

# Beulah

## Land News

### Hats, Hats and More Hats!



Rock Creek Elementary School in Erwin, Tennessee is located in Uncoi County—a beautiful mountainous region on the Tennessee/North Carolina state line.

Our latest ministry endeavor has involved crocheted toboggan hats. Lots of hats—193 so far. But this story doesn't start with hats. It starts with pencils. Let me explain.

Nick has a part-time job working for the CitiBank Call Center here in Gray. One of his coworkers, Jennifer Corby, who also works as a teacher's aide at Rock Creek Elementary School (RCES) in Erwin, Tennessee asked her coworkers to bring in their old newspapers and telephone books. She was selling them to get money to buy pencils for the fourth grade class that she assists at RCES.

We were shocked to learn that school children lacked simple resources like pencils! This situation touched our hearts so much that we gave a gift card to the teacher so that she could buy some basic supplies for her class which she did. She bought pencils, crayons and scissors. She had the supplies laying out on her desk the next morning when the kids came to school. When they saw the supplies, they stopped dead in their tracks and their mouths fell open. "Can we keep them?" they asked. The teacher assured them that the supplies were theirs to keep. It just so happened that there was poster contest underway, and they needed these supplies to enter the contest. However, they didn't have any poster board. Fortunately, there was enough money left on the gift card to allow them to buy poster board.

Then I got the idea that what with winter coming on I would make some warm crocheted hats for the fourth grade class. I thought **maybe** some of the kids **might** wear

them. I made enough for one fourth grade class, put them in a box and sent them to the school via Jennifer. As it happened, the day she took them to class they were going on a field trip. All the kids were excited about the hats and wanted to wear them on the trip. The teacher was delighted because it made it easier for her to keep up with her kids since they were the only ones wearing hats. When they returned from the field trip, they began to put the hats back in the box. The teacher explained that they could keep them. They were really excited then.

Once I learned that the kids had enthusiastically received the hats, I began to make them for the entire school. Fortunately, Rock Creek Elementary School is a small school. Little my little I have sent more hats to the school until every child in the school has a hat.

*(continued on page 2)*



Each grade had their own distinctive costume for the Christmas program. The first grade chose to wear their crocheted hats.

## Hats! (continued)

While I was working on the hats, stories were coming back to me about how much the hats meant to the kids. One mother told Jennifer to tell the "lady that made the hats" that her son never takes his hat off except to take a bath. He even sleeps with it on. If it falls off during the night, he puts it back on as soon as he wakes up in the morning.

December 18, 2007 the children of RCES performed their Christmas program. We had heard that some of the kids were going to wear their hats during the program. This was a must see for us, and it was also our first opportunity to actually go to the school ourselves.



This is something you don't see very often today—children in a public school enacting the story of the birth of Jesus.

The children did a good job in the program. They enacted the nativity story which impressed us very much. You don't often see that in public schools today.

The entire first grade wore their hats in the program, and the Sign Language Club signed "We love our hats" as well as several Christmas carols.

I have always believed that it is important to use whatever gifts and talents that God gives us to help others and bring glory to Him. That is what I seek to do with my love of crocheting. What are you doing with your gifts? —Ann



The Sign Language Club doing their part in the Christmas Program

## From the Mouth of Babes

Below are some of the thank you letters written by students of Rock Creek Elementary School:

*Dear Mrs. Skipper*

*Thank you so much for those great hats. They are warm and they smell good. All of them look so colorful and pretty. Thank you so much for these beautiful hats. It was very sweet of you. I love all of them a lot.*

*Thanks a lot,  
Mary*

*Dear Mrs. Skipper*

*I love the hats, they are so cool. I'm glad you made them. They are so, so, so soft. And very, very, very warm.*

*Thank you,  
Kayla Allen*

*Dear Mrs. Skipper*

*Thank you so much for the hats! It will help me in the mornings when I take my dog out. I bet your hand and fingers hurt when your done. (Thank you)*

*Sincerely,  
Alix Bennett*

*Dear Mrs. Skipper*

*Thank you for taking your time to make us these hats. Thank you also for the camouflage ones. I'm a deer hunter so I like that color. And especially thank you for making them for our school.*

*Sincerely,  
John Burnett*

*Dear Mrs. Skipper*

*These hats are beautiful. You have made me very happy. Thank you for the beautiful hats. These hats are not just hats. These hats are made from you and that's what makes them special. I hope you have a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!*

