New Worship Center Highlights Holston Home Goals

Capital Campaign Announced During Annual Fundraiser

BY LISA WARREN
STAFF WRITER



SUN PHOTO BY O.J. EARLY

Terry Hull Crawford, the evening's main speaker, addresses a crowd at the General Morgan Inn.

Holston United Methodist Home for Children is launching a capital campaign to help fund a new worship center on its main campus in Greeneville.

Initial plans for the proposed project were revealed Thursday evening during Holston Home's annual "Friends of Children" benefit dinner at the General Morgan Inn.

Holston Home president and CEO Bradley Williams said the proposed worship center would be built just off the Tennessee Rt. 70 truck route, behind Beacon School, the institution's on-campus educational facility.

Holston Home's current chapel facility is located within Beacon School.

Williams explained that the 80-seat chapel no longer offers enough seating capacity for Holston Home's youth and their family members who attend services, as well as staff members and other guests.

He noted that $1 million has already been set aside by Holston Home in matching funds to go toward campus expansion projects.

BUDGET SHORTFALL

Another issue facing Holston Home this coming fiscal year is an anticipated budget shortfall, Williams said.

"We have no debt, and we are proud of that," Williams said. "Yet a private school has limited funding, and for this budget year, we are looking at a $200,000 shortfall for Beacon School that we have to make up through charitable gifts.

"We're committed to taking Beacon School forward," Williams said, praising the work of the school that provides "needed individualized attention" to its students in grades K-12 who may otherwise have trouble succeeding in a traditional educational setting.

"At least 69 percent of our graduates enroll in college or a technical school," Williams noted. Nationwide, only 20 percent of children in foster care enroll in higher education, he added.

Last year, 87 percent of the students who began classes at Beacon School were behind grade level. And Williams said that Holston Home and the school's staff are committed to helping those children achieve their educational goals.

"Tonight's opportunity to support us is for those two causes," Williams said.

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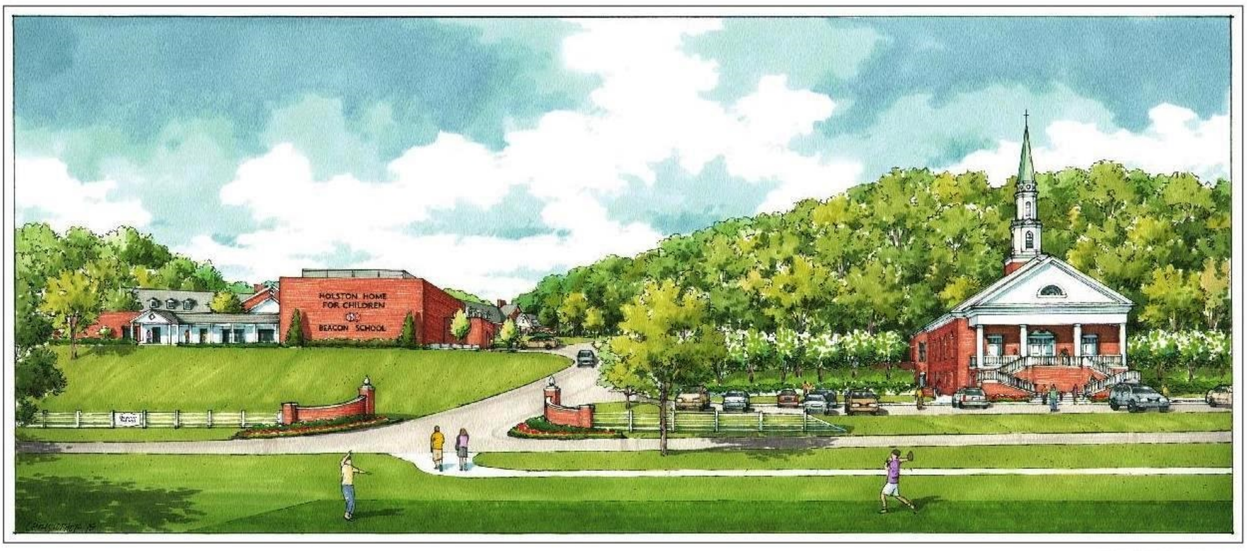

GRAPHIC SPECIAL TO THE SUN

Shown at right, above, in this artist's rendering is the proposed expanded worship center at Holston United Methodist Home for Children. Shown at left in the rendering is Beacon School, the organization's on-campus educational facility, where Holston Home's current 80-seat chapel is located.

