale Academy, The Haisten Group, Heritage High School,** and others for the time they spent with our kids!



Welcome New Board Members!

We welcomed four new members to our Board of Directors this year. Each began a three-year term of service in January, which can be renewed twice. We look forward to working with them, as we know their expertise will help us continue providing the best possible care for the children in our community.



Cam Born



Teddi Mendel



Jim Miller



Cindy Wilkerson

In addition to the election of these four new members, Chambliss Center for Children's Board of Directors also elected new officers. **Paul Fitzgerald** with **Northwestern Mutual** will serve a two-year term as Chairman; **Ross Schram** with **Baker Donelson** was elected as Vice Chairman; **Hugh Brown** with **Pendleton Square** will serve as Treasurer; **Kelly Lopez** with **Schnellecke Logistics** was elected to the Assistant Treasurer's position; **Anne-Marie Spencer** with **PlayCore** will serve as Secretary; and **Catharine Bahner Daniels**, owner of **Plum Nelly**, will serve as Past Chairwoman.

Volunteers & In-Kind Donations

Our thanks to each one of you for your help in making Chambliss Center for Children the best place for children in our community! This list acknowledges those who donated time, talents, and services from November 1, 2016 – February 28, 2017. Thank you!



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**145
YEARS!**

This year Chambliss Center for Children celebrates its 145th Anniversary! Look for information about our latest agency projects and accomplishments and anniversary celebrations in the August issue of our newsletter.



The **Mark Hite Team** and Friends had great fun at this year's Gala. Pictured here are (front row, from left to right) **Crystal Rowan, John Rowan, Mark Hite and Shay Mahone**. In the back, from left to right, are **Celeste Dobbins, Casey Dobbins, Lauren Mundy, Amanda Riggs, Liz Tidmore, Eric Tidmore and Amy Mahone**.

This group of friends took a break from dancing for a quick picture. Pictured here, from left to right, are **Todd Tessier, Lauren Tessier** (back), **Monica Fallo** (front), **Mark Fallo, Will Cox, Tonia Cox, Parul Patel** and **Mitch Patel**.



MARDI GRAS GALA

Photography by Nooga Pics and Kenney Photography

Catharine Bahner Daniels and Phil Acord were crowned Queen and King.



Our fifth annual Mardi Gras Gala was a great success! Held on February 24th at **Bessie Smith Hall**, the event was organized in collaboration with our friends at **Events With Taste Catering** and featured Cajun-inspired fare, cocktails, Dixieland Jazz by the **Ralph Miller Quartet**, late-evening DJ & dance party, and lots of New Orleans-style fun. The event also featured a crowning of the Mardi Gras Queen **Catharine Bahner Daniels** and King **Phil Acord**, who led guests in a parade throughout the venue. Thanks to our Super Krewe sponsors **Accent Construction Services; Chambliss, Bahner, & Stophel, PC; Ray Feher; First Tennessee Bank; The Mark Hite Team; and PlayCore**.

These ladies came to have fun, and they sure did! Left to right, are **Janda White, Sherri Burns, Ronelle Sellers, Tonya Hathorne, Julie Brandao, and Tara Wood**.



TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM

We are so excited to have our first Transitional Living resident! A young man moved into one of our duplex units in early March. He is currently working and will begin Chattanooga State in May. In an effort to assist teens “aging out” of the foster care system, who, in many circumstances become homeless, our Transitional Living Program is the first of its kind in this area. In addition to housing, this program will offer counseling and training in basic life skills, such as financial planning and budgeting, cooking, interviewing, and job readiness skills for young adults ages 18 to 21 who are in school. We are proud to offer such an important service benefiting young people in this community!



Thank you to the **Fowler** family and Sustaining Board members **Andrea Aaron** and **Susan Stein** for helping decorate our Transitional Living units.

AROUND THE CENTER



We are lucky to have these wonderful ladies, both past and current Foster Grandparents, with our agency. Pictured here, from left to right, are (front row) **Jeanne McDaniel**, **Willie Odom**, **Mildred Flick**, **Sadie Foster**, **Mary Myers**, **Willie Mae Holland**, **Lillian Brooks**, and **Nancy Stark**. On the back row, from left to right, are **Imogene Odom**, **Jocelyn Bell**, **Wilma Elsberry**, **Ethel Green**, **Bonita Springs**, **Tina Custer**, **Wanda Buck**, **Buela Martin**, **Johnnie Simmons**, and **Teresa Smith**.