*Sincerely,  
Mason Dock*

...and this note from Jennifer Corby:

*I thought I'd share what one of the students said. The teacher was explaining that everyone couldn't get the same color, that people would have to choose from what was left if their first choice was taken by the time she got to them, so to have a second choice in mind. And one of the girls said, "It doesn't matter what color we get, just that someone cared enough about us to make them." Like they say—out of the mouth of babes.*

# Beulah Land News

## Exposed

In 1994, I went on my first real mission trip and helped build a new campus for the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague, Czech Republic. Although I have no formal background in construction, I enjoy demolition and construction projects as a way to do missions. There is something about using your hands to tear down, build or remodel a structure for someone else that seems to draw me closer to our Lord.

I am reminded that He also worked with His hands as a carpenter. I am sure that He took great pride in His work. I wonder how many times He did not charge for His labor, but instead gave of His time and material as a gift to someone in need.

Since moving to Tennessee, I have had the pleasure to work with a group of men and woman on several building projects. This year we did a major remodel project in one week for the Boys to Men organization. Boys to Men is a faith-based mentoring program dedicated to building youth into spiritually vital, socially impacting, character driven adults with the goal they will do likewise for others.

Like so many projects, we started with a facility that was once used for another purpose, but now after several years of neglect was in much need of repair. The site was an abandoned "for blacks only" elementary school and an old greenhouse. The greenhouse had a center section

## Special Gifts for Teachers

Every school year teachers dig into their own pockets to buy supplies that are needed in their classrooms. Thanks to your generous support of our ministry, we were able to give \$50 gift cards to twelve teachers at Rock Creek Elementary School in Erwin, Tennessee. We hope that in the future we will be able to continue to support teachers in their important work of educating children.

with two wings and had been converted at some point in time to be used as offices and educational rooms by the state program for the mentally challenged. In one week we hoped to replace all the windows in one wing, replace damaged sheetrock, install fire doors between the wings, remodel a workroom into a kitchen, repair a leaking roof and install new vinyl siding.

Since childhood I have been honing my skills at tearing things up, so I volunteered to demolish the old workroom to make ready for the new kitchen. I then moved on to assisting with the repair of the roof. This required that three of us scrape off all the old layers of gravel, tar and felt around an area where water had caused the wooden decking to rot away leaving a large hole. About midway through this process, I found another hole—as my feet went through another section of rotted decking. At the last second I was saved by a nail that ripped into the seat of my pants leaving me hanging. The other workers rushed to my rescue while trying to contain their laughter.

Embarrassed and scraped up, I was relieved that I had not gone all the way through the roof or broken any bones. I assured those offering help that the bleeding would stop and that a couple of large gauze bandages for my scraped shin and thigh would be all I needed. Everyone was so considerate and helpful. Why, they didn't even mention the whole seat of my pants had been torn and was flapping in the breeze. They didn't even say anything when the camera crew from the local TV station came to cover the mission project. By this time my body was adapting to the earlier trauma by going numb, so I had no way of knowing of my "exposure" that would be televised on the six o'clock news.

Thankfully Ann did not see the broadcast, but everyone where I work did! Well, it gave me an opportunity to tell them about our ministry and that of the Boys to Men. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

I believe God has given us each special gifts, and we are to identify those gifts and use them for His honor and glory. In the process we should be aware of the opportunities that our exposure brings and share the good news. I pray that each of you will use your gift and experience the awesome feeling that comes with sharing Jesus with someone.

—Nick

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# Interfaith Hospitality Network

Another ministry that we have gotten involved in is the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) of Greater Johnson City. This worthwhile ministry helps homeless families with children to get back on their feet and back into their own home. It is sponsored by churches of all denominations in the Tri Cities area.

Families enter the network and live in a different church each week. Each sponsoring church provides a place for them to sleep, food to eat, a place to take a shower and transportation to and from jobs and school. IHN helps the participants to find homes and belongings for their new home. They also assist with job training as needed. Each family is nurtured in the name of Christ.

I made several crocheted afghans for IHN which they could give to each family as they leave the network to move into their own home. A local church does the same thing with quilts.

As I thought about these families moving from church to church each week, I wondered about the stress on the children. When our youngest grandson was little, he had a "blankie" which he took everywhere with him. This was his source of comfort. With that in mind, I made several child-size fleece blankets that could be given to the children when they come **into** the network. As they move from place to place, their very own "blankie" would be there to comfort them. —Ann