A Major Honor

Minors Are 2nd Family Inducted To Holston Home's 'Hall Of Fame'

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SUN CONTRIBUTOR

A Rogersville family's service to children in need will be remembered for years to come with their induction to Holston United Methodist Home for Children's "Hall of Fame."

Diana and Hugh Minor have been inducted for their 16 years of fostering special needs and medically fragile children with Holston Home.

Pastor Will Martin, Holston Home's director of recruitment and training for mentors and foster parents, started the hall of fame last year to honor "exceptional families" who have gone above and beyond in their service with Holston Home.

The Luttrell family, of Knoxville, was inducted in 2018. They were the first and only — until now — to be recognized.



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From left, Pastor Will Martin of Holston United Methodist Home for Children reads a certificate presented to Diana and Hugh Minor, recognizing them for exceptional service as a foster family, upon their induction to the organization's "Hall of Fame."

Criteria to be added to Holston Home's Hall of Fame include serving for at least 15 consecutive years, consistently taking children into their home. Families must not have received any findings in investigations or corrective actions during their period of service. Finally, their home must be "closed," meaning they are no longer taking in foster children.

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Holston United Methodist Home for Children officials Lisa Shifflett, from left, and Pastor Will Martin present Diana and Hugh Minor a certificate recognizing their 16 years of exceptional service as a foster family.

The Minor family began their partnership with Holston Home when the youngest of their four biological children was "nearly grown," they said.

That was 16 years ago.

In the time since, the Minors have had 16 placements, many of which lasted 2.5 years or more. They have adopted five of those children.

Diana Minor worked as a nurse until she had a cerebral aneurysm in 1994. When she recovered, she decided it was time to open her home to a foster child.

She said she had always wanted to foster children but worried about growing attached and dealing with the loss when a foster child went home.

Diana Minor said God spoke to her and gave her "a spanking."

"He told me I was being selfish, and I was worried about myself instead of what I could put into these children's lives while I had them, however long that might be," she said.

Hugh Minor said that it was at that point his wife told God, "If you'll bring them to me, I got the arms to hold them."

"And we had to hold some of them until they died," he said.

The children that the Minor family took in were all special needs or medically fragile.

The oldest of their adopted children tragically aspirated popcorn at just 1 year old. When the Minors were called about his case, they were told to keep a close eye on him, because he was not expected to live longer than three days.

He recently celebrated his 10th birthday.

Two of their foster children and another they adopted have died of terminal illnesses. One lived to adulthood and "aged out" of foster care into developmentally disabled adult services, but continued stay with the Minors until his death.

While it was difficult for the family, Diana Minor said it comforts her to know that the children she cared for "knew love."

Martin said that the Minors' unwavering commitment and lack of limitations is what makes them so exceptional.

"They were willing to open their hearts and their home, knowing that these children could die at any moment in their care, and they were still willing to make the sacrifice and love these kids until they passed on," Martin said.

The Minors built a relationship with the Department of Children's Services and were often requested by name. On more than one occasion, the parents of a developmentally disabled child asked the Minors to care for or adopt their child.

They also worked to build relationships with the biological families of the children they cared for.

"I think that has been the most impressive thing," Holston Home Administrator over Foster Care Lisa Shifflett. "The Minors have gotten along well with the families and worked with them as a team, accepting them with open arms and without judgment."

"We would have been friends with all their parents if they wanted to. We didn't have a problem with that," Hugh Minor said.

"I just figured the plan is to get them back home, if possible, so you've got to get to know the family and teach them what needs to be done," Diana Minor added.

The decision to close their home was not the Minors'. Because they have adopted four of their foster children, and because the children have disabilities, they are not allowed to take in anymore children. Their home was officially "closed" this year after their most recent adoption.

Now, their names and years of service with Holston Home will be engraved on a plate to be added alongside the Luttrells and kept at Holston Home for years to come.

They received a certificate on Aug. 27 and will also receive a plaque and a professional photoshoot at their home.