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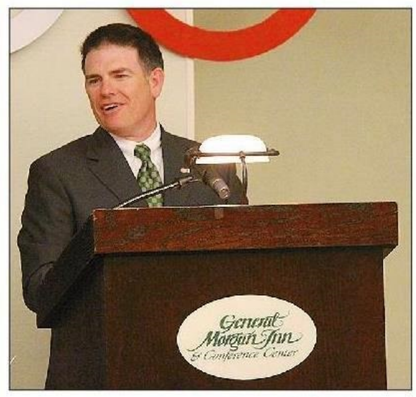
Terry Hull Crawford, the evening's main speaker, addresses those attending the "Friends of Children" dinner at the General Morgan Inn.



SUN PHOTO BY O.J. EARLY

Bradley Williams, Holston Home president and CEO, speaks Thursday evening at the Holston Home "Friends of Children" benefit dinner at the General Morgan Inn.

PRAISE FROM KEASLING

The theme for the 2015 "Friends of Children" benefit was "Building Winners."

The master of ceremonies for the event was Greeneville native Dale Keasling, chairman, president and CEO of Home Federal Bank of Tennessee in Knoxville, who serves on the Holston Home board of trustees.

Keasling praised the administration and staff of the Christian-based organization, which he said provided care to around 2,000 children in 2014, including those in residential care, foster care, adoption and other services.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The keynote speaker at the well-attended event was Terry Hull Crawford, a Greeneville native who serves as director of coaching for USA Track and Field.

Crawford was introduced by Kent Bewley, a former chairman of the Holston Home Board of Trustees.

In his introduction, Bewley noted that he first met Crawford 59 years ago when she was a student at Greeneville High School and, as a volunteer coach, he helped to introduce her to the sport of track and field.

"It's an honor to be here and to be here as a Greene Countian," Crawford said. "My life is filled with a lot of great memories of growing up here."

Crawford left Greeneville in 1966 to attend the University of Tennessee, where she became a pioneering female in track and field and then started on a career path that has taken her around the world as an Olympic coach.

After finishing her education at UT in Knoxville, she became the school's head women's track and field/cross-country coach.

Crawford later went on to become a successful coach at both the University of Texas, in Austin, and at California Polytechnic State University, in San Luis Obispo, Calif., where she coached both men and women.

She now coaches Olympians and serves as director of coaching for USA Track and Field.

During her career she has earned many awards and titles, including being named Coach of the Year numerous times by the Southwest Conference, the Southeast Conference and the NCAA.

She was also the first woman president of the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association, among other honors.

"I feel very blessed to have had the opportunities and the career that I have had," she said.

Crawford expressed appreciation to Bewley for his mentoring early in her life, and also thanked others who helped create the opportunities that led her to fulfill her life's passion as both an athlete and a coach.

During her career she has earned many awards and titles, including being named Coach of the Year numerous times by the Southwest Conference, the Southeast Conference and the NCAA.

"I'd like to challenge all of you — especially the young people who are here tonight — to really recognize your opportunities — and to also recognize the people who create those opportunities for you," she said.

"Never forget, that is the force that helps you along your way."

Another aspect of success, Crawford said, is finding your passion in life and setting clear goals to succeed.

"Passion is the great drive that makes people successful, regardless of what profession they are in," she said.

Being a mentor to young people is vital in helping them shape their future success, Crawford stated.

She noted that everyone can become an effective coach by:

- developing bonds of trust;
- communicating and having an open dialogue;
- motivating and empowering people to develop clear goals and vision, and
- providing strategies and instructions that are tangible and believable.

Another piece of advice she offered was to stay on the cutting edge of knowledge and to be a life-long learner.

"Stay hungry and seek knowledge," she said. "Always look for something new within your profession."

Crawford concluded her talk by telling those present at the fundraiser that "by being here tonight, you are part of Holston Home's team.

"You are part of helping them find their passion and accomplish their vision for a successful life."

Several Holston Home youth played active roles in the evening's events including serving as greeters to the incoming guests and as musical entertainment during the meal.

The Friends of Children organizing committee was led by chairperson Debbie Oldenberg, and included: Kent Bewley, Brenda Parrish-Dickmann, John McGuffin, Bradley Williams, the Rev. Charles Hutchins, Nicole Rader and Chris Cates.

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For more information on Holston United Methodist Home for Children or how to donate to its "Friends of Children" campaign, visit www.holstonhome.org.