

History of Habersham Christian Learning Center

Habersham Christian Learning Center used for its model the Gainesville Christian Education Center, a first with its criteria. In 1967, just prior to his becoming a Georgia Supreme Court judge, Judge Bill Gunter talked to a group of people at the Gainesville First Presbyterian Church who were asking how churches could make Christian Education more effective within the next 10 years.



Pictured are founding members of the firm Hulseley Oliver & Mahar, LLP, from left to right: Superior Court Judge A. Richard Kenyon, Edgar Duskin Kenyon (founded firm in 1914), and Georgia Supreme Court Justice, William B. Gunter.

Judge Gunter spoke of the need and benefits of a released-time Christian Education Center with the following criteria:

- Supported and governed by churches and community
- No tax money used
- Classes taught by full-time teachers with appropriate degrees and offered within walking distance of high school and junior high in a building designed and built for this purpose
- Elective credit given for graduation upon successful completion of the courses
- Classes taught during every period of each school day
- Courses designed to include studies of the Bible, Christian heritage, and religion, and to help students apply these to daily living
- Parents required to give written permission
- Entanglement with the public school to be avoided
- Predominate faith of the community reflected

One person who heard Judge Gunter was Sam Harben, Jr., a Gainesville attorney. Mr. Harben, at his own expense, flew to a conference to learn more about the broad concept of Released-time Christian Education as was begun by the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. William Wirt, in Gary,

Indiana, in 1914. (There can be and is a tremendous diversity of types of released-time programs. By 1996 there were over 1,000 off-site Released-time Christian Education programs in 32 states. Most of these are elementary student Bible studies, and classes are about 45 minutes each one day a week. No program they could find in 1967 fit all the criteria Judge Gunter recommended.) Sam and those he talked with believed a full-time program offered every period of every school day to Gainesville high school and junior high students could be of the greatest benefit. Mr. Harben went to the governing bodies of four of the larger churches in Gainesville and told them of the need and benefits of this type of Christian Education Center. They voted to pledge support to start and pay the yearly costs for a Center, giving \$10 per member per year. The four churches were: First Methodist, St. Paul Methodist (since then both have added "United"), First Presbyterian, and Grace Episcopal.

Each church chose representatives to serve on the Board. Pastors who gave a great deal of time and effort to get the Gainesville Center started were: Revs. Bill Markley, Parks Segars, Larry Bauman, and Nat Parker. Much of the effort was done by countless people interested in young people and the community, such as Tom Wilheit, Hammond Johnson, Johnnie Swetenberg, and Ruth Robertson. The idea of "quality" was emphasized with all decisions.

Dr. Bill Stonebraker was hired as the first director and teacher. He and Sam Harben, Jr. spoke with the Georgia State Board of Education. They suggested the Gainesville project go ahead, but that they not officially vote on it because of needless controversy and litigation that might have to be fought if there was adverse media coverage. It was determined that any case brought against the Center would be won because of Supreme Court rulings beginning in 1952, but that expenses and efforts toward fighting the case could drain the community's resources that were needed to support the Center.

Since 1952, the Supreme Court has upheld Released-time Bible education as being constitutional in all 50 states. Justice William O. Douglas, speaking for the majority, in 1952, concluded that while the first amendment prohibits governmental financing of religious instruction, it does not require the government to be hostile toward religion. In *Zorach V. Clauson* (1952), "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being. When the State encourages religious instruction or cooperates with religious authorities by adjusting the schedule of public events to sectarian needs, it then follows the best of our traditions, for it then respects the religious nature of our people and accommodates the public services to their spiritual need." In 1972, Joseph Ryan from the National Department of Education in Washington D.C., visited the Gainesville Christian Education Center, observed classes, and talked with people on the staff, in the public schools, and community. Mr. Ryan concluded in a report that "this is the best answer to separation of Church and State."

Sam Harben, Jr., also wrote a grant proposal which was approved to help pay for the building that housed this first Center and establish an endowment fund. Later he served as Chairman of the Center's Board. Mr. Harben now serves as the school lawyer for about 100 public school systems in Georgia.

Students from Gainesville High and Junior High began taking courses at the Gainesville Christian Education Center midyear in January of 1969 with Dr. Bill Stonebraker as teacher and director. Sylvia B. Palmer was added to the staff in the Fall Semester, for the first full year of

classes. She served as teacher of the Junior High students, secretary, and maid. (Dr. Stonebraker was Director, High School teacher, and janitor.) Dr. Stonebraker and Mrs. Palmer also taught adults on Sundays and evenings as requested. The Center was featured in nine magazines and the Gainesville Times regularly wrote articles on what was being done there. Both Dr. Stonebraker and Mrs. Palmer were chosen as S.T.A.R. Teachers in different years. Mrs. Palmer received the Citizen of the Year Award from the Civitan Club in 1977 as appreciation for what the Center was doing for young people and the community as a whole.

Courses taught to Gainesville Junior High and High School students at the Christian Education Center were Biblical studies, World Religions, Denominations of Christianity, and Church History. The Center served as an extension for Emory and Columbia Seminaries, and professors from those seminaries came to teach classes for adults in the evenings. At least 17 of these 8-12 week courses were taught.

Dr. Stonebraker recognized a need for more counseling to be available to students, but exactly how to do this was not decided. He resigned in 1975 and Sylvia B. Palmer became Director and teacher. Curtis Segars, principal of GHS, asked that she also teach the high school students and not just the junior high students. Frankie Frazier was hired as secretary. Lindsey Collins was hired to teach; and he and Mrs. Palmer shared the teaching of junior and high school classes, each teaching three or four classes. Dr. Charles Bancroft heard from his son and his friends that they were going to Mrs. Palmer to talk about problems. He was licensed through Emory to train others for the American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors and called and asked Mrs. Palmer to join a group of five others in this training. After 15 months of training, counseling became a large part of the ministry of the Gainesville center; first to the Center students, later to their friends and families. The content of some of the courses and methods for teaching were changed also. Courses focused more on the application of Biblical teachings to the lives of the teens as they were living right then while continuing to teach the content of the Bible. Released-time Centers that have developed since have used this concept for many of their courses.

Mrs. Palmer's husband, Gerald K. Palmer, was Human Resource Director for Fieldale Farms (formerly Ralston Purina) which built its corporate office in Baldwin, Georgia, in 1977. He commuted for over two years, before Highway 365 was built, and his job required he go back to Gainesville often during the day, making the trip four times a day. Since the Gainesville Christian Education Center was the only one known with its exact criteria, Mrs. Palmer did not want to give up that job. Praying about this, the idea came for them to visit Cornelia Presbyterian Church. Rev. Richard Scoggins' sermon that Sunday was on God's Providence. He used the illustration of the confusing streets where he used to live, but that Providence Road ran down the middle and if you kept your eye on that, you could find your way. Mrs. Palmer felt God was saying to her that as long as she kept her eye on serving Him, she could take other roads. After the service Nancy Bates, Richard and Barbara Pletsch, Sandy Smith, and others talked to her about the need for a Habersham Center. These persons proved to be key persons for the success of the Center. Nancy Bates was instrumental in getting the Center started and later served on the HCLC Board most of its first 20 years, giving generously of her finances, time, and abilities; from rewriting the By-laws to driving Mrs. Palmer to several communities interested in starting Centers like Habersham's and Gainesville's and doing some of the speaking, to mowing the grass when M. J. Crocker, a regular volunteer, was on vacation. Richard Pletsch

volunteered to chair the Fund Raising Committee to build the building and start the Center. He and Lea Cohen volunteered to hang all the wallpaper when the building was built, and then he later served on the Board, one term as President.

When Mrs. Palmer resigned from the Gainesville Christian Education Center, she had no idea that another Center like the one in Gainesville could actually be started as several others had attempted, but none with success. Christian Education classes from Emory and Columbia had visited the Gainesville Center to hear about the program and observe, and they often asked, "What is the phenomenon about Gainesville that it could be done here?"