GPS Lacrosse Coach Caroline Carlin brought around 30 students to our main campus over winter break to introduce our preschoolers to the sport. Everyone involved, including **Jakob** pictured here, had a great time, and we appreciate these young ladies spending time with our kids.



City of Chattanooga Police Officer **Ayriel Novak** recently visited our Runabouts. They loved listening to her read and asking questions about all her equipment. They were also very excited about the coloring books and cookies she brought to share. She is pictured here getting a big hug from **Ti'Jerria**.



Keller Williams Realty recently presented us with a donation of \$10,000. Pictured here with agency Vice President **Katie Harbison** (center) are **Nathan Brown** (left) and **Mark Hite** (right) with Keller Williams.



The **TVA** Giving Tree for Chambliss Center for Children has become a much-anticipated holiday tradition. In early December our three and four-year-olds boarded a bus to TVA where they, along with the help of some TVA executives, decorated the tree with ornaments the children had made. Each ornament listed an item on the back from our Extended Childcare Program's wish list. While there, the children also sang Christmas carols, ate pizza and visited with Santa - their favorite part of the trip! Following our visit, TVA employees purchased and delivered the items from the tree. We received toys, educational classroom supplies, and art supplies. We look forward to this every year, and greatly appreciate all the hard work that goes in to making it such a special time for the children. Thank you, **Linda Tonya, Barbara Suarez**, and all our TVA friends!

TVA'S Giving Tree

Staff with **TVA Nuclear** are gracious enough to organize this event for us each year. Pictured here with Santa, from left to right, are **Barbara Suarez, Susan Shirk, Lucia Harvey, Michele Floyd, Jennifer Affolder, Rhonda Parrott, Angela Smith** and **Linda Tonya** (seated).



With a little help from **TVA** employee **Tyler Wolfford**, **Ger'Myia** places her ornament on the tree.



Kylin wanted to make sure Santa got his cookie.



Our three and four-year-olds were happy to sing some of their favorite holiday songs for **TVA** staff.

Red Bank Thrift Store & Child Care Center Update

As you may know, we purchased the former Girl Scout Council Building on Dayton Boulevard last Spring. There are many codes and regulations that must be adhered to in renovation projects, especially when it involves a child care center. However, we are nearing completion and expect to open both The Thrift Store and our new Early Childhood Education center in late Spring/early Summer. We will need lots of great items to stock our new store, so keep us in mind when you do your Spring cleaning. You are welcome to drop off items at The Thrift Store in Brainerd, located at 3723 Brainerd Road. Or, if you have furniture to donate, give us a call at 423-698-3730, and we'll pick it up!

WELCOME NEW STAFF

Mike Mahan has joined the Chambliss Center for Children team as Maintenance Supervisor. Mike has a history with our agency, having been in our program as a youth. He brings years of experience, as well as a love for the agency, to this very important position. **Laurie Millener** recently came on board as Program and Operations Assistant. In this position, Laurie provides vital assistance to the Volunteer and Development Departments, as well as the Extended Childcare Program.



Financial Donations This list of financial contributions is from October 1, 2016 – February 28, 2017. If we have omitted your name, please accept our apologies and let us know so that we may correct our records and acknowledge you in our summer newsletter. Thanks to each of you for helping us continue our mission of working with our community's families and children.



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- Mr. & Mrs. Dan Stefaniuk**
Patsi & Kirk Walker
- Mr. & Mrs. Taylor Stein**
Gloria Miller & David Bowman
Carrie Holland
Alexis & Scott Probasco
- Dao Le & Sydney Stephens**
Mark Hite
- Beth & Charlie Stout**
Alexis & Scott Probasco
Susan & Ben Probasco
- Katie Stout & Kids**
Christie & Brice Burbank
- Leslie & John Stout**
Susan & Ben Probasco
- Jill & George Stowe**
Julie & Patrick Stowe
- Mr. & Mrs. Thorny Strang**
Patsi & Kirk Walker
- Mr. & Mrs. John Straussberger**
Patsi & Kirk Walker
- The Sutherland Family**
Christie & Brice Burbank
- Ms. Becky Sutter**
Jane Kline
- The Swanson Family**
Christie & Brice Burbank
- Madeline Swanson**
Paulette & Phil Acord
- The Symms Family**
Christie & Brice Burbank
- The Tafel Family**
Julie & Patrick Stowe

