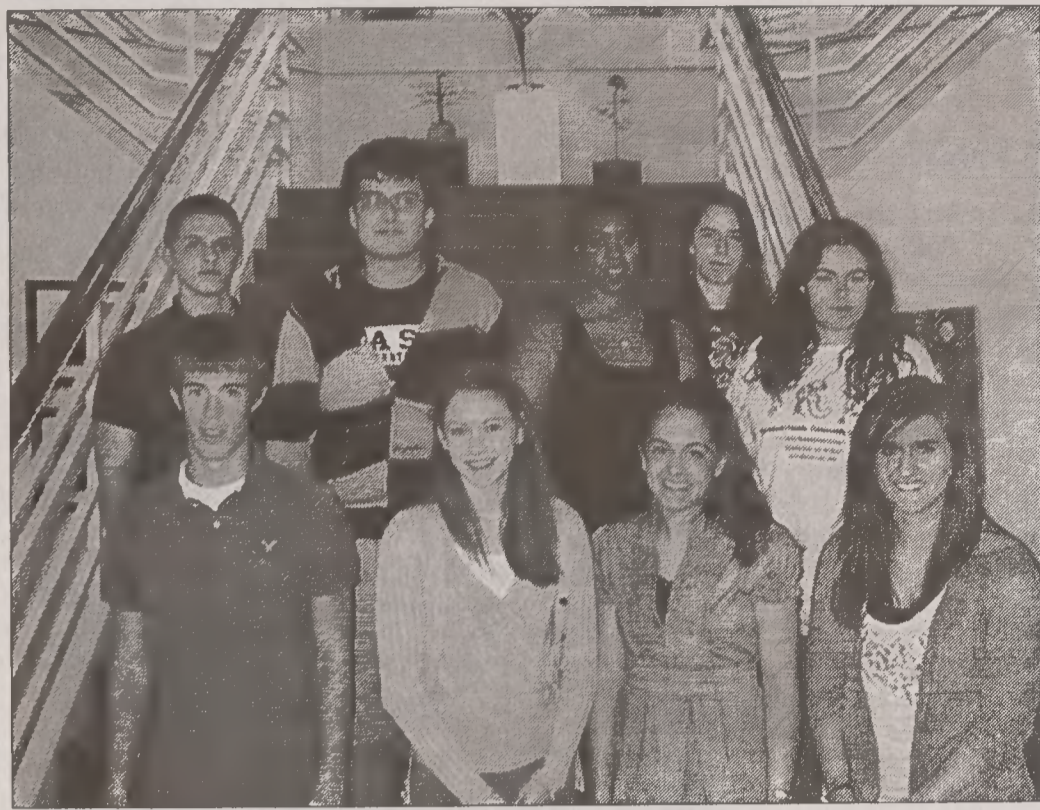


FOCUS



COURTESY PHOTO

Members of this year's Youth Leadership Program include, front, from left, Burke McDade, India Green, Kristen Livengood, Kaitlyn Wilson; back, from left, Lawson Hodges, Bruce Belk, Aubiran Tuttle, Chistine Knight and Kerri Gwynne.

High school juniors complete Youth Leadership Program

TIMES STAFF REPORT

Nine 11th graders from throughout the county recently completed the Youth Leadership Davidson County (YLDC) program. YLDC, a program of the Thomasville and Lexington Chambers of Commerce, strengthens the leadership capacity of high school students.

Highlights of the YLDC program were a challenge course, personality profiles and learning about global economics and global education. "I learned so much," says India Green, a student at Sheets Memorial. "My eyes have been opened to major topics affecting my life. YLDC is an amazing program."

Kristen Livengood is also a student at Sheets. "YLDC opened my eyes. I loved this experience." Kerri Gwynne from Get Real reflects about her new perspective of living in Davidson County. "I have more faith in Davidson County than I did before, and I know myself better."

Chamber leaders exude excitement when talking about the program. Doug Croft, President of the Thomasville Area Chamber of Commerce shares, "I get real excited when talking about this program. I can literally see these young people changing. It is a bonus for me to make such a contribution in their lives." Croft compares his experience to that of a teacher. "I understand the pleasure that teachers must receive from seeing student growth within their classroom."

Diversification is an important component to the YLDC program. The youth participants come from a variety of schools as well as socio-ethnic backgrounds. According to Croft, that mix-

ture is another highlight for the participants. "Every year, we receive feedback about how much they like meeting and learning with other kids from other schools and throughout the county."

Sports rivalries seem to be a non-issue to these high school juniors. "I think that they realize that they are all on the same team with regard to their future in Davidson County," adds Croft.

The long-term impact of the program is stronger leadership for the county as these young adults transition into the workforce and civic involvement.

Participants experience personal leadership and skill development with a focus on the themes of economic development, education, government and human services.

Students who will be 11th graders during the 2010-2011 school year are eligible for next year's YLDC program. Contact either the Thomasville Area or Lexington Area Chamber of Commerce for more information. Through an application process, local business leaders select participants for the program.

Old Dominion Freight Lines, Davidson Works, Duke Energy and Laser Print Plus help sponsor the YLDC program.

Completing the Youth leadership program this spring were: Bruce Belk - Extended Day School; India Green - Sheets Memorial Christian School; Kerri Gwynne - Get Real; Lawson Hodges - Thomasville High School; Christine Knight - Davidson County Early College; Kristen Livengood - Sheets Memorial Christian School; Burke McDade - West Davidson High School; Aubiran Tuttle - Central Davidson High School; Kaitlyn Wilson - North Davidson High School.