Jack Harwell, editor of the Baptist Christian Index, wrote the Cornelia First Baptist Church that Mrs. Palmer was moving to Habersham. Blake Foster asked her to speak May 19, 1980, to their Long Range Planning Committee: Wink Verdery, Cliff Kimsey, Jr., Pat Carter, Richard McMullan, Herman Benefield, and Glenda Moore. The Palmers had bought a house next door to Carolyn and Milton Stewart, Jr., but were waiting to move until classes at the Gainesville Christian Education Center finished for the school year. Mrs. Stewart suggested to the Rotary Club that they ask Sylvia to give a program about the Center concept. The talk was given May 29, 1980. Jack Abbott, newly appointed president, led the Rotary Club to take on starting the Habersham Christian Learning Center as that year's project. He and Les Smith put in countless hours during that year to start the Center. It was Jack who had the concept to involve many community groups in supporting and governing a Center also, instead of just churches as in Gainesville. Other Rotarians gave much of their time and abilities. Alton Wingate wrote Mrs. Palmer the day after the talk and said that he thought Habersham needed a Center as described in the talk and offered his help, which he has given off and on as needed since. Keith York volunteered to serve as the lawyer and continued years after his agreement to do so as a Rotarian. Rick Martin did all the bookkeeping of the many hundreds of donations, large and small, all that year. Bobby Joe Caudell, owner of The Steak House, offered a free dinner for all the pastors, their wives, and any others interested in hearing Mrs. Palmer talk about the Center idea and has sponsored other meals to help HCLC. Hal Woods, who came to the meeting to learn more about this concept gave the first \$1,000 as "seed money". Many attending arranged for Mrs. Palmer to speak to the Ministerial Associations and numerous individual churches. Jack Abbott, Les Smith, and Stella Hiers served as officers of the first HCLC Board, and other Rotarians served on Committees. Mike Markcity donated a bull, the sale of which went to the Center. J. C. Irby and Skip Brown did all the paper work necessary to attain a 501 (c) 3 non-profit status. Mr. Brown has continued to serve as consultant and Board member; adding a lot of humor to meetings, giving financial advice, even selling concessions for HCLC at the Olympic Soccer Games that were being played in Athens, Georgia, in 1996. On July 14, 1980, Mr. Abbott, Mr. Smith, and Mrs. Palmer went to the Habersham County Board of Education to request students be allowed to attend a Released-time program and receive elective credit if a Center was built near Habersham Central High School. (State law said the local Board of Education can decide what courses receive credit.) School Board members Bill Spruill, S. Y. Sosebee, and Charles English, and Superintendent Max Cash all voiced favorable comments and the vote was unanimous.



**HCLC Ground
Breaking Ceremony**

Harry Hilliard, Richard Pletsch, Kathryn Stribling, Casey Chosewood, Les Smith

Background: Sylvia Palmer, talking with John Foster

Flag Bearers:
Local Scouts

Let
the
building
begin!



Jack Abbott had hoped Mrs. Palmer could be officially hired, with a salary, by September 15 (1980). By August 14, there was not yet a firm pledge for continued support from any group except Rotary, although many, like the Mountaineer Shrine Club, had made generous donations for the building. The Fund Raising Committee was asking people to pay for one or more "bricks" at \$30 a brick to build the Center building and many people had started doing this. The churches were being asked to pledge \$10 per member per year as the supporting churches in Gainesville did. After Mrs. Palmer spoke to the Ministerial Associations, Rev. Johnny Thomas led Habersham Baptist Church to pledge support for the Center. Bill Loyd invited Mrs. Palmer to speak to the Kiwanis Club and he, Richard Pletsch, and Milton Stewart, Sr., led them to vote to give support at the \$10 per member per year. Bill Loyd served on the HCLC Board several terms and was the voice for several slide shows and videos. Dr. Richard Long, pastor of

Cornelia United Methodist Church, had gone by the Center in Gainesville in May and talked with Mrs. Palmer about the Center concept. He arranged for her to talk with their Administrative Board. Paul Reeves was one on that Board who encouraged the Church to support the Center. He has given vital contributions every year and served on the HCLC Board in its early years adding much common sense and long range, Christian, perception. In late August, Cornelia United Methodist Church voted to support a Habersham Christian Learning Center. During the first two years, Dr. Long was invaluable in organizing, clarifying record keeping, and providing structure for the Center and Board.

Calvin Stovall, of Cornelia United Methodist Board, told some deacons in Cornelia First Baptist that his church had made the commitment and challenged them to also. Many people in Cornelia First Baptist Church were working to start the Center, but the Church deacons had not yet voted to support it at the \$10 per member per year level. (Their new church year, and budget changes, started in October.) Mr. Stovall continued to show interest in the Center and 17 years later began serving on the HCLC Board. One Cornelia First Baptist deacon, Jim Stapleton, Sr., especially helped get the Church to accept the challenge. He served on the Center's Board for the majority of HCLC's first 20 years, supported it financially, and made sure the church continued to support the Center until his death in 2000. Also, Blake Foster served on HCLC's Board several years and led fundraising. Blake may be best known now as the father of Miss Georgia 2001, Emily Foster, who was a toddler when Blake first worked to get the Center started and later, while in high school, took courses at HCLC. David and Jean Irvin have been strong supporters of HCLC since its inception and their two children are HCLC alumni. They also were instrumental in Bonnie Johnson's coming on the Board. Mrs. Johnson of Cornelia First Baptist has served on the Center's Board for many years and has repeatedly been persuaded to serve as Chairman because of her strong leadership, enthusiasm for, and commitment to HCLC.

The Clarkesville United Methodist Church, encouraged especially by Rev. Oscar and Frances Crosby, Kathryn Stribling, and Agnes and Charles Ramsey, followed soon after the Cornelia United Methodist Church in pledging support for the Center.

The Northeast Georgian and The TriCounty Advertiser published many articles, often on the front page. The Advertiser owner, Mrs. Amilee Graves, worked on the Publicity Committee headed by Carolyn Stewart and printed the first brochures using a logo that Dr. Tom Mewborn designed. Tom, an artist, had just begun as pastor of Demorest Baptist Church that summer of 1980. This logo was used for about the first 14 years. As her gift to HCLC, artist Betsy Whatley, designed the logo now being used. It emphasizes HCLC's commitment to education, family, church, and the community.

Habersham Countians from all nine towns and numerous churches of all denominations worked to get the Center started. Mary Garrison, wife of Dr. Oland Garrison, organized 600 people to go to homes and businesses telling folks about the Center and soliciting donations. Dr. Garrison later served on the Board and helped build up the endowment fund that began from a grant received in 1983. During the year it took Mrs. Palmer to write a grant proposal, exacting expectations and invaluable guidance were given by Dr. Morris Hale. This fund also received a great boost when a Habersham Countian left a large amount to HCLC in her will.

Jack Abbott, Les Smith, and Mrs. Palmer made an application, then a presentation, to the newly formed Habersham County United Way, and their Board voted to give \$10,000, to be paid in 1981. As the Rotary Steering Committee planned, Mrs. Palmer was officially hired on September 15, 1980. Within those first Summer and Fall months, Mrs. Palmer counted 87 programs she had given to churches and clubs. These were talks about the Center concept, adult classes on moral development and marriage and family strengthening, Saturday training sessions for church school teachers; one night as well as week-long Biblical studies and programs for young people and adults. She also counseled teens, adults, and families during this time using Cornelia United Methodist Church's library.

The Chamber of Commerce offered one end of a large room at the Cornelia Railroad Depot for an office until the Center building was completed. The newly organized United Way office was in one end of that room with Jesse Bradley as the director, and the Chamber of Commerce was in the other room with Stella Hiers as its director. Barbara Johnson (Mrs. Hugh) volunteered to serve as secretary while the depot was providing the office, and she and her husband continued to contribute. Margaret Tench gave the first office desk and has contributed financially regularly. The Wisteria Club voted to come in as a supporter and appointed Sarah Cook as their representative. Mrs. Cook served several terms until Rena West, whose son had been one of the first HCLC students, was appointed as their representative on the HCLC Board.

Clarkesville First Baptist, with encouragement from their pastor Dr. Jerome Smith, voted to support the Center. After Dr. Smith left this church stopped supporting the Center at the \$10 rate so they could buy a building near them that came up for sale, to be used as a family center. This is the only time I know of that a church came in as a supporter of a Center then decided to stop, but individual members have continued to help in many ways. The most helpful benefit was that Wallace Beggs was appointed as their representative. Mr. Beggs gave an enormous amount of hours and expertise to planning and overseeing the building of Habersham Christian Learning Center in 1981. He and Mrs. Beggs continue to be strong supporters of HCLC.

Kiwanian and founder of Standard Telephone, Milton Stewart, Sr., paid for the property near the high school. Les Smith and Jack Abbott arranged the buying of this acreage from Mrs. Pauline Ansley. Mr. Stewart wrote letters of encouragement and advice and continued to give very generously until his death.

Rev. John Flanigen, Rotarian, and rector of Grace-Calvary Episcopal Church, wrote many articles to submit to the papers. He and his wife Jackie served on the Publicity Committee and gave generously of their time for several years. Rev. and Mrs. Flanigen donated benches and a birdbath for a meditation area on the road side of the Center in memory of their adopted granddaughter. Though many, like Dick and Sandy Bunce, helped in the starting of the Center, Grace-Calvary Episcopal did not come in as a regular supporter until several years later under the encouragement and leadership of Harriet and Miles Beech and Dr. Barbara Brown Taylor.



The Vision Becomes a Reality!