Kauri Tallant
Paulette & Phil Acord

The Tallent Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Nanette & Dick Tanner
Gloria Miller & David Bowman

Louise Tate
Mark Hite

The Taylor Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Julie Taylor & The Whole Gang at Erlanger Health System Foundations
Christie & Brice Burbank

Susan & Alec Taylor
Gloria Miller & David Bowman

Tobe Taylor
Paulette & Phil Acord

The Templeton-Phillips Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

The Thatcher Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Thatcher
Jane Kline

Mr. & Mrs. Gabe Thompson
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Thompson
Beth & Charlie Stout

The Thornhill Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Carol & Bedford Transou
Susan & Alec Taylor and Family

Chris Trimmier
Mark Hite

Terri Tucker
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Gwin Tugman
Susan Taylor

Mr. & Mrs. Robby Tyson and Family
Rosalee & Jerry Bogo

Kay & Douglas Vickers
Mark Hite

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Vinson
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Schriener

Mr. & Mrs. Eric Voges
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Regina Wade
Paulette & Phil Acord

Roslyn C. Wade
Gloria Miller & David Bowman

The Wagner Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Caroline Walker
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Emily & Shelby Walker
Mark Hite

Jim Walker
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Lisa & Rob Walker
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Patsi Walker
Wilma Dietzen

Mr. Whit Walker
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Walldorf
Paul Jacobs

The Walley Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Mendy & Tyler Ware
Mark Hite

Everett Warren
Page & David Houseman

Susan & Everett Warren
Gloria Miller & David Bowman

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Patsi & Kirk Walker

Dr. Rob Watlington
Paul Jacobs

The Watson Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Mr. & Mrs. John Watson
Christie & Brice Burbank

Patti Webb
Christie & Brice Burbank

Mr. & Mrs. Tom Webb
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Mr. Cole Webster
Paul Jacobs

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Webster
Paul Jacobs

The Brad Weeks Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Karen & Miller Welborn
Susan & Ben Probasco

Mr. & Mrs. Wendell
Barbara & T. O. Helton

Vernon West
Christie & Brice Burbank

Ms. Martha Westbrook
Jane Kline

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Paul Jacobs

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Susan & Ben Probasco

Dr. & Fred C. Whitmire, Jr.
Paul Jacobs

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Christie & Brice Burbank

The Whittington Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Ms. Anne Wilkins
Paul Jacobs

The Wilkinson Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

The Frank Williams Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

The James Williams Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Ms. Janice Williams
Jane Kline

Merrilyn & Bill Williams
Julie & Patrick Stowe

The Nelson Williams
Christie & Brice Burbank

Dr. & Mrs. R. Henry Williams
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Christie & Brice Burbank

Jane Williamson
Pat Persinger

Mr. & Mrs. Randy Wilson
Christie & Brice Burbank
Alexis & Scott Probasco
Beth & Charlie Stout

Susan & Scott Wilson
Susan & Ben Probasco

Mr. William B. Wilson
Paul Jacobs

Dr. William Wray
Erin, Susan, & Alec Taylor

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Yerby
Paul Jacobs

Haden York
Mark Hite

The Youmans Family
Christie & Brice Burbank

Mr. & Mrs. Bill Young
Alexis & Scott Probasco
Patsi & Kirk Walker

Don Young
Mark Hite

Mr. & Mrs. Mark Young
Paul Jacobs

Crystal Zabbara & Wayne Wimberly
Mark Hite

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Paul Jacobs

Mr. & Mrs. John Zeiser
Paul Jacobs

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Magaline Robinson

Charles A. Bonam, Sr.
Magaline B. Robinson

Marshall S. Bright
Mr. & Mrs. Scott Graham

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Martha & Jim Ensign

Richard Cadavero
Mr. & Mrs. Roland W. Fanselau

Phyllis Callaway
Julie & Bruz Clark
Linda Friberg
Gloria Miller
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Schriener

