

## August 2019 Newsletter



### *Bringing Families Home*

**PO Box 733 – 781 Spring Parkway  
Woodstock, VA 22664  
540-459-4599**

**Website: [www.shenandoahfamilypromise.org](http://www.shenandoahfamilypromise.org)**



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### **Message from Sherry**

Welcome to August! By the time you read this, students will be ready to start school for the 2019-2020 school year! FPSC has sheltered 8 families this year - 16 children, 11 of them were 5 and under. Seven of these families moved into housing, and one family is currently in the program. Ten of these children are attending Shenandoah County Public Schools, some for their first school experience. Even though these children now have stable housing, they spent several weeks or months in a shelter for homeless families.

But Family Promise of Shenandoah County is so much more than just a shelter for homeless families. All of you surround our guests with so much love, care, support and hospitality that they quickly become motivated to work on finding employment and housing. And the children respond to all the attention and positive interactions with each one of you. The children develop relationships with you and often tell us stories about the fun "stuff" they did at a host site. I am so impressed and overwhelmed by how you simply accept our guests as they are - you treat them with dignity and respect and just provide listening ears, all without any judgement!

Heartfelt   
**THANKS**  
**TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!**

Claas Ehlers, CEO of Family Promise, published a LinkedIn article last October about his experience as part of a “different kind of family” and how our volunteers can make a difference. I know we shared it before, but it has such a powerful message that it's worth revisiting! Thanks for all you do - have a great August!

*Sherry Arey  
Executive Director*

**Hospitality & Judgement, Claas Ehlers, October 31, 2018**

# Cardboard City 2019



*Jimmy Fortune  
with Cardboard City 2018 T-shirt*

**When:** Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> 4pm to Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> 8am

**Where:** Antioch Church of the Brethren  
23502 Senedo Rd., Woodstock

**Who:** Youth groups, families, boy/girl scouts, businesses, civic groups, etc. are invited to make a cardboard home to stay in overnight.

**Purpose:** To raise awareness of how it feels to be homeless for a night and to raise funds for Family Promise of Shenandoah County!

**Activities:** “Homeless Journey,” music, packing “Blessing Bags” to be given to the homeless in our community, soup kitchen supper, games/prizes

**Participant Information & Forms:** Available on our [website](#).

**Questions:** Contact Diane Pence, 540-459-4599

**Get Your Group Together  
& Sign Up Today!!**

*Thanks to our sponsors: F&M Bank, LD&B Insurance Agency, Mt. Jackson Moose Lodge #979, Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative, and Valley Towing & Recovery.*

## **New Host Site New Market Seventh-Day Adventist Church**



God’s hand was definitely at work when He brought together New Market Seventh-Day Adventist Church and FPSC in what might seem to some a random series of events! Numbering 700 members, the church has focused on small groups to bring their members closer to each other for social reasons and to find ways to serve our Lord. Some of the groups include fishing, crocheting, art, cooking and study.

Kevin & Jean Crawford, Hillary & Devon Genus, Karen & Bob Ockenga, Karen & Gene Sigler, Cheryl Thrall and Carolyn Wolters formed a group and went about brainstorming ideas for service. Back at FPSC, we were busy planning our Celebration of Gratitude and Libby Rocco reached out to the Vesper Singers &

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Community Choir to participate. A number of church members participate with this group and attended the event on February 17, 2019.

Members had never heard of our program and were very excited about our mission. Hillary and others realized this would be a great fit for their group called SERVE (Seek, Encourage, Reach & Value Everyone). God was encouraging them to take care of the less fortunate. By the end of June, they were ready for their first host week. Twenty-four volunteers participated. Mount Zion Lutheran Church in New Market provided one of the meals; employees from Good Life Corporation (where Karen Ockenga is employed) also provided dinner one evening. The owner of Ben's Diner in Woodstock is a member of their church, and he hosted the families for dinner on another day.

Altogether it was a very positive experience. They needed to do some juggling since their space is in high demand with two schools and church activities, but it all worked out without too much fuss. One of their members commented: "I've been there, but nothing like this was available!" Another volunteer was very nervous about his host job on Friday, but he must have enjoyed it because he came back on Saturday night to help out again. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday was right in the middle of their host week, so everyone was able to sit out on the lawn and enjoy the New Market fireworks display. By the last evening of host week, the families and hosts had gotten acquainted and spent an enjoyable evening just visiting with each other.



New Market Seventh-Day Adventist Church is also very involved in other outreach work as well: Their "clothes closet" is open on Wednesdays from 8am to 5pm and on Thursday afternoons. Each year they have a mission trip overseas. They offer music concerts and at Christmas the "Journey to Bethlehem" experience is open to the public. The academy students also go into Washington, D.C. each month to help feed those in need.

**We are so thankful to welcome New Market Seventh-Day Adventist Church as a new host site!  
They have already scheduled their second week to fill in a gap in our schedule!!**

### **Case Manager's Corner**

It's hard to believe that August is upon us! The summer has definitely been a busy time of year for us at Family Promise. At the end of June, we brought in an English as a Second Language (ESL) family (our first since 2017). Although the mother and father spoke some English, we still had our challenges with communication. Initially we had a lady from their church come with them to speak with me and the mother to provide the necessary information for bringing them into the program.