Dr. Dan Holloway, pastor of Clarkesville Presbyterian Church, served on committees, and young though he was, was a mentor to Mrs. Palmer. His church had a small membership, yet helped in many ways. Their present minister, Rev. Bruce Dodd and wife Carolyn were very valuable members of the Board of Directors for HCLC in the middle 1990's and the church contributes yearly to HCLC.

Linda Amos, Interior Designer, volunteered to do all the designing of the interior of the Center building with help from Joann Lowery. She and Mrs. Lowry even convinced several people into giving the furniture they had chosen. Mrs. Amos, and Mrs. Lowry, donated an enormous amount of time to this task as their contribution to the Center. Mrs. Amos and Mrs. Lowry have checked on the Center off and on since and replaced and added furniture and other decorative items as needed. Clifton Amos, CPA, has continued to serve the Center also doing its yearly financial compilation (as needed instead of a yearly audit). Luther Purcell built all the cabinets in the offices, kitchen, and bathrooms as his gift. Mr. Bob Ballew built the decorative table in the library. Kathryn Stribling paid for all the furnishings, including bookshelves for the library and dedicated it to her aunt, Lucile Dimon, as the "Dimon Memorial Library". Mrs. Stribling was very generous to the Center with her time, money, and abilities.



HCLC students studying in the Dimon Memorial Library

A lawyer in Clarkesville for a short time threatened to bring suit against the Center if it was begun. His phone call came the same day that the bids for the building designed by Thom Mayes, Rotarian, were opened and the lowest bid was more than twice the amount Mr. Abbott and Mr. Smith believed could be paid. The fee for Mr. Mayes and all the contractors (who had figured costs) still had to be paid. There was a feeling that it was not possible to go ahead and it was not possible to stop and give back all the donations, some a couple of dollars, some for hundreds. People from every community in Habersham and almost every denomination had invested so much time, effort, and money by then. As Mrs. Palmer was praying late that rainy afternoon, she looked out the windows of her living room and God had painted a gorgeous rainbow all across the mountain view. She believed He was assuring them that He would make it possible and for them to continue, trusting Him. (I have left out most of the seemingly insurmountable problems all 20 plus years. As Kathryn Stribling said, "This just seems to go from one crisis to another one". Isn't this often when God does His most wonderful works: when we can't do it, pray for and submit to His will, and have to leave it up to Him to act and triumph for us. As Galatians 6:9, 10 reminds us, "And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.")

When it was realized that the initial building plan was not in the budget, Wallace Beggs persuaded the Board that a metal building would be adequate, could be attractive, and would be much cheaper. Mrs. Palmer was opposed to this but later realized he was right. Mrs. Palmer sketched a floor plan with classrooms on opposite ends (side by side had been a problem in the Gainesville Center design), library and conference room between, and offices behind it. Two of the offices were to be sound proofed for counseling. Mr. Beggs took the primitive sketch and made it fit needed specifications and arranged for B. J.'s Supply and Mechanical Company to build it. The Center was built for just over \$90,000. Hubert Lovell did the surveying and Charles Ramsey did the grading for free. Their wives, Rowena Lovell and Agnes Ramsey, served on the HCLC Board and several committees for several years. The concrete floor was poured in the fall as leaves were falling as can be seen imprinted in the library floor. Wallace Beggs scored and polished the floor.



Ann Nichols

Ann Nichols (Mrs. Ed) was hired as the first paid secretary and Ted Childs was hired to teach, starting January 4, 1982. Central Heights Baptist Church offered their facilities so the first students could be taught there for a few weeks, since the Center building was not completed when the second semester of that school year was to begin. J. D. Robinson, owner of Indian Trails bus and van lines, lent a van to transport students from Habersham Central High School.

On January 12, with patches of ice everywhere, Ted and Sylvia made the first trip to talk to a group in Ellijay interested in starting a Center, at the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Joel Stembridge. Mrs. Stembridge was related to Judge Bill Gunter whose concept began the Gainesville Center. The Stembridges paid for 4,000 new brochures to be made for Habersham's Center. John Jones did all the photography for free.

Raymond Morris, a recent seminary graduate, and wife Molly were friends of Dr. Tom and Barbara Mewborn. They heard a talk about the Center's concept at Demorest Baptist and began working to get a Center started in Commerce. Mrs. Palmer was invited to speak to groups there. This Center began before the Ellijay one and operated for about 10 years. When the city system decreased and the county system increased a great deal, the Center had to become a private Christian school for financial reasons.

The first day of classes for HCLC students was to be January 14, 1982, but 0 degree weather, ice, sleet, and snow (up to 6 inches) delayed school and the first classes began January 25, 1982. Mr. Childs taught three classes in a Sunday School room at Central Heights Baptist Church and Mrs. Palmer taught three classes in the sanctuary. Classes could be taken all six periods of the school day. This assured that any student who wanted a class could take it in whatever period was possible for him or her. Class sizes ranged from 3 to 11. The first course was: Life and Teachings of Jesus. Classes moved into the new building built for the Center's purposes on March 18, 1982. Winnie Milam brought her gardener and she and he planted azaleas on the roadside of the Center. Kathryn Stribling planted tiger lilies across and all down beside the parking lot.

Mr. Childs and Mrs. Palmer each taught three classes of high school students daily, adults classes on Old and New Testaments at the Center weekly, gave talks and taught adult courses at individuals churches and civic clubs as requested, conducted Divorce Support Groups, and counseled teens (not limited to HCLC students) and adults in the community. Mr. Childs served the Center for three semesters, then taught at Alto Correctional Institute. He is now one of the counselors at Habersham Central High School and is very much respected and loved by the students.



One of the early HCLC classes hard at work!

The lawyer in Clarkesville was not able to get a plaintiff in Habersham County to sue the Center, but he contacted the ACLU that wrote all the pastors and the Board of Education members. A meeting was called with Board of Education members, HCLC Board members, and interested persons, led by Sam Harben, Jr. The Habersham Board of Education did not back down on its decision to allow Habersham Central High students to take courses at HCLC and receive credit. Sam Harben explained the criteria and concepts of this Center to ACLU members after this meeting, and they no longer made efforts to stop it. (This was around the Spring of 1983.) Mr. Harben has continued to be a valuable consultant to all the Centers that have begun and for community groups that are working toward starting a Center using the Gainesville and Habersham models.

Karen Bailey (now Mrs. Steve Stovall) had worked as a youth director in Anderson, South Carolina and came here to serve as an intern for the first semester of the 1983-84 school year, teaching three of the classes. She spent a lot of time with the students at high school games and just "hanging out" and was especially effective in relating to them in a way that encouraged their applying the Christian teachings to their lifestyles. Rev. Mike Campbell, a youth director in Alabama, was hired to teach the second semester of that school year with hopes of his continuing for many years. After one week, he said he felt his real calling was to be a pastor; but he stayed for the rest of that semester, to the end of school year. Students enjoyed and respected him, and he did a good job teaching them and one adult class. After he became pastor of Baldwin Baptist Church, he served as chairman of the HCLC Board until his move to a church in Clayton, Georgia. A friend of Karen Bailey's, Sheryl Bouchillon, moved from Anderson, South Carolina, taught three classes during the 1984-85 school year and wrote a grant proposal. (She usually won the race running from the high school to HCLC when challenged by her students. She even kept up with Greg Griffin as he rode his skate board, which he later donated to HCLC.) Sheryl became engaged to Anthony Pitts whom she had dated for years, married him that summer, and moved to Anderson to teach and coach basketball.

Tom Query, who had recently graduated from Southern Seminary, taught three classes the next two years, 1985-87. He was especially capable as a counselor and was an interesting teacher. He was amazing as a magician and did several programs for adult groups teaching a Biblical

lesson with it. Mr. Query spent many hours putting together a video about the Center program which was shown at a National Released-time Conference and used to explain the Center locally. Mr. Query left to become a full-time counselor and continues to counsel through Foothills Counseling Center in Habersham and is part of a practice in the Atlanta area.

Carole Moore (Mrs. Hugh) was the secretary for over six years, while Miss Bouchillon, Rev. Campbell, and Mr. Query, then Ken Wright, taught. (Mrs. Palmer was teaching three or four of the classes every day for the first 18 years, so the teacher changes were only for some classes.) Mrs. Moore was like a mama to the students, loving them and enjoying them, but not hesitating to correct them when needed. Mrs. Moore wanted more time to do things with her husband, so after four years she then shared the work with Beth Goss (Mrs. Kenneth); one working two days, the other three. Mrs. Goss had a calm, sunny personality that appealed to the students; but after a year decided her family needed to have more income. Mrs. Moore resigned when she and Mr. Moore decided to sell their house and buy a camper. They spent the next few years traveling and living in other areas. A couple of years ago they decided to settle again in this area and started building another house (they actually do the work) in Sautee; and just as it was near completion they were in a car wreck. Mrs. Moore has been paralyzed since, but continues to call and ask about HCLC.

