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Dear Friends and Partners in Ministry:

All across Thornwell's beautiful and historic campus, signs of summer and the change of pace it brings to our life here are everywhere evident. The cover is off the pool, and in a matter of days, the sights and sounds of children splashing and swimming and playing in the water will capture our attention. Seniors are getting ready to graduate and to move to the next level of their education. Registrations are completed, and soon the children and young people will be off to Montreat conferences, church retreats, and sports and academic camps. Cottages have planned their family vacations and look forward to special times together. Some of the children will be heading back to their birth parents; and others will be entering our residential program. Yes, the signs of summer and its change of pace are all around us.

On April 28 - 29, our campus community enjoyed the two-day meeting of the Board of Visitors, welcoming long-time friends and greeting new friends with smiles and hugs. It was a time of grace and goodness, and was followed on Saturday, April 30, by the fabulous Pig-Pickin', courtesy of Bennett Brown and friends. Cottages were camping out, playing games, fishing, and just visiting with each other on a perfect spring weekend. And the barbecue!! Just the BEST we've ever had (and I say that as one who fancies himself as a true connoisseur of barbecue).

We have continued to be in conversation with potential community partners regarding mission-appropriate collaborations in the future. While specific plans or projects are not ready for proposal, the quality of our discussions and the clear spirit of goodwill and the desire for mutually-beneficial partnerships are cause for celebration and hope.

As you will read in the Development report, we continue to be blessed by the generosity of individuals, churches, and church groups, as well as by businesses and other supporters. In particular, the gifts we have received through bequests and estates this year have been remarkable. This has made us even more aware of how important it is to nurture existing relationships while working to make new friends for this amazing ministry to God's children.

The renovations and additions to Anita Cottage, made possible by the generosity of Mrs. Nancy O'Neal Garner and her family, are progressing very nicely. When that project is completed, a service of dedication will be held and the "Anita - Nancy" Cottage will be reopened as one of the premier facilities on our campus.

Because this is the final UPDATE that I will be privileged to write, I want to reaffirm my gratitude to the Board of Trustees and to our staff for allowing me the joy of serving at Thornwell - and especially for these past 8 months as your Interim President. As I take my leave of Thornwell and as Caryl and I shift gears into retirement, I do so in the knowledge that with our strong and dedicated Board of Trustees and our new President, the Rev. Elliot Smith, Thornwell is in excellent hands.

Over the past 40 years, God has called me to serve the Church in some wonderful places, with people whose friendship and Christian commitment have encouraged and inspired me in my own Christian pilgrimage. Without any doubt, I know that for me, God saved the best for last.

Sincerely,

Charles D. Elliott
Charles D. Elliott



Campus and Cottage

May 2011

The past few months have been extremely busy ones here on the Thornwell campus. Our cottage families enjoyed the gathering of the Board of Visitors on April 28-29 and the barbecue which followed on Saturday, April 30. Some of our Family Teachers and kids camped out at the Thornwell pond and “assisted” Bennett Brown with the cooking of the pigs for the barbecue. Our new president, Elliot Smith, was very popular with the kids as he took pictures of the fish that were caught from the Thornwell pond.

Since mid-March, we have admitted twelve children on emergency-five from one family, four from another, two

from another and one from yet another. The last student was admitted this past Friday and is part of a sibling group, but we did not have room for his one and eight year old siblings. The ages of the children we have taken in range from one to twelve.

Tuesday, May 16, was our annual Family Teacher Appreciation Day. This is a time of fun and fellowship and a day for us to honor our Teaching Family staff. We have a competition each year for the design of a tee shirt to commemorate the day. The slogan this year was “I role model for a living” and it was submitted by Chris Broecker. Danny and Ashley Smith, Family

Teachers at Georgia Beatie, were selected as Practitioners of the Year and will attend the National Teaching Family Conference in Banff, Canada, in November. Danny and Ashley have been at Thornwell four years.

Our children have been busy with end of year activities at their respective schools-chorus concerts, science fairs, track meets, athletic and academic banquets, and field trips. As school lets out, we will gear up for camps, mission trips, service projects, and cottage vacations.

The Learning Center

Testing is on every teacher and student’s mind as the end of the school year approaches. These tests are considered high stakes tests because they tell much about the quality of education our students receive, and they are major factors in the district’s report card. Also, they are very important to the work we do at the Learning Center. We use them to measure the progress of our students.

- Tenth grade students took the HSPA (High School Assessment Program) April 12-14. A score of 200 is required in English and language arts and in math for a student to earn a high school diploma.

- Select eleventh and twelfth grade students took AP (Advanced Placement) exams during the first and second weeks of April. Students who pass these tests earn college credit.