Sherry and I learned how to communicate better with them by using Google Translate apps on our phones. I am sure that anyone who walked by my office and looked in had to stop and figure out what we were doing—me sitting at my desk typing something into my cell phone while the mother was typing into her cell phone! You would see us nodding our heads and sometimes there would be verbal communication happening, like "Yes" and "Si" or "No". In the three weeks they were with us a different type of "bond" developed between me and the mother due to our back and forth conversations on our phones! When we needed to have a more in-depth conversation we did bring in a professional interpreter to help us

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communicate. It could be a bit of a challenge for our volunteers as well, but their time in the program went by without a hitch.

The English language is not an easy language to learn. How many of you struggle with using the correct spelling of the word “there”? It can be spelled three different ways: there, their, and they’re; I know several people who do not use the correct spelling and at times I admit I have to stop and think about how I should spell it! Another word is through, which can also be spelled threw or thru. See what I mean?

Here are several tips to help open the lines of communication with the English as a Second Language (ESL) community.

- Keep it simple. Using basic words like “good”, “give”, “take”, “more”, and “less” are better choices than “positive”, “administer”, “increase”, “decrease”.
- Use shorter sentences.
- Give the person time to answer your question. By doing so you allow them to process what you just said, convert it in their head to their language then answer it in English.
- Speak slower not louder. They are not deaf, and we have a tendency to speak louder without realizing we are doing so.
- Remember not to use acronyms, slang or idioms. Use of these words can really slow or block the lines of communication.
- The final tip is one that I used and that is to provide written forms. When I had several questions, I needed answered at one time it was easier to type the questions up in Word and then translate in the mother’s language. I then would print it off and show her both English and the translated questions.

Source: <https://www.dimensionsofculture.com/2010/10/8-tips-for-communicating-with-limited-english-proficiency-patients/>

### **Maurertown Brethren Church Vacation Bible School Mission Project**

Thanks to the VBS students & staff at Maurertown Brethren Church for their donation of tied blankets for families coming into our program at FPSC. For their craft one evening, they used their time to make the blankets. We so appreciate your thoughtfulness!



**Please share this newsletter with friends.**

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*A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. Proverbs 11:25*  
Thanks for all the refreshing things you do for our families!



## Buttonwood Lodge at Signal Knob Farm



Many thanks to Buttonwood Lodge and their staff as well as Connie Fauber and her team of volunteers from local Lutheran churches for taking a host week. Our guests really enjoyed their time at the lodge. Two of the children, little girls ages 4 and 5 just stood in the "big room" turning slowly and taking in everything. They finally shouted, "This place is beautiful!"

The lodge was established "to be a place apart in the beauty of the Shenandoah River and Massanutten Mountain, for groups seeking spiritual renewal in the Christian faith and opportunities to live out a more just, caring and peaceful lifestyle." It is part of the Caroline Furnace Camp & Retreat Center under the direction of Tom Powell. Many thanks to Tom for arranging for us to use this wonderful retreat as a host site.

## Wish List

- Hair Conditioner (we have plenty of shampoo)
- Dryer Sheets
- Clorox Wipes
- Toilet Paper
- Laundry Baskets
- Plastic Bins with Lids (48-55 gallon)
- Twin Sheet Sets
- No-Spill Sippy Cups
- Body Wash (men & women)
- Body Lotion
- 55 Gallon Trash Bags
- Tall Kitchen Garbage Bags
- Gently Used Strollers



## 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Golf Tournament Saturday, Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> Bryce Resort



**12:00 PM Shotgun Start – 4 Person Scramble**  
**\$100 per golfer or \$400 per four-man team**

**Included with entry fee:**  
Golf, Carts, Snacks, Goodie Bag, Golf Tees, Player Mulligan Package, Door Prizes, Awards Dinner, and entry into all contests (Putting, Longest Drive, Closest to the Pin)

**Sponsorship Opportunities Available**  
(see registration form)

*Registration form available on our website:*  
[shenandoahfamilypromise.org](http://shenandoahfamilypromise.org)

*For more information, contact:*  
Norma Barb at 540-459-7629

## Scouts from Woodstock Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Eight youth and six leaders were at the FPSC Family Center last Wednesday evening to do some much needed landscaping work. They said they had a great time with this service project and everything looks so much nicer now! Thank you so much for reaching out to us to volunteer.



## Teeny-Tiny House



*Pam Keen, Dennis Bowers & Diane Wittreich pose with playhouse Dennis Bowers built*

We are so excited about the playhouse Dennis Bowers surprised us with last month! Dennis, who has used his carpentry skills as a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity and Family Promise of Shenandoah County, came up with the idea of building a playhouse for us as an “attention grabber” and fundraiser a few months ago. He got busy gathering materials and was blessed by Wells Roofing who donated items. Pam found the adorable windows on Amazon. The flooring came from Habitat Restore, and he shopped at our local Lowe’s for the remainder of the materials.

The house made its debut at the FPSC car wash in June. We will be participating in Family Fun Fest on August 17<sup>th</sup> and will have the house there; and it will also be in the Edinburg Ole Time Festival Parade.

Many, many thanks to Dennis & Pam for their generous support of FPSC!!!

## Save the Dates



- **Family Fun Day, Sat., Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>, 11am to 4pm, Shenandoah County Fair Grounds.** FPSC will have a booth with our Teeny-Tiny House.
- **Cardboard City, Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, Antioch Church of the Brethren.** See separate article.
- **Edinburg Ole Time Festival Parade, Sat. Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>, 1:00pm.** FPSC will be in the parade with our Teeny-Tiny House.
- **Golf Tournament, Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>, Bryce Resort.** See separate article.
- **Family Promise Week, October 20<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>.** Stay tuned for more details!!



**Website:**

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**Contact:**

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