Ken Wright was hired in July 1987 to teach classes and be the Director of Development and was with HCLC for six years. Jeanette Vetrano was hired as part-time bookkeeper, but resigned after a year. When Carole Moore left, Betty Pennington became secretary and bookkeeper. Mrs. Pennington was outstanding in organization and very efficient. She was young, dressed very professionally (and had even won an international clogging contest). The Center's finances were really strained during this time. There were often times when salaries could not be paid on time. Mrs. Pennington worked hard at trying to come up with ways to save and even raise money along with Brooks Roseman, a member of the HCLC Board, and others

Dr. Jeanne Odell, a missionary until she got her doctorate and opened a counseling practice in California, had recently retired here. She helped Mrs. Palmer with the counseling load and was able to counsel persons Mrs. Palmer was not qualified to counsel. In order that anyone who needed counseling could have it, Norma Partain sent money every month for a couple of years to supplement Dr. Odell's income. Dr. Odell was killed in a car wreck, December 1989. She was 75 years old, but was still working out regularly at a fitness center and was a very gifted counselor, singer, and artist.

Every teacher counseled with their students; but Dr. Odell, Tom Query, and Mrs. Palmer also did all the counseling of adults in the community. At the time the Center began its counseling in 1980, there was almost no professional counseling available in Habersham. Mrs. Palmer asked during all her years with the Center that adults pay for an hour of her counseling whatever they were paid per hour themselves with the money being put in the Center's operational account. Dr. Odell and Mr. Query each used a "sliding scale". Ken Wright was especially interested in the counseling area of the Center's program. After Dr. Odell's death, he restructured part of the counseling program. He had an agreement with Mental Health, for him and several adjunct counselors to help them with their load. The Adjunct Counselors were: Shirley Wright, Catherine Nichols, Bill Ford, Becky Garrett, and Marie Huff. Mr. Wright was gifted in expressing ideas through writing or speaking and coming up with creative ideas. He invited the

ministerial associations to the Center each year to hear about the Center. He even cooked much of their meal.

About 1988, Jimmy Stapleton, Jr., gave the Center a 1977 van that was being used by the Boy Scouts with the understanding that the Scouts would use it when needed. The students had walked the first few years, but a fence was built around the back parking lot of the high school making the walk much longer and cutting into class time. Betty Pennington (later Sue Brooks) and Mrs. Palmer took turns driving the van to pick up and deliver students (nine times a day).



1977 Van receives a much needed wash

Mr. Wright had sleep apnea and was afraid he would endanger the students while driving with them in the van. The van was mechanically sound, but as classes kept growing in number, students were much too packed in for safety. This van served the Center until 1995 when Pam Giesler and Bill Stump, members of the HCLC Board, found and arranged a good buy on church bus. With the help of David Sherman, Blake Foster, and others, funds were raised to purchase the bus.



“On The Road Again!” The “new” 1986 HCLC bus heads out to pick up another load of students from HCHS



Judie Vinson and Sue Brooks help out o an HCLC Work day

Sue Brooks was hired as secretary (later as Executive Assistant) in September of 1989 when Mrs. Pennington left. Even students seeing her in the halls at the high school who have never taken classes at HCLC call her "Super Sue". Her conscientiousness, sense of responsibility, amazing abilities to do so many different types of things as needed at the time, and positive but no-nonsense personality have made her ideal for the Center. She models sincere love and caring and high moral standards. Her encouraging influence with the students has helped so many to grow in their commitment to God, become more responsible and outgoing, and reach more of their potentials. She also is very efficient and able to learn to keep up with new technology. She works very well with adults and has been a tremendous representative of the Center. Her commitment to HCLC is only after her commitment to God and her family.

David Colston, a Habersham Central football player and graduate, had finished college and some seminary work and was working as a youth director in Florida when word reached us, soon after Ken Wright left, that he had just married and was interested in coming back to Habersham County. Mr. Colston had worked with youth groups when he came back for visits in Habersham while in college and was very much respected. Mr. Colston was hired to teach half of the class load, three classes, in August 1994. He relates exceptionally well with teens and has added a needed appeal to football players and other "very male types". He is not only a very popular teacher with both genders, but serves as a mentor to many. Also, Mr. Colston and a newly formed church started "The One80" student ministries a few years ago. They reach many students who were not interested in church and even some not signing up for HCLC. They train HCLC students and others to disciple other teens. About 50% of each year's HCLC student enrollment have been unchurched teens (when they first enroll), but there was still a group who avoided even a Center with Christian in its name or who had dropped out of school and Mr. Colston wanted to reach these teens. He had been teaching teens to disciple in an afternoon class and believed they could have more training and experience with this ministry that meets at night, and could help God reach others. The first summer on staff Mr. Colston worked with a youth program that met once a week at night at the fairground.



David Colston works with Ty Rushing



The HCLC Curriculum Committee is invaluable in helping to choose material that is relevant to today's youth.

Amy Walker moved to Habersham when her husband, Rev. Blaine Walker, became pastor of Cornelia First Presbyterian Church. This church was one of the first local churches to work towards getting the Center started. They voted as soon as their new church year began in the Fall of 1980 to support the Center and was the only church to pledge more than the \$10 per member per year. Mrs. Walker had Master's degrees in Education and Guidance and Counseling and several years' experience as a teacher and as a school counselor and showed an interest in



Amy Walker

HCLC. Mrs. Palmer had voiced a need for the Board to be looking for someone who could become Teacher-Director-Counselor when she retired, knowing that it would take a few years to really know all the facets of the job. The Board hired Mrs. Walker in the Fall of 1995 to teach the high school classes Mrs. Palmer had taught the first 18 years, and Mrs. Palmer served only as director, adult educator, counselor, and speaker for the Center. The Center staff had given talks, conducted support groups, parenting classes, workshops, and seminars to 2,000-4,000 adults every year since its beginning. The students learned to love Mrs. Walker and appreciate her as a teacher and caring person. She is

gifted with organization and technology, teaching, and in representing the Center. When Mrs. Palmer resigned in June 1998, Mrs. Walker became the Director as well as teacher. She counsels with students as needed. Counseling of adults is no longer done at HCLC except for parents of the students. The county now has professional counseling centers available to its citizens. There are not as many adult talks and programs, but the high school enrollment was the largest in 2001 and 2002 since the Center classes began. Funds are needed for another teacher.

Many churches gave one-time donations. The first churches to support HCLC on a regular basis were: Habersham Baptist, Cornelia and Clarkesville United Methodist, Cornelia First Presbyterian, Cornelia and Clarkesville First Baptists, St. Mark's Catholic; Level Grove, Mt. Airy, Bethlehem and Central Heights Baptist. The first civic clubs were: Rotary, Kiwanis, and Wisteria.

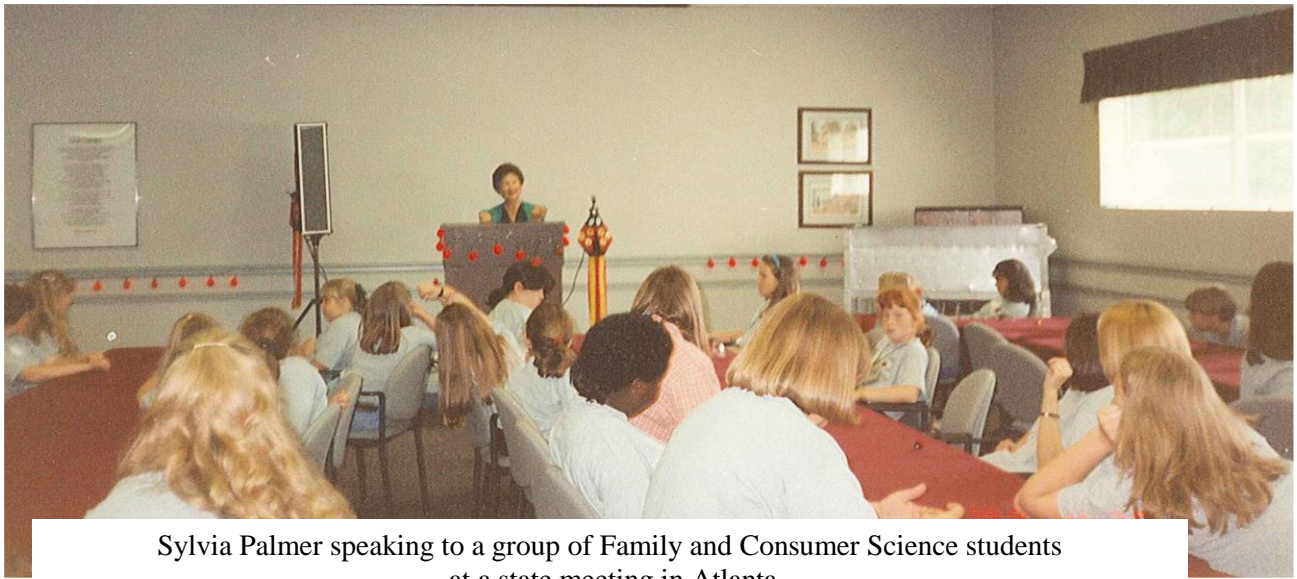
Several individuals have arranged to put HCLC in their wills, but have chosen to remain anonymous. We respect their privacy and are extremely grateful to these individuals for their faith in this ministry.