Col. Ted Cash, M.D.
Linda Friberg
Gloria Miller

Norma Clark
Susan Taylor

Chet Devaney
Pat Persinger

Martha Dietzen
Elizabeth Pelton

Jacquelin Fleming
Mr. & Mrs. Robert H. Fleming

Donald Geoffrion
Jane Geoffrion

Mr. & Mrs. R. E. Hendershot
Ralph M. Hendershot

Charles Hill
Brinda J. Hill

Hugh Huffaker
Marion Huffaker

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Graham Burns and Lucy, Edy, & May
Tennyson Dickinson
Pat Persinger & Meg Persinger Brock
Adrienne Rhodes

Nina Isaac
Lisa Marks

Marje & Walter Johnson
W. Chris Johnson

Ted King
Pat Persinger

Jarand Lane
Grady Lane

Donna Jaynes Lassetter
Will Lassetter

Margaret & Arthur Ledford
Michael Ledford

Natalie Marks
Lisa Marks

Betsy Chambliss McLean & Alan Robb McLean
Susan Chambliss Irvine McRae

Hal Morris
Gloria Miller

Louise Apple Moss
Gloria Miller

Sharon Olinger
Gena Hartman
Carolyn & Gary Tate

Janet Paden
Pat Persinger

Ralph Paden
Pat Persinger

Frances Popham
Nancy Pruitt

The Purse Family
Marilyn & Frank Sutterlin

Buffett Rich
Lawrence & Lawrence, PLLC

Ethel Seifert
Teddi Mendel

Jim Thomas
Amy & Jamie Thomas

Mrs. Jean Tipton
Anne Whitaker

John Charles Tugman
Mrs. Frank Brock
Graham Burns & Family
Martha & Jim Ensign
Shirley Grant
Keating Griffiss
Mary & John McGee
Miller & Martin PLLC
Mary & Ted Moore
Pat Persinger
Deborah & James Reilly
Joseph W. Thatcher
Mrs. Jean Tugman & Family

Phil Whitaker
Pat Persinger

Jennie Wright
Brinda J. Hill

Charles Alexander Young
Diana Miller

W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION PROJECT UPDATE

In May 2015, we received a one-year planning grant from the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation** to gather data and have conversations with families living in poverty, identifying issues that keep them from being successful, as they define success, for themselves and their children. Throughout the following year, information was gathered from 356 parents over 30+ breakfasts, lunches and dinners. We compiled the results from the surveys and conversations and in June 2016 hosted a Report to the Community luncheon to present our findings to community leaders. We then presented those findings to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Upon reviewing our research and recommendations, they recently awarded us with a 2-year grant totaling \$900,000. This 2-year funding will be used to hire staff and implement programs to help parents and children living in poverty access the resources they need to be more successful and enhance the resources for those providing home-based care. We are very excited to move forward with this project, and will continue to update the community on our progress.

Nya and her mom **Candace Clark** attended one of our Parent Resource Days, an event inspired by the conversations we had during our research.





CHAMBLISS CENTER FOR CHILDREN
GROWING YOUNG LIVES 24•7•365

(Formerly Children's Home/Chambliss Shelter)
315 GILLESPIE ROAD
CHATTANOOGA, TN 37411

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LESLEY R. BERRYHILL
Director of Communications

VIRGINIA RUSHTON
Director of Volunteer Services

www.chamblisscenter.org
423-698-2456



Bunny Hop!

Friday, May 5th • 6:00-8:30 pm
First Tennessee Pavilion



Chairmen **Dr. Tonia & Will Cox** and **Mark Hite** invite you and your family to attend the 17th annual event, which will include dinner, music, a silent auction and activities for children of all ages. Reservations and more information can be found at www.bunny-hop.org. Please mark your calendar and make plans to attend!

Families \$100 (\$125 after 4/24) • Adults \$35 (\$40 after 4/24)
Children \$15 (\$20 after 4/24)

Follow
**Chambliss
Center for
Children**
on all
these
sites!

Save the Dates!

The Ice Cream Social Sunday, June 25

Cool down on a hot day at the **Chattanooga Market** from 11 am – 4 pm. Ice cream vendors will give out samples of flavors to ticket holders, and then tasters vote for their favorites to win the trophy. Tickets can be purchased for \$6 on the day of the event, and all proceeds will benefit Chambliss Center for Children.

21st Annual Golf Tournament Tuesday, October 24

We hope you will make plans to join us at **Council Fire Golf Club** for a fun day on the course. Lunch will begin at 11:30 am, followed by a 1:00 pm tee time. Please contact the Development Office at 423-468-1122 to reserve your spot!