Grandchildren offer lifetime of laughs for grandparents

UNCLE BILL'S CORNER



BILL HILL
Guest Columnist

As we think back over the years, grandparents played a big role in our lives. They were the foundation and building blocks that we as adults learned many wonderful and interesting things. Grandparents are precious gifts. May God Bless all of you readers who are grandparents. You have, I am sure, shared much tender loving care to those little ones.

Here are just a few of the hundreds of funny little things I found on grandparents.com. Just sit back, drink your morning coffee or tea and read your morning *Thomasville Times* and laugh out loud, as I did.

Classic Comedy

My 5-year-old granddaughter and I were having one of our art sessions. She needed a pair of scissors but the only ones around were a filigree-handled heirloom. I passed her the beautiful scissors and told her to take good care of them because they meant a lot to me. "Are they old?" she asked.

Excited that she seemed interested in their history I explained that they belonged to my mother and her mother.

Well, that explains it," she said. "Explains what?" I asked.

"Why they don't work."

Hair Situations

My 5-year-old grandson didn't love his mother's newly-bleached hair, which had gone from dark to almost white. "Gomma," he said, "I liked my Mom's hair better when it matched her eyebrows."

I'm gray now, but I use to dye my hair and sometimes it would come out bright red-orange.

When I was with my 4-year-old grandson one day, a lady complimented him on his beautiful red hair. "It's orange," he said. "And some-

times my grandma's hair is orange, too."

In the Eye of the Beholder

One day I watched my two grandsons, ages 6 and 3, while my daughter had her hair done. When she arrived home, the 6-year-old told her how beautiful she looked. Then he looked back at me and said, "And Grammy, you look almost beautiful."

Birthday Surprises

When my granddaughter was 4, I told her she was growing up too fast and needed to slow down. "But it isn't my fault Grammy," she replied. "It's my mom's fault. She keeps giving me those birthday parties."

Just Asking

"Hey Grandma, Why don't you and Grandpa have names like the rest of us?"

Driving my 6-year-old grandson home, I spotted a lady crossing the street with her cute little dog Matthew.

I said, "Look at the cute little French poodle over there."

"Gammy, how do you know he's French?"

You're Only as Old as You Feel

All my grandkids were swimming and 7-year-old Madison asked if I was going to wear my swimsuit, too. I teasingly told her that I was going to put on my bikini. Her eyes sparkled with excitement and she said, "Cool! People your age will think you're hot!"

My 3-year-old granddaughter Eva came into the kitchen and said, "Old lady would you please help me wipe my hands?" I was taken aback and my daughter asked her why she called me that. Eva answered, "Well she calls me young lady."

How Old Are You Now?

My 3-year old granddaughter once asked me, "Grandma, how old are you?"

"How old do you think I am?" I asked.

"Ten. You are 10."

"Nope, I said, I'm soon going to be 60 years old."

"Sixty?" she replied.

"I didn't know that was a number!"

One day my son, his wife and my 3-year-old grandson were eating out with us and a man that knew us stopped by the

table. My grandson said, "This is my grandma."

The man said I didn't look old enough to be a grandma. Then my grandson replied, "Oh she's old enough!"

You Can't Take Them Anywhere

My 3-year-old granddaughter, Madelyn, was out for breakfast with us while our schnauzer, Whisky, waited in the car. Madelyn is a very chatty little girl and talked with our waitress the entire time we were there. When we finished our meal, the waitress asked what we were going to do next., and Madelyn — standing up in the booth for all to hear, of course — said, "Well, we have Whiskey in the car ..."

I took my 6-year-old grandson to his favorite steak restaurant. Being very grown up, he ordered everything for himself. When the waiter asked him how he wanted his steak, he replied with a puzzled look, "You know ... on a plate."

The Last Word

One day, I was playing with my 4-year-old grandson and his race-car set. Later on, he was doing something that wasn't allowed. After three warnings, I yelled at him to stop. He came over to me with a long face, head down and his lower lip quivering and climbed on my lap. He said, "I still love you, Nanna, but the next time you talk to me that way you will not play with me or my race-car set anymore."

I picked my 8-year-old nephew Balmir up from school every afternoon. He calls me Grandfather-Uncle-Bill. While at school sometimes, he talks and talks and talks — for this he gets in trouble. The other day I picked him up and he said to me, "Grandfather-Uncle-Bill, I was good at school today!"

I thought to myself, thank goodness. He continued to talk and said to me, "Grandfather-Uncle-Bill, will you please stop by the store and buy me some Starburst Candy — that candy just makes my tongue tingle and my tummy twirl."

Well have a great week! Uncle Bill over and out. Contact Guest Columnist Uncle Bill Hill at billyunclebill@aol.com.

Hall returns from deployment in Afghanistan

TIMES STAFF REPORT

Army Pfc. William R. Hall has returned to Fort Richardson, Anchorage, Alaska after being deployed to Afghanistan for one year. The soldier is one of 3,500 members of the 4th Airborne Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division stationed at Fort

Richardson.

The airborne brigade served in three eastern provinces of Afghanistan, which included the Paktya, Paktika and Khost. Soldiers improved roads, provided vocational training in construction and civics, improved and re-opened 29 schools, remodeled six medical clinics and

improved three district courthouses.

While deployed in Afghanistan, he was decorated with an Army Commendation Medal.

Hall has two years of military service.

He is the son of Charles R. Hall of HHG Road, Lexington, N.C. and a 2008 graduate of South Davidson High School.

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