There are now 24 churches supporting the Center at some level; the above named civic clubs, the African-American committee, and many individuals. Other clubs like the Cornelia Garden Club, with landscaper Tom Grundy, redesigned and replanted the front, when it became needed, about 1991. Danny and Sue Brooks have helped add to and maintain the grounds with help on "workdays" from Board members, students, and community volunteers. During the past 20 years volunteers have been a very important part of the Center. Several volunteers have gone the extra mile for HCLC, including Pat Goodwin who volunteered almost every day for nearly two years, Eloise Tench, who contributed hundreds of hours along with friends to revamp the HCLC library, and the late B. F. Almand who kept us entertained while helping automate our library. Col. Almand researched and procured library software and even helped to train the staff in implementing the new program. Harriet Beech is a faithful volunteer who continues to volunteer weekly and is an inspiration to the staff.



The staff today (2007) – Sue Brooks,
Amy Walker, David Colston

The Center is grateful to have a Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, and high school faculty and staff who, though not directly involved, are aware of the positive contributions of the Center. Since retirement from HCLC, Mrs. Palmer has been serving on the Habersham County Board of Education. Because of the service on the Board of Education and the 29 years with the two Christian Education Centers, Sylvia is regularly asked to speak to and correspond with public school boards and personnel and groups in other communities wanting a Christian Education Center, to explain the Center criteria and benefits to a school and the whole community. Don Howell, a businessman in Stone Mountain, has become a dynamic factor in helping get Centers in more communities. Sid Webb, Director and teacher at the Gilmer County Christian Learning Center in Ellijay, has taken on the role as a consultant for other communities wanting a Center.



Sylvia Palmer speaking to a group of Family and Consumer Science students at a state meeting in Atlanta

At this time of Habersham's 20th anniversary, the Christian Learning Centers now operating using Bill Gunter's criteria are in Gainesville and Hall County, Habersham, Ellijay, Social Circle, Fannin County and Monroe-Loganville. Communities where much work is being done with hopes of starting one are: Augusta, Gwinnett County, and Milledgeville. It takes so very much work from such a large number of people in the community who are committed to serving God and making the present and future lives of young people and families better. Many more communities have tried than have made it happen. Persons who have been in on all the enormous amount of work necessary to get a Center like this started are always amazed at the question almost always asked by some who first hear about it: "If we let this be offered to students, what would keep a group less favorable to the community from starting one?" Only people who have no inkling of the almost overwhelming and continuous efforts and commitment required could ask that. Only communities who want a Center a great deal will put in the work to start and keep one going. It is hard to imagine enough parents giving the required written permissions, and enough people in the community willing to invest so much of their time, effort, and finances to start and finance and govern a "Satanist" Center. I believe only Boards of Education which are convinced a Center will further the purposes and values of their particular communities and their own mission statements and interest in benefiting students will even consider voting to allow students to be released for classes off campus.

When persons in a community want to provide their students and parents with the choice of courses and programs of a Center like this, it is really necessary to "put hands to the plow and not look back". They must jump in all the way and trust God to work with them and guide them. How wide the influence has been and how much this work is doing and will do for our future can not be truly known. I am convinced that unique purposes can be fulfilled at these Centers in ways that will not, and can not, be done without them. The thousands of persons who have contributed to the beginning and the continuing ministry of these Centers are much too numerous to name. A list of the persons who worked in some way to start or help the Habersham Christian Learning Center would look like a telephone directory

I did not try to mention all the events that at the time seemed so important. It would have looked like a set of encyclopedias. I may have forgotten to name some truly important persons; but our God knows and He has each one written in His History Book. I challenge those with each of the other Centers to write its history while those who began it can remember, and for them and Habersham to continue adding to the history being made during the next generations.



Sylvia B. Palmer



Operation Christmas Child!
One of the favorite community service projects of the HCLC Students



In 2002 a grant was received from the John Huland Carmicael Foundation for building renovations, repairs, etc. Below is a list of what the money was used for:

Purchased a Dell Computer system to insure update bookkeeping practices

Cut and removed large pine trees that were in danger of falling on building

Cleaned and sealed cement floor in lobby of HCLC

Replaced 20 year-old carpet in the 2 classrooms, 3 offices, and common areas

Replaced vinyl baseboards in entire building

Purchased paint and painting supplies to paint 2 bathrooms, lobby, and secretary's office

Purchased custom-made oak bookshelves and TV cabinets for 2 classrooms

Purchased a computer desk for 1 classroom

Purchased classroom chairs to replace 20 year-old chairs

Installed new bathroom partitions in 2 bathrooms

Purchased a new vacuum cleaner

Patched and resealed driveway and parking area

Purchased new heat pump to replace 22 year-old heat pump that went out

Extensive termite treatment with 10 year warranty (We have been plagued with termites-regular yearly treatments was not working)

In 2004 HCLC also received a matching operations grant from the Carmicael Foundation. HCLC also received significant funds from an estate in 2004.

In March of 2007, HCLC purchased a brand new bus! How thrilled we all were to have something new since we had always had “hand-me-downs” for transportation. The students have thoroughly enjoyed the new bus and the staff has been thankful for the dependability. Funds to purchase this bus were provided by estate funds from the Louise Boling Estate, John Huland Carmical Foundation, and friends in the community.



The new bus arrives!!



Some Board members and staff pose with the new bus.



Students in 1st block Spring 2007 enjoy the first ride on the new bus.



In the Spring of 2007, HCLC also benefitted from an Eagle Scout project. Justin Bottoms, HCLC student, chose to plan and construct a Student Prayer Garden complete with gazebo, picnic tables, flowers, and an arbor. A dedication of both the Student Prayer Garden and Almand Memorial Garden completed several years earlier was held on May 21, 2007. (Program below) The Almand Memorial Garden was dedicated to the memory of the late Col.(ret) B. F. Almand who had volunteered many hours at HCLC helping with a new library program that he purchased for the Center.



Col. B. F. Almand III



Boy Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best
to do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
Mentally awake and morally straight.

DEDICATION SERVICE

B. F. Almand Memorial Garden

HCLC Student Prayer Garden

**Habersham Christian Learning Center, Inc.
May 21, 2007**

B. F. Almand Memorial Garden

B. F. Almand III was born in Atlanta, Georgia on January 9, 1920. Col. Almand was a unique gentleman with many talents. He was a United States Army Lt. Colonel and served in World War II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War in the area of counter intelligence. After retiring from the Army with 33 years of service, he became a professor at San Jose University in California where he also attended school part-time and earned his library of science degree. He and Mrs. Almand married in 1988 and eventually moved to Habersham County. When Col. Almand heard of our need for updating our library, he volunteered to help with that project. He spent many hours helping to bring our library into the world of technology. He was generous with his time and talents and HCLC will be forever grateful for his help.

Welcome and Introductions-----Lisa Nicholson
HCLC Board Chairman

Memories of Lt. Col. (ret.) B. F. Almand-----Rev. Tim Burpee

Visions of Students at Prayer-----Justin Bottoms
HCLC Student and Eagle Scout Recipient

Special Blessing and
Dedication of Gardens-----Rev. David Colston
HCLC Teacher

Refreshments

Col. Almand passed away on September 20, 1999. Mrs. Almand's desire to honor her late husband lead to the creation of the B. F. Almand Memorial Garden. Mrs. Almand teamed up with Jay Dillard who made this his Eagle Scout project. Jay and Boy Scout Troop 24, family, and friends spent many hours digging, planting, and mulching to create a garden which attracts birds, butterflies, and students on occasion. Mrs. Almand finished it off with a beautiful bird bath and bench. Col. Almand was a Boy Scout himself and it was very appropriate that a Boy Scout created this garden in his memory.

