

# Victory Village Christian Academy

*Fifty-Four Years of Showing God's Unconditional, Healing Love to Teen Age Girls*

Heart Ministries, Inc., 201 S. Victory Road, Burrton, KS 67020; Phone 620.463.6112; [www.victoryvillagechristianacademy.org](http://www.victoryvillagechristianacademy.org)

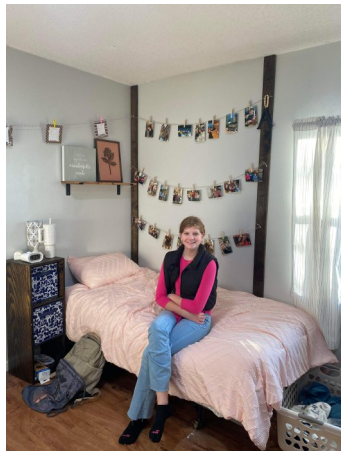
*Kelli Schwarz-Rump, Director; Bill and Carole Cowell, Editors & Administrators*

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## From our Director, *Kelli Schwarz-Rump*

It's hard to believe it's a new year! 2024 is here! The girls are all back from Christmas break, which means the quietness in the dorm is no longer there! I have never been too fond of the quietness in the dorm when the girls are gone. However, this break I did use some of that quiet time to reflect on this past year and begin to look ahead to 2024.

A fun way to begin the New Year was making New Years cookies with **Jim** and **Diane Bartel** and the girls. Most of the girls had never had or made these before. It was a fun time of frying, frosting, lots of eating and fellowship together. **Diane, Dustee** and **Carolina** are busy frying and frosting, while **Ivy** is enjoying another New Year cookie!



There have been a lot of incredible things happen this Past year (which you have Read about through the year). God is so good and continues to bless Victory Village. Be sure to stay tuned through next year to see what God has planned for Victory Village--I'm sure it's going to be awesome!!! Here is **Aubrey**, all moved into her room on move-in day!

**Holden** is the son of dorm staff member **Cayleena**. Holden comes with Cayleena to Victory Village a couple times a week. He is loved by all at VVCA, so when it was his birthday he definitely needed to be celebrated. The girls blew up a bunch of balloons and we all had a fun "balloon party" in the gym. There are more pictures of Holden's party on page two.



## Visit the Village....with *Bill and Carole* *Making A Difference*

Helping others is a character trait woven into the fabric of our ministry at Victory Village. Students over the past 53 years have gone to help with missions in Africa, South America, Europe, Asia and Mexico. While here at VVCA, some more recently have been able to help with an AWANA program at Hutchinson's Gospel Chapel, and as Junior Leaders at the Kansas Bible Camp. In preparation for what we hope will be a life of service to others, important tasks here at Victory Village are assigned to be performed as Service Hours.

Two former VVCA graduates are presently doing some phenomenal ministry in Africa. We have featured both of them before, but thought it good to bring you up to date on their present activities and how God is using them in a great way.

**Staci Byrd Austin**, who came here from Farmington, New Mexico, graduated from VVCA in 1994. As many do, she went through some years of struggle, but held on to her faith in Jesus, and is now doing a great ministry in Kenya, East Africa.



In December, Staci wrote, "Next week, my team and I will be helping the least among us in the Kibera Slums of Nairobi. We are trying to build as many houses for orphans and widows as possible. If you feel it in your heart to donate, please go to [houseswithhope.org](http://houseswithhope.org). Your prayers are so much appreciated."

**Julie Thomas** came to VVCA from Topeka, and graduated in 1997. She loved to argue, and we had some exciting times, but we loved Julie and believed God had great plans for her in the future. One day Bill told Julie she should become a lawyer! After graduating from VVCA, she enrolled in Washburn Law School in Topeka, where she graduated and went to work for a law firm in Houston, Texas. Last July, along with a birthday wish, Julie wrote, "Thank you for loving me and never giving up on me! You are a true father and warrior for Christ! I don't want to think where my life would be without you and Carole."

(continued page two)

**FROM OUR DIRECTOR (continued from page one)**



Thank you for all of your love, support and prayers. Wishing each of you a Joyous New Year!!

**NEEDS LIST**

- 13 GALLON TRASH BAGS
- 4 GALLON TRASH BAGS
- 2 NEW SHARK VACUUM CLEANERS
- LIQUID LAUNDRY DETERGENT
- DRYER SHEETS
- PAPER TOWELS
- NAPKINS
- NEW TRAMPOLINE WITH SAFETY NET



**Our second big snow of the season - 6 ½ inches!**

*Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole  
I want Thee forever to live in my soul.  
Break down every idol, cast out every foe--  
Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.  
-from the Hymnal*

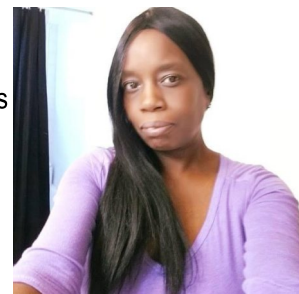
**VISIT THE VILLAGE (continued from page one)**



