

The Hill @ B.A.S.I.C. Training
P.O. Box 13, Hardin, Ky. 42048
Phone (270) 437-4172
Website: lifeonthehill.org
Email: contact@lifeonthehill.org

SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

I spend a lot of time reflecting on the early days of our ministry. Perhaps I've grown more nostalgic as I've grown older. (For the curious mind, I'm fifty-eight.) Or maybe it's because I have forty years of memories packed tightly into my brain and they're just dying to get out.

These memories etched within me are innumerable and precious.

Some of those memories recently surfaced when I reconnected with John Bridges (or "Johnny Red"), and his wife Amy. The Bridges stayed with us for a couple of days as they passed through the Hardin area, and it was a time filled with smiles and reminiscing. I hadn't seen John for over thirty years. He is a gifted carpenter who, in the mid-1980s, framed the Ark, a dormitory we use to host overnight guests. After they left, I began thinking how nice it would be for you to hear some stories about a few of those who left their mark on this ministry and our hearts.

I expressed this idea to Hannah DuBois, a talented writer and one of our student residents. We both thought this would be an excellent opportunity for her to assist with this special edition newsletter. I am grateful for the time and talent she has given to tell the stories of a small handful who are walking on strong, full of God's life, and sharing Him with others. Without them, this ministry would not exist.

While living in the past can rob us of living in the present, glimpsing back now and then is essential. It serves to remind us of God's unfolding story. His provision, care, and faithfulness. It allows us to hope for the future.



John and Amy Bridges in California shortly after getting married.

You, too, are part of this story. Thank you for your prayers, encouraging phone calls, texts, and e-mails. We are overwhelmed by your sacrificial financial generosity and volunteerism. The dishes you have washed, small groups you have led, and grass you have cut are expressions of your Father's heart. Many of you have utilized The Hill's written and audio resources and taken the

message of Christ as our life to the world. You are this ministry, and we are forever grateful. The story continues.

Remembering God's Faithfulness,

Kim

Still The Same

We believe that the essence of the Christian life is intimacy with Jesus Christ. Our primary interest is maturing people in the faith, so they in turn can be used to mature others in the faith. Thus we believe that as a ministry we exist for the purpose of disciple making (2 Timothy 2:2).



John and Amy more recently.

Building Memories

I walked into the Manna house for Tuesday night Bible study with the distinct sense of walking into a place of rich history. So many people have come before me through those very same doors, stepped on that one squeaky floorboard, stared at that cross set into the stone fireplace, and discovered God's presence through the voice of teachers and peers. As a college student, it is so easy for me to become engrossed in campus culture and let myself believe the lie that I have to figure everything out right



Hill resident and newsletter author, Hannah DuBois.

here, right now, right the first time. That I must figure it out alone. But standing in the Manna house, hearing metal chairs scooted about, inhaling the mingling scent of cologne and coffee and sweat, I began to notice the Bibles. Nestled among notebooks and pencils, Bibles laid on white plastic tables, wrinkled hands touching their worn leather covers like an old friend. My gaze wandered over tresses of ivory hair being pulled over a shoulder like a crown of

glory. Baseball caps removed in prayer to reveal a graying widowspeak. And the more I watched these older brothers and sisters in the faith, the more my ears itched to hear their stories. I began to believe that if their Friend brought them this far, He would take care of me too.

When Kim introduced me to John Bridges, the first thing I looked at were his hands. After all, these were hands that framed the Ark. These, in fact, were John's resume when, all those years ago, he presented his calloused palms to



Donna Green Seltzer and a friend on the deck of Bob's cabin in the early 80's.

Bob Warren and pronounced, "I'm a framer." To which Bob heartily replied, "You've got a job!" John grew those calluses from constructing dormitories in Hawaii. There, he'd earned the nickname "Johnny Red" because, well, "I went to Hawaii and turned red!" he told me, laughing



A mid-80's Bible study at Bob's cabin.

about working long hours in the tropical sun. But it wasn't his only nickname. Whenever Bob told people that "This is the guy who built our dormitory!", he'd add "I'm just braggin' on ya, John boy!"

While John worked on the Ark, he shared an apartment on the Hill with Bob and joined a Bible study led by one of the women also living on the property. The study explored how God peels us back in layers to heal us. One evening, she called for a volunteer. John leapt at the opportunity! As is often the case where God is involved, the acceptance of one little challenge unlocked so much more. As their discussion leader asked him a series of questions growing more and more personal, John saw himself with increasing clarity. He ran a hand through his hair as he told me about realizing his deep need for a



"Huggin" Harold Phillips also played a big role in construction of the Ark and Manna House.

father figure. "I'd never had a close relationship with my father and I'd always wanted to be close to him," he said, "I was fine during the meeting. I was fine walking down to my room. But once I was alone, I started balling and I couldn't stop." That's how Bob found him moments later.

Admittedly, he didn't remember much of what Bob said since his own emotions were too overwhelming, but what he does remember is how Bob gave him permission to think of Bob as his father. "And that got me coming back," John said. "I've got to go hang out with Bob."

All these years later, John said it's so good to come back to the Hill and revisit sweet memories. "It reminds me how sold out and focused I was on God. But, you know, you have children and get involved in ministry and it's hard to keep that focus."

Now that I knew who built the Ark, I wanted to know whose hands helped raise the Manna house. When Kim introduced me to Donna Green (now Seltzer), a woman with wide, blue eyes and silvery hair, I stared at her with amazement. "John Bridges told me about a woman who helped him frame the Ark..." I ventured. "Yes, that was me!" Donna exclaimed. "I was there with a hammer and did all kinds of things. I loved anything I didn't know how to do." She told me how they wrote scripture on the walls of the Manna house and all the dormitories before installing drywall. I looked around the room in awe, imagining the verses hiding beneath the wood paneling.