HCLC Student Prayer Garden

Justin Bottoms has been a student at Habersham Christian Learning Center for three years having taken three of our four courses. Justin had a desire to create a quiet place where students could go to meditate, reflect, and pray. He chose to create the HCLC Student Prayer Garden for his Eagle Scout project. He and Boy Scout Troop 5 along with family and friends spent many hours designing,

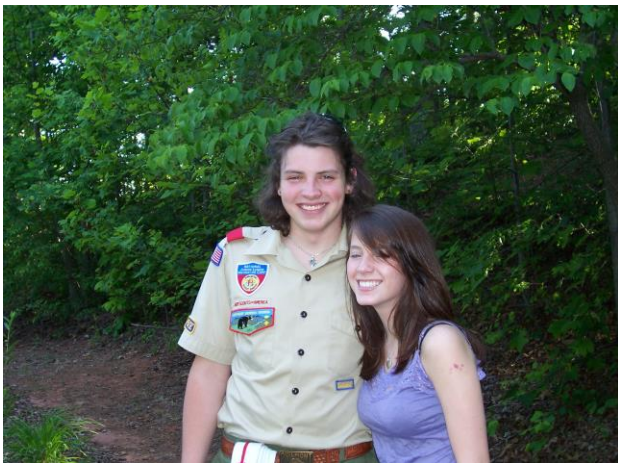
securing materials, and creating this special area. The gazebo and picnic tables also provide a place for outside classroom activities. Upon Justin's high school graduation, he plans on attending college and majoring in business and counseling. Justin also has a desire to one day work in youth ministry. Thanks to Justin's generosity and hard work, HCLC students will be able to enjoy the prayer garden for many years.



Lisa Nicholson welcomes guests from the gazebo in the Student Prayer Garden.



Margie Almand, widow of Col. Almand chats with Sue Bottoms, Mom of Eagle Scout Justin Bottoms. (Almand Memorial Garden in the background.)



Justin Bottoms with friend, Katie Poff, at the Dedication Ceremony.



Yana Almazan and Amy Walker prepare to serve guests from the festive table.

**Habersham Christian Learning Center's
25th Anniversary and Annual Meeting Celebration
Cornelia United Methodist Church
March 14, 2008**



Dining area was elegantly decorated with a silver and black theme. Silver gift boxes contained gifts for each lucky recipient at each table



Entertainment was provide by the Chetta's and Friends

To celebrate this special occasion, Pioneer Awards were given to those individuals whose vision and perseverance contributed greatly to the establishment of the Habersham Christian Learning Center.

HCLC Pioneer Award recipients were: Mr. Jack Abbott, Mrs. Nancy Bates (posthumously), Mr. Wallace Beggs, Dr. Oland Garrison, Mrs. Mary Garrison, Mr. Richard Pletsch, Mr. Jim Stapleton, Sr. (posthumously), Mr. H. M. Stewart, Sr. (posthumously), and Mrs. Kathryn Stribling.

MR. JACK ABBOTT incoming President for the local Rotary Club heard Sylvia Palmer speak about the Center concept May of 1980. He contacted Mrs. Palmer about started a Center in Habersham County. He persuaded the Rotary Club to take on the project of getting the Center started as their Rotary Project for that year (June 1980 – June 1981). He made the contacts to United Way and they became financial supporters of the Center. He also arranged for Mrs. Palmer and others to speak to the Board of Education and the Board granted permission students to earn elective credit. Along with Les Smith, he found the land, persuaded Mrs. Ansley to sell, and asked Milton Stewart, Sr. to pay for the land the Center was built on. He formed and conducted dozens of committee meetings and was the first HCLC Board Director. It was his concept to involve the whole community, not just churches (as was done in Gainesville at that time). He enlisted Rotary members to: keep the financial records (Rick Martin), do the legal work (Keith York), for Bobby Joe Caudell to invite all ministers, their wives, and interested persons to a free meal at his Steak House to hear Mrs. Palmer tell about Center concept and programs. The first “seed money” came from this meeting (\$1,000 from Hal Woods) and many invitations to speak to churches and other groups resulted. Mr. Abbott also encouraged Rotarian Mike Markcity to give a steer to auction with proceeds going to the Center. Jack spent countless hours every week to get HCLC underway.

MRS. NANCY BATES was the first to tell Sylvia Palmer that Habersham County needed a Center like the one at Gainesville City Schools. Nancy wrote grants, mowed the grass, edited articles written by Sylvia, served on Board, planned and carried out fund raisers, drove Sylvia to speak to out-of-town groups interested in starting Centers, and convincingly answered questions (some from ACLU representative).

MR. WALLACE BEGGS volunteered to serve as building contractor. He helped design building, choose builder, found materials, and oversaw the building of every aspect of the Center. He often did the actual work (scoring the concrete floor of the library, staining of cabinets and book shelves), and with a great deal of knowledge and commitment saw to all the countless details necessary. He has continued to support the Center in so many ways for over 27 years.

MRS. MARY GARRISON organized over 600 people to convey the importance of HCLC for our young people. In conjunction with helping to get the word out, she organized the collection of capital funds used to build our building and jumpstart classes. Mary spoke to numerous groups and individuals promoting this project. The time and energy spent on our behalf was invaluable.

DR. OLAND GARRISON single-handedly went door-to-door to area businesses soliciting funds to establish the endowment fund for Habersham Christian Learning Center. Thousands of dollars were collected that are still benefiting HCLC today. Dr. Garrison had the foresight to realize the need for ongoing income. The interest from that endowment fund has continued to support HCLC financially.

MRS. SYLVIA PALMER, probably more than any other one person, inspired this community to take on the monumental task of establishing the Habersham Christian Learning Center. The number of hours Sylvia spent talking with individuals, churches, and civic organizations are innumerable. The passion she demonstrated inspired others in the community to see the vision of what HCLC could provide for the high school students of Habersham County. Without Sylvia Palmer, HCLC probably would never have become a reality.

MR. RICHARD PLETSCHE graciously volunteered to serve as chairman of the Fund Raising Committee; an enormous task. His guidance and leadership certainly helped secure the funds needed for start up. He also put up wallpaper (with the help of others) at night after work; served on the Board of Directors, twice as Chairman of the Board; and was a consultant and advisor for many years.

MR. JIM STAPLETON, SR., was instrumental in persuading the Cornelia First Baptist Church to support the Center from the beginning. He continued to be an advocate for HCLC among his peers. He served on the Board, arranged for the Center to have the first van to transport the students and continued supporting financially, persuading others of the importance of HCLC, and encouraging the staff until his death.

Mr. H. M STEWART, SR., who owned and operated Standard Telephone Company, purchased the land for the Center from Mrs. Pauline Ansley. Mr. Stewart regularly sent financial support and acted as mentor and advisor to Mrs. Palmer. He was a faithful supporter of the Center until his death.

MRS. KATHRYN STRIBLING persuaded many people and groups to support the Center, wrote a grant, paid for the library shelves and conference table, gave financially regularly, and bought items for Center when aware of needs. She gave advice and encouragement and was often at the Center accessing needs and seeing they were met.



Pictured are:

Wallace Beggs, Richard Pletsch, Beulah Stapleton accepting for her late husband James Stapleton, Sr., Jonathan Stribling accepting for his grandmother, Kathryn Stribling, Dr. Oland Garrison, Sylvia Palmer, Mary Garrison, and Tom Bates, accepting for his late wife Nancy Bates. Not pictured is Bill Loyd, accepting for Jack Abbott and the late H. M. Stewart, Sr.

Annual Report for 2007 presented March 14, 2008

**Twenty-five years! “God has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.” (Psalm 126:3)
HCLC has been greatly blessed.**

The HCLC building was completed, teachers were hired, and classes began in January of 1982.

A van for student transportation was provided in 1977. As classes grew, more adequate transportation was needed, and in 1995 a bus was purchased. Again, better transportation was needed and in 2007 God blessed HCLC with a new bus.

Student enrollment has continued to grow over the years. For the past five years, HCLC has operated right at capacity. Class enrollment for 2007 peaked at 195. Today there is a waiting list of students who want our classes. A part-time teacher is needed to help meet the demand.

HCLC has had a tremendous impact on the lives of the young people of this community. Since its beginning, HCLC has had the honor and privilege to serve over 3000 students from all walks of life and from all stages of faith. So many former students tell us how much the classes at HCLC has benefited them.

Our amazing Outstanding Students for 2007 were Brooke Melton and Denis Almazan. The Sylvia B. Palmer Award went to Michael Freeman and the 2007 Bonnie Johnson Service Award was given to Justin Bottoms, Emilee Campbell, Krystal Gunnels, Brooke Melton, and Amanda Underwood. It was indeed a blessing to have these students in class.

You are a partner in this great mission: the mission to “train a child in the way he should go” (Proverbs 22:6a). Thank you for all you do for the young people of this community. May God bless you and this ministry as we embark on another twenty-five years!

Annual Report for 2008 presented March 20, 2009 Annual Meeting

Habersham Christian Learning Center Annual Report

HCLC’s mission is to teach Christian ethics, morals, and values to high school students during their school day by sharing God’s truths in love for passion and purpose throughout life. HCLC reaches 160 to 180 Habersham County high school students each year with positive life-changing lessons. Our courses teach these students how to prevent the social crises that so many teens experience today. Each student receives 136 contact hours per semester of intensive training and hands-on activities that helps them solidify their values, beliefs, and goals.