- Students in grades three through eight take the PASS (Palmetto Assessment of State Standards). This test is a criterion referenced exam that provides information regarding a student’s

mastery of grade level objectives.

- Students in grades one through nine are given the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress). This test uses a scale to measure student achievement and growth. The scale is an equal interval score that helps us determine if a child is performing on grade level or not.

- At the Learning Center, we give the STAR test for reading and math. The scores on the STAR serve as both pre and post tests for the school year and the summer program to help us measure the amount of growth a student has realized over a semester and over the summer.

In June, our summer reading program will begin. All students are required to read a mixture of fiction and non-fiction titles throughout the summer in order to maintain or improve their reading skills and be ready for the next grade level.



Thornwell family enjoying great food and fellowship at the April 30, BBQ.

Faith Development and Christian Nurture

May 2011

The children and youth are sending \$2,000 to Children of Promise Ministries Namibia, Africa. They raised the money through two bake sales and a matching gift from Mr. Wilson Farrell. Many thanks to all our Board of Visitors and Board of Trustees members who bought baked goods in support of our kid's efforts!

The Farrell Fund for Philanthropy is a philanthropic fund which allows our kids to experience learning about charitable agencies throughout the year and then to vote and give the money to local, national, and international agencies in the spring. On April 17, the youth groups voted to award the proceeds from the Farrell Fund to the following agencies:

- United Way of Laurens County
- Harvest Hope Food Bank
- Souper Bowl of Caring
- Relay for Life
- Mission Possible's LaHatte School in Haiti
- St. Joseph's Home for Boys in Haiti

Liz Codington, missionary to Albania, spoke to the campus on May 1, about her calling as a missionary.

On May 15, Hospice of Laurens County held its annual worship service and butterfly release at the Hartness-Thornwell Memorial Presbyterian Church.

Thornwell will participate in the Laurens County Relay for Life on May 20, at the Clinton High School track. We are giving \$1,000 to Relay (part of the Farrell Fund), setting up a tent, providing a puppet show for children, decorating and filling luminaries and walking the track.

As we plan for the summer, our kids are registering for summer camps: Montreat youth conferences; a mission trip to Conyers, GA; and Vacation Bible School.



May 15, Hospice Butterfly Release Ceremony

Outstanding gifts for the month of April came from the estates of Margaret E. Muranyi of Lakeland, FL; Frances Q. Holley of Mount Pleasant, SC; Allene (Polly) Martin Roseberry of Stockbridge, GA; and John G. Kemp, Jr., of Cartersville, GA. We are truly grateful for these thoughtful and gracious gifts and for all those who provide for Thornwell's children with their gifts of advocacy, prayer, and financial support.

For the Advancement Department, as well as for the entire campus, April is an exciting month as we prepare for the annual Board of Visitors meeting that is held the last Thursday and Friday of the month. This year we welcomed 8 new members to the Board: Philip and Karen Neely, Joe and Mica Nixon, Jim and Jan Temple, David Rivers and Gene Smith. We look forward to getting to know each of these new members as we work together on behalf of the ministry.

During dinner on Thursday evening, Board of Visitors Chairperson, Tea Madden, presented three awards to members of our Thornwell Family. First, the Distinguished Benefactor Award was presented to Mrs. Nancy O'Neal Garner. In addition to her lifetime of faithful support for Thornwell's ministry to children, Mrs. Garner, and her children in her honor, gave a generous gift designated to add additional living space to Anita Cottage and provide energy-efficient and safety upgrades. Accepting the award on behalf of her family was Mrs. Garner's daughter, Ms. Jeanne Garner Clay. In accepting the award, Ms. Clay expressed her gratitude on behalf of her mother and family for the award and felt "honored to be welcomed to our campus with such kindness."

Next, the Distinguished Service Award was given to Lonnie Bixler, who has served Thornwell for 20 years as Assistant Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services. In presenting this award, Tea praised Lonnie for, "approach[ing] his work with a contagious Christian faith, a lively sense of humor, an infectious laugh [and] a deep love for people – especially for the children of Thornwell."

The third presentation was truly a special moment for me. I am deeply grateful to the Board of Visitors, our Thornwell campus family and our Thornwell alumni for their gracious and beautiful gifts, and to my good friend, John Anderson, for his kind words.

On Friday morning Tea introduced the new President of Thornwell, Rev. Elliot Smith, to the group. Elliot told the Board that he was excited to join the Thornwell family in ministry on June 1 and looked forward to getting to know and working with everyone on behalf of Thornwell's children.

As the perfect ending for this year's meeting, on Saturday