Julie also went to Kenya to serve the Lord, and last November she wrote about her Miracle Marriage. "As I was praying for a husband last year, the Lord led me to this verse that has now been fulfilled. **At the appointed time I the Lord will make it happen (Isaiah 60:22).**" Now married to **Godwin Ukoh Esin**, she wrote, "I thank God for you being in that church praying when they sent you to check in on this crazy American missionary who would fulfill the prophetic word in your life that God was sending your wife from abroad. It was crazy how I heard the Lord say to check plane tickets for October 6, 2023 when I was planning to go later in the month. Divine timing and friendly hearts led me to connect with that pastor and now our dear friend at the Frankfurt airport whom God used to send you to your wife! I'm still in awe of this sovereign God and this amazing husband of mine!"



After two happy stories, we know that life is a mixture of joy and sorrow. We are sad to report that **Natasha Brown**, VVCA graduate in 1988, passed away recently in Strasburg, Colorado. She was the first of five who came to VVCA from Hollis, in the Queens district of New York. Natasha was married and her husband had also recently passed away. Mrs. **Eleta Brown** called in the early 1980's asking us to take her son Larry. She was planning to send Natasha to another school.. We told her that we had a girl's school and suggested she send Natasha to us and Larry to the other school where they took boys. She took our suggestion, and later sent daughters **Debra, Helena** and **Tawanna** to VVCA. **Larry** finally came also, and **Way** and **Becky Eikleberry** took him to live with them in Hutchinson. All graduated except for Debra, and Mrs. Brown became a true friend and benefactor. She was a nurse in a hospital in Queens, and when there were babies born and rejected by the mother, the Browns adopted them. They gave the children a good life, taking them on cruises, where once they were invited to sit at the Captain's table because of such good behavior. Eleta made several trips here to visit while the children were in school, and was



always a welcome guest in our home. A little humor while she was staying with us was when she was sitting at our dinner table and asked if we had a dishwasher where we would put it. Not knowing what she had in mind, We just told her where it would probably fit in. A few days after she returned to New York, a Sears delivery truck drove in with a new dishwasher for our kitchen! When Bill was young and his mother made him do dishes, he told her he was going to buy his wife a dishwasher! Carole humorously said, "Mrs. Brown beat you to it.!" Mrs. Brown also ran a day care in her home on Dunlap Street. In the days of our bus tours we visited her home and she would graciously feed us and let us stay the night. Once, we also had a service in her Church, and they fed us well; **The Tabernacle African Methodist Episcopal Church** of Queens, New York. Mrs. Brown was one of hundreds who gave us hospitality in those days of travel and ministry.



We were blessed over Christmas break by attending a Christmas program, extravaganza, involving children, youth and adults at **Hutchinson's Gospel Chapel**. Our daughter **Becky** and husband **Rod**, and several of our Victory Village Staff are a part of the Chapel, and the **Kansas Bible Camp**. We are thankful for the special camaraderie between the Gospel Chapel, Kansas Bible Camp and Victory Village.



A special outing for dinner at the Carriage Crossing with two of our fine VVCA Staff members--**Barbara Hedges** has been our faithful Secretary for 35 years, and **Wilma Engle**, Carole's cousin, is our skilled and competent Accountant.

We enjoyed a festive Christmas eve service at the **Buhler Mennonite Church**. This fine Church, pastored by Willmar T Harder has been a blessing to VVCA in many ways. We have been asked to bring the VVCA girls for songs



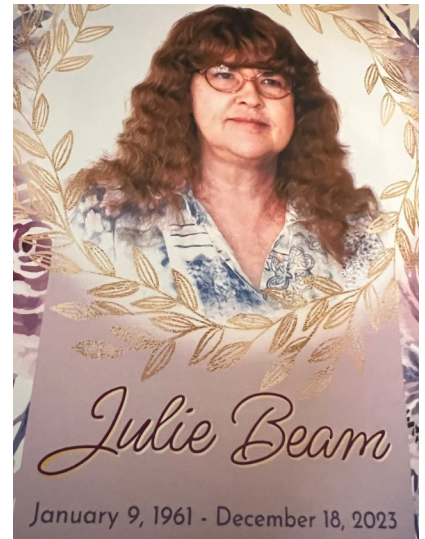
and testimonies in their Sunday morning service, February 11 at 10 a.m. Buhler Mennonite is also the home Church of our Board Chairman and wife, **Bob** and **Virginia Friesen**.

We will also be taking the girls for sharing testimonies and singing at the **Trinity Community Church** in the Stafford County town of Hudson, January 21, at 10 a.m.

Chaplain **Dave Denlinger** of the **Pleasant View Home** in Inman has invited us to bring the girls and share in song and testimony on January 25, at 6:30 p.m.