So many of our teens lack the skills to make appropriate decisions and set priorities. HCLC’s 2008 courses, Dating and Relationship and Interacting are designed to help students learn the skills they need to make appropriate choices for their present as well as their future. The classes for 2009 will be studying Survival Strategies and Life and Work Planning.

The student enrollment for 2008 was 199. It is indeed a daunting task to have the responsibility of shaping so many young lives. Many of these students also enrolled in our 2009 courses.

Our 2008 Outstanding Students, chosen for high moral character, relating skills, and academic achievement, were Kasie Hughes and Jordan Cain. Scott Hulse and Tiffany Reese were presented the Sylvia B. Palmer Award for exceptional spiritual and emotional growth. The 2008 Bonnie Johnson Service Award was given to Amanda Herrera, Kasie Hughes, Christie McDonald, Chris Patterson, and Tiffany Reese for their leadership and dedication to service. We are very proud of these wonderful students.

The churches and civic organizations of this community have been especially supportive this year in these hard economic times. We are very appreciative to B. C. Grant Baptist Church, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Clarkesville United Methodist Church, Cool Springs United Methodist Church, Cornelia Christian Church, Cornelia Kiwanis Club, Cornelia United Methodist Church, Demorest Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Cornelia, First Presbyterian Church of Cornelia, Grace-Calvary Episcopal Church, Habersham Baptist Church, Habersham County Rotary Club, Hebron Presbyterian Church, Hillside Baptist Church, Level Grove Baptist Church, Mt. Airy Baptist Church, Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, River Point Community Church, and Wisteria Civic Club for their faithful support.

Thank YOU for being a partner in this great work. This ministry is dependent on your faithfulness to the young people of Habersham County. You are invited to visit HCLC to learn more.

HCLC honored their outstanding students for 2009 at the HCHS Honors Day Program on May 15, 2009.





2008-2009 HCLC Outstanding Students

David Colston presented plaques to Brittany Trotter and Meck Xayavongsa recognizing their outstanding moral character, relating skills, and academic achievement



2008-2009 Sylvia B. Palmer Award Recipient

Sylvia Palmer congratulates Jacob Griffin upon receiving the award named in her honor for exceptional emotional and spiritual growth.



2008-2009 Student Advisors

Jessica Ardeneaux, Dixie Mayes, and Meck Xayavongsa pose for a picture with their new switch flops – a thank you for all their help with HCLC projects throughout the year.

Habersham Christian Learning Center Annual Report for 2009 presented at 2010 Annual Meeting

HCLC's mission is to teach Christian ethics, morals, and values to high school students during their school day by sharing God's truths in love for passion and purpose throughout life. HCLC reaches 160 to 180 Habersham County high school students each year with positive life-changing lessons. Our courses teach these students how to prevent the social crises that so many teens experience today.

The courses offered in 2009 were *Survival Strategies* and *Life and Work Planning*. *Survival Strategies* focused on coping skills and how to deal with trials of life including stress, depression, and grief. *Life and Work Planning* is designed to help students gain insights for deciding on directions and God's purposes for their lives.

The student enrollment for 2009 was 162. Each student received 136 contact hours of intensive training and hands-on activities that helped them solidify their values, beliefs, and goals. Students learned what it means to live like a child of God.

Our 2009 Outstanding Students, chosen for high moral character, relating skills, and academic achievement, were Brittany Trotter and Meck Xayavongsa. Jacob Griffin was presented the Sylvia B. Palmer Award for exceptional spiritual and emotional growth. The 2009 Bonnie Johnson Service Award was given to Jessica Ardeneaux, Dixie Mayes, and Meck Xayavongsa for their leadership and dedication to service. These are awesome students and we are proud to know them.

2009-2010 Outstanding Students Evan Cain and Cody Newsome



Evan Cain with David Colston and Amy Walker



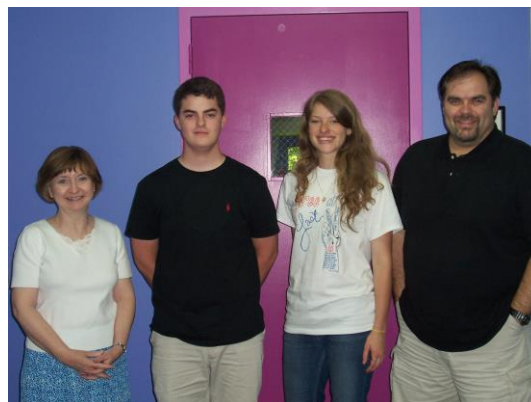
Amy Walker with Cody Newsome

**Shelby Kiker
Sylvia B. Palmer Award**



Shelby Kiker with Sylvia Palmer

**Bonnie Johnson Service Award
presented to HCLC Student Advisors**



**Amy Walker, Cody Newsome,
Shelby Kiker David Colston
(not pictured Dixie Mayes, Cody Parson)**

In 2010 HCLC went “global” by starting a website, habershamclc.org. A new logo was incorporated into the website following an observation and comment by one of HCLC’s students – “This (HCLC) is an oasis”. This became the official “new” logo in 2010.



RECIPIENT OF HCLC OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARDS

1987-1988	Chris Allison	Valisa Hulsey
1988-1989	Jill Stewart Archer	Michelle Colston
1989-1990	Tonia Mashburn	Monica Terrell
1990-1991	Tracy Dowis	Allyson Dunagan
1991-1992	Evelyn Knight	Kathy Irvin
1992-1993	Jerri Free	Beth Brooks
1993-1994	Amy Dunagan	
1994-1995	Amanda Shook	Kimberly McLean
1995-1996	Graham Garrison	Summer Owenby
1996-1997	Stephen Barry	Matt Wood
1997-1998	Josh Armour	Misty Loggins
1998-1999	Robert Reepe	Suzanne Williams
1999-2000	Donna Brooks	Katie Hannas
2000-2001	Cristina Medlock	Isaac Trotter
2001-2002	Holly Higgins	Megan Oliver
2002-2003	Danielle Cook	Nathan Crowe
2003-2004	Sarah Beth Fede	Melissa Short
2004-2005	Tim Almazan	Melissa Bailey
2005-2006	Casey Simmons	Chelsey Stump
2006-2007	Denis Almazan	Brooke Melton
2007-2008	Jordan Cain	Kasie Hughes
2008-2009	Brittany Trotter	Meck Xayavongsa
2009-2010	Evan Cain	Cody Newsome
2010-2011	Seth Hulsey	Jessi Tench

RECIPIENT OF SYLVIA B. PALMER AWARD
(Award first given in 1995)

1994-1995	Brooks Ray
1995-1996	Chris Barnes
1997-1998	Beth Cunningham
1998-1999	Noah Anderson
1999-2000	Derrell Seigler
2000-2001	Jay Dillard
2001-2002	Gerrin Fish
2002-2003	Megan Worrell
2003-2004	Chase Rudeseal
2004-2005	Andy Wilson
2005-2006	Stephen Cowart
2006-2007	Michael Freeman
2007-2008	Scott Hulsey Tiffany Reece
2008-2009	Jacob Griffin
2009-2010	Shelby Kiker
2010-2011	Jacob Vermilya

Bonnie C. Johnson Service Award
STUDENT ADVISORS TO THE HCLC BOARD

Named the Bonnie Johnson Service Award in 1995,
in honor of Bonnie Johnson,
Chairman of the Board for 10 years

1988-1989	Missy Capers	
1989-1990	Tracy Dowis	
1990-1991	Tracy Dowis	
1991-1992	Heather Burke	
1993-1994	Tina Hammond	Amy Dunagan
1994-1995	Amanda Shook	
1995-1996	Casey Maney	Amanda Shore
1996-1997	Lori Crowe	Matt Wood
1997-1998	Amanda Cantrell	Wes Colston
1998-1999	Kelly Weston	Shelly Weston
	Mandy Wilson	
1999-2000	Tiffany Daniel	Annabelle Robinson
2000-2001	Mary Kathryn Fouts	Guy (Gator) Mullinax
2001-2002	Scott Norris	Haley Wood
2002-2003	Rachel Davies	Jessica Morrison
	Melissa Short	
2003-2004	Sierra Bennett	Amber Bower
	Cory Cantrell	Sarah Beth Fede
	Melissa Short	
2004-2005	Christopher Adams	Erin McAllister
	Jessica Reubens	Andy Wilson
	Shannon Wood	
2005-2006	Christian Cantrell	Chelsey Stump
	Megan Teague	Hillary Thomas
2006-2007	Justin Bottoms	Emilee Campbell
	Krystal Gunnels	Brooke Melton
	Amanda Underwood	
2007-2008	Amanda Herrera	Kasie Hughes
	Christie McDonald	Chris Patterson
	Tiffany Reece	
2008-2009	Jessica Ardeneaux	Dixie Mayes
	Meck Xayavongsa	
2009-2010	Shelby Kiker	Dixie Mayes
	Cody Newson	Cody Parson
2010-2011	Ashton Bazemore	Austin Sprayberry
	Mikaela Tench	Donatus Carrol (B. Johnson Service Award for other service)