"Everybody just pitched in and did what they could do. It seemed like everytime we needed something, God provided." Just when they needed a framer, John arrived, and just when they needed plumb-



Donna and her husband Steve Seltzer have studied God's word at The Hill for many years in the very building she helped construct.



A small group meeting in the Manna House before it was finished.

ing installed, a man from Nashville offered his services free of charge. And just when Donna needed a father figure for her son, Justin, the men at the Hill stepped in.

"I asked God that Justin would just be around spiritual men so that he would have lots of spiritual fathers. And he really did. All the men knew he was the child of a single parent and they just took him up and raised him. He really grew spiritually with all of the men here." The idea of being a single parent for nineteen years daunted me. "What did God show you in that challenge?" I asked. Donna answered without hesitation. "That He was in control. That my life

was not my own. And that God was always with me and that I was never alone. I was a single mother, yes, but Jesus was actually my husband and though I was living a life as a single person in one manner, I had the best relationship that there was. And that was with Jesus. It's the best relationship that you can have. Nineteen years is a long time but it was worth the wait because it was God's choice," she said, smiling at Steve, her husband of twenty five years.



Volunteers raising the Manna House walls.



The Manna House getting closer to completion (around 1983).

But Donna's son and John Bridges weren't the only ones to find role models at the Hill ministry. As I shook the hand of Aaron Wells and took in the silver creeping into

his red beard, I could sense the stories welling up behind his eyes. “When you have adults in your life you can trust that love Jesus, it is so beneficial,” he said. Rick Underhill, a man who loves Jesus and people so well, greatly impacted Aaron’s life. Aaron remembered his days as an immature teenager and how Bob and Kim treated him like one of their own. I smiled to think of how many young men had the chance to experience Bob and Kim as parental figures. So many more stories poured out as Aaron spoke: of the satisfaction of working on various camp projects, of hours spent playing volleyball, of the wild pranks campers and staff played on each other. It was easy to see all the creative ways God fed into his life through the camp community, through teaching as well as good, plain fun. And that impact has been lasting. “I desire to know Jesus deeper and spend time with the Father daily because of my roots in Hardin,” said Aaron, reflecting on the lessons that have stuck with him. “If all forsake me, I know that I will be ok because Je-



Campers from one of the first summer camps held at The Hill. Recognize any of them?

sus plus nothing truly is everything. My identity in Christ has been the bedrock of my walk. If you don’t know who you are, you will be tossed around in life’s waves. If you can yield to the Spirit inside of you, He will never lead you to do anything outside of God’s will. He has revealed Himself more to me as I have grown older and become a husband and father. I think that Jesus relates even more to us as we

get older, or maybe better yet, we relate better to Him and His life as we get older.”

Aaron’s son, Roman, is gearing up to attend his first summer camp in June this year. “It is a surreal experience,” said Aaron. “I hope that he is impacted for eternity like I was. I hope that he sees something in Jesus that makes him want to be fully known by His Savior.”

Written by Hannah DuBois. Hannah is a resident at The Hill and an English and Professional Writing major at Murray State University.

Featured Resident: Trent Bugg

Trent Bugg was introduced to the Hill in May of 2021 by Greg and LeAnne Lynch. He began attending Tuesday night Bible study, enrolled in summer camp, and a mission trip with their local church. When asked if he was interested in becoming a resident, his initial thought was, “absolutely not.” He was afraid of the unknown, of change, and



of moving away from home since family is incredibly important to him. But “there was something about this place, these people, and the way they lived life with each other that really drew me in.”

Trent added, “My conversations with God since moving here have become way more honest and confessional than ever. When I was young, everything I learned

in church made me afraid of God. I felt like I constantly let Him down and that He was never happy with me. Through this community, The Hill, and our new church family, we

hear about our relationship with God almost daily. I’ve fallen in love with the humility and “put others before yourself” approach to life that I’ve found here. I’ve been vegan for over two years now and it’s not always easy to adjust to. The Hill community have shown their love for me by laboring through a brand new recipe, getting the ingredients, and making me a vegan version of whatever meal they are cooking. It may not seem like a big deal to them, but it has touched my heart so deeply.



Another group at the cabin for Bible study in the early 80’s.

Upcoming Events

Summer Youth Leadership Camps, June 5-11 & June 26-July 2, 2022. Our annual summer camps for 13-18 year olds. [Click here to register.](#)

Senior Leadership Weekend, July 22-24, 2022. An equipping weekend for graduated seniors from the class of 2022. This will be led by Kevin Gaunce and Rick Underhill. [Click here to register.](#)

Romans Retreat, August 26-28, 2022—After a break for COVID and the Grace Conferences we are on track for a weekend study of Romans 1-8. It is impossible to exhaust the truth and revelation from this wonderful section of Scripture. Watch the website for info on speakers and other details. [Click here to register.](#)

Rooted & Grounded, September 9-11, 2022—This is the Rooted & Grounded Remix! R&G was postponed in January due to COVID. This retreat is designed for post highschool young adults, 18-25, and will focus on relation-

ships/marriage. [Bill Layle with Grace Life Int'l](#) will be the speaker. Both couples and singles are encouraged to participate. Go to our website for details. [Click here to register.](#)

Fall Retreat, October 28-30, 2022—Our annual gathering of friends, families, couples, and individuals who love God's word. Watch the website for info on speakers and other details. [Click here to register.](#)

For more info on these and other events go to lifeonthehill.org.

Thank you for the way you love and support us. Whether you invest your time, money, or prayers to further God's work here, we are appreciative. God sustains the ministry, and you have been a faithful part of His plan.

Your Friends at The Hill