## Julie Beam, 1961-2023

On December 22, we conducted the memorial service for a former staff member who endeared herself to all. Julie was loved and appreciated by both fellow Staff and VVCA Students. She loved God and she loved the girls, ministering to them with a servant heart. Julie modeled the Spirit and methods of Jesus to those who hurt, who



were afraid, or who had experienced some of the hard and bitter things that life often brings. One of our former students wrote this, **Rest in peace my beautiful Julie Beam. I loved you so much. When I was at Victory Village, you were one of the sweetest ladies there. You would tell me how beautiful I was. I so very much loved you. Your kindness and gentleness spoke louder than words. I know you are with the Lord Jesus.** Julie was a believer, a great servant of the Lord, and also a great artist. These words of a poet speak of Julie very well..

***She held the lantern, stooping low,  
So low that none could miss the way,  
And yet so high, to bring in sight,  
That picture fair--the world's great Light.  
That gazing up--the lamp between--  
The hand that held it scarce was seen***

# Victory Village Christian Academy

New Year, January 2024



HEART MINISTRIES, INC.  
Victory Village Christian Academy  
Post Office Box 2068  
Hutchinson, KS 67504-2068

Nonprofit Organization  
US Postage Paid  
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Burton, KS 67020

(Address Service Requested)

***Our 53rd Year of Changing Lives for Jesus Christ and His Kingdom; Jesus said, I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)***

**Our Mission** is to serve as the hands and feet of Jesus. Inspired by His Gospel, we seek to make God's amazing love and compassion real to teenage girls, serving them without charge to their families by providing a clean and safe home, a good Christian and State certified education, nutritious meals, training in life skills, outdoor and indoor activities and sports, opportunities to be involved in the ministry of helping others, and an introduction to Jesus, who will love them forever. We affirm the worth of all, without prejudice, partiality or intimidation. **Victory Village Christian Academy** is located at 201 S Victory Road, Burton, KS 67020, and is licensed by the State of Kansas, with State certified teachers and curriculum. Credits are transferable, high school diplomas are earned and recognized for entrance to colleges. **Rev. Bill and Carole Cowell, Founders and Administrators; Kelli Schwarz-Rump, Director and Principal; Katy Nininger, Athletic Director, Assistant Principal, Marla Johnson, Jerry Nininger, Larissa Hawkinson, Teachers; Barbara Hedges, Office Manager, Secretary-Treasurer, Wilma Engle, Accountant; Jessica Kerzner, Therapist; Kristi Colvin, Case Manager; Heather Smith, Dormitory Director; Jenna Weimer, Robin Traffas, Shannon Fitzgerald, Emily Moore, Amanda Herd, Janice Janzen, Karen Chaterton, Trinity Sampson, Cayleena Pilgreen, Grace Skiles, Lauren Holmes, Bri Neal, Becky Valdois, Ahneka Valdois, Kayla Felix, Brenda Shenk, Dormitory Staff; Emma Foster and Hadassa Foster, Cooks; Scott Hilburn, Maintenance, Board of Directors: Bob Friesen, Chairman, Rev. Bill and Carole Cowell, Becky Goering, Larry Chapman, Gordon Goering, Lyndal Penner, Rev. John Williams, Kelli Schwarz-Rump, Dr. Jessica Kerzner.**



**Carolyn Joyce Busenitz** was promoted to Heaven on the day after Christmas, where she was reunited with her husband **Arthur**, who preceded her in 2019. In the early days of Heart Ministries, and while Victory Village was being founded, Arthur listened to our radio broadcast over KJRG in Newton. He became interested and began to give generously, especially for the construction of the Dormitory. He later became one of our Board members. Arthur and Carolyn were members of the Emmaus Mennonite Church of Whitewater. Carolyn graduated from Berean Academy, attended Bethel College and became a school teacher. They raised eight children on their farm near Whitewater, had 22 grandchildren and 29 great grandchildren. They raised their children to follow Christ faithfully, taught them the importance of family and community, and had a strong concern for the spiritual and physical well-being of them all.

## Some Closing Words from Bill and Carole

At the beginning of 2024 our hearts are filled with gratitude to God for His blessing on Heart Ministries and Victory Village Christian Academy for the past 54 years. There were skeptics at the start, that a Boarding school of this kind could operate without charging tuition or room and board. God has proven them wrong, and credit goes to Him and not to us. Hundreds of young lives have come and been changed, who would have never been able pay for what they received. Our hearts are full of praise for the new leadership He has provided, with **Kelli** as Director, **Bob Friesen** as Board Chairman and the great Staff Kelli has put together. Carole and I will keep going as long as God gives us health and strength, but we are confident this ministry will continue well beyond our lifetimes. Thanks also to the many who support financially, and pray for the ministry, and we are confident that with God's help many will continue to do so. May God bless you all.

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**Stephen Waite**, and the Great Plains Institute, have been instrumental in helping us maintain our Wastewater certification with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Bill has traveled to Dodge City biennially for many years for the required updated training.