**HABERSHAM CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER
BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ADVISORS**

LName	BM1	BM2	BM1 Yrs Served	BM2 Yrs Served
Abbott	Jack		1981, 1980	
Addis	Kenneth		1985, 1984, 1983, 1982	
Barnette	John		1990, 1989, 1988, 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984	
Barry	Teresa		2003, 2002, 2001, 2000	
Bates	Nancy		2007, 2006, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1989, 1988, 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1983, 1982	
Beaty	Kelly		2005	
Beggs	Wallace		1990, 1989, 1988, 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1983, 1982, 1981	
Benfield	Hollis		2011, 2010	
Black	Bobby		1993, 1992, 1991, 1990, 1989	
Blackmon	Warren		1980	
Bluster	Denise		2004	
Boatwright	Marney		2002, 2001, 2000, 1996, 1995, 1991, 1990, 1989, 1988	
Bottoms	Sue		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006	
Bower	Patricia		2004	
Brooks	Janet		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007	
Brown	Cliff		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1998	
Brown, III	Skip		2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992	
Bruce, Jr.	Anne		1990	
Burton	Shirley		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000	
Calhoun	Bill		1992, 1991, 1990, 1989	
Campbell	Mike		1989, 1988, 1987, 1985, 1984	
Carlisle	Logan		1991	
Carr	Spencer		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003	
Chandler	Myra		2005, 2004, 2003, 1980	
Cody	Heather		2001, 2000, 1999, 1998, 1997	
Cook	Sarah		1989, 1988, 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1983,	

LName	BM1	BM2	BM1Yrs Served	BM2 Yrs Served
			1982, 1981	
Copeland	Barbara		2004, 2003	
Courson	Jack		1980	
Crocker	M. J.		1996, 1995, 1994, 1991, 1990, 1989, 1988	
Daniel	Sue		1991, 1990, 1989	
Davis	Alan		1994, 1993, 1992	
Day	Joni		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007	
Dekle	Guy		2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001	
Dempsey	Jed		2006, 2005	
DeWitt	Katie		1990	
Dillard	Doug		1992, 1991	
Dodd	Bruce	Carolyn	1996, 1995, 1994	1996, 1995, 1994
Doxey	Bill		1996	
Duff	Denise		1998, 1997, 1996	
Durham	Clint		1992	
Dykstar	Dennis		1980	
Edmonds	James		1988	
Epperson	Carol		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, 1995	
Fish	Tom		1998	
Flanigen	John		1982, 1981, 1980	
Ford	Betty	Bill	2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007	2011
Fordham	Don		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004	
Foster	Blake	Jane	1995, 1994, 1993	1992, 1991, 1990
Foster	Sandy		2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006	
Frederick	Curt		1990, 1989	
Garrison	Oland	Mary	1999, 1998, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992, 1991, 1990, 1980	1982
Gibbs	Ann		2000, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996	
Giesler	Pam		1994, 1993, 1992	
Gober	Betty		1980	
Goss	Beth		1988, 1987	
Grant	Reneè		2011	
Griffin	Mary Beth		2007	
Griggs				
Gunn	Wendell	Roberta	2009, 2008, 2007	2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007
Halbrook	Travis		2011	
Hamric	Bud		1992, 1991, 1990, 1989	
Harmon	Leslie		2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001	
Harris	Kathy		2011	

LName	BM1	BM2	BM1 Yrs Served	BM2 Yrs Served
Heirs	Stella		1980	
Helm	Carolyn		2000	
Hendricks	Nancy		2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001	
Hendrix	Pam		2003	
Hill	Jennifer		2008	
Hill	Lawonda		2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004	
Hilliard	Harry		1989, 1981	
Hinesley	Que	Bette	1988, 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1983	1993, 1992, 1991, 1990, 1989
Hoffmann	Brian		2008	
Holbrook	Bill		1994, 1993, 1992	
Holloway	Dan		1980	
Hood	Cecilia		2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003	
Hughes	Jill		2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999	
Hulsey	David		1989, 1988	
Irvin	David	Jean	2000, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1991, 1990, 1989	1998, 1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992, 1991
Jenkins	Houston		1990, 1989	
Johnson	Barbara		1980	
Johnson	Bonnie		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992	
Johnson	Etta		1988	
Jones	Rebecca Smith		1998, 1997	
Kelley	Greg		1995, 1994, 1993, 1991, 1990	
King	Holton		1996, 1995, 1994	
Kirbas	Paul (Ministerial Advisor)		1991	
Kitchens	Joe		1996	
Lawrence	Gordon		1986	
Lawson	Kim		2008, 2007, 2006	
Lee	Debbie		2006, 2005, 2004	
Lewis	Furman		1984, 1983, 1980	
Long	Richard		1981	
Lovell	Rowena		1991, 1990, 1989, 1988	
Lowe	Darla		1992, 1991	
Loyd	Bill		2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 1993, 1992, 1991, 1990, 1989, 1988, 1987, 1985, 1984, 1983, 1982, 1981	
Martin	Rick		1982, 1981, 1980	

LName	BM1	BM2	BM1Yrs Served	BM2 Yrs Served
Mason	James		1986	
Matthews	Kelli		2009, 2008	
McClure	Dave		2001, 2000	
McCreary	Terry (Ministerial Advisor)		1990, 1989	
McCullough	O. L.		1984	
McFarlin	Jarvis		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008	
Merrick	Sue		1994	
Milam	Carroll		1982	
Mize	Dee		1999	
Morris	Gary		1988, 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1983	
Nelson	Lisa		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005	
Nelson	David		1982, 1981	
Nicholson	Lisa		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002	
Nunnally	Gary		2010, 2009, 2008, 2007	
Oklapeke	Betsy		2007	
Olds	Yvonne		1993	
Peterson	Gerald		1980	
Pletsch	Richard		1988, 1987, 1985, 1984, 1983, 1982	
Potts	Annette		1996, 1995, 1994, 1993	
Pruitt	Ricky		2005, 2004, 2000, 1999, 1998, 1997	
Purcell	Anne		1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1983	
Ramsey	Charles	Agnes	1982	1987, 1986, 1985, 1984
Rand	Pamela		2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999	
Raymond	Phil		1982, 1981	
Reeves	Paul		1983, 1982	
Richardson	Dawn		1999	
Rogers	Terry		2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001	
Roseman	Brooks		1988	
Rosser	J. R.	Pauline	1980	1980
Scroggs	Sarah		2000, 1999	
Schoonmaker	Vivian		2008	
Sexton	Tom		1980	
Sherman	David		1995, 1994	
Short	Melissa		2005, 2004	
Smith	Les		1980	
Sosebee	S. Y.		1981, 1980	
Staples	Al		1986, 1985, 1984	

LName	BM1	BM2	BM1 Yrs Served	BM2 Yrs Served
Stapleton	Janis		1988, 1987, 1986	
Stapleton	Jim		2000, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, 1989, 1988, 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1983, 1982, 1981, 1980	
Stewart	Carolyn		1982, 1981	
Stinespring	Curtis		1980	
Stough	Gary		2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999	
Stovall	Geleta		2001, 2000, 1999, 1998	
Stovall, Jr.	Calvin		2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999	
Stribling	Kathryn		1984, 1983, 1982, 1981	
Stump	Bill		2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992, 1991, 1990	
Swanson	Dean		1980	
Tallent	Jimmy		1980	
Tench	Wayne		2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1998	
Terrell	David		1994	
Terrell	Judy		1980	
Terrell	Tracie		2000	
Thurmond	Kevin		2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006	
Trotman	Donna		2005	
Underwood	Mike		1992	
Wade	Lela		2011, 2010	
Walter	Amy		2005	
Walters	Hugh	Lindalee	2011, 2010, 2009	2011, 2010, 2009
Webb	Troy		2011	
West	Rena		2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1998, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992, 1991, 1990	
White	Sue		1998, 1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993, 1992, 1991, 1990, 1989, 1988, 1987, 1986	
Wilbanks	Tom	Connie	2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005, 2004, 2003, 2002	2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001, 2000, 1999
Wilson	Joey		1998, 1997	
Wingate	Alton		1980	
Winkler	Barbara		1982	
Wood	Sue		1999, 1998, 1997, 1996	
Woods	Bucky (Legal Advisor)		1991, 1990, 1989, 1988, 1984, 1983	
Woods	Hal		1984, 1983, 1982, 1981, 1980	
Worrell	Harriett		2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005	
Wright	Shirley	1992		

LName	BM1	BM2	BM1Yrs Served	BM2 Yrs Served
Wright	Steve		1987, 1986	
York	Keith (Legal Advisor)		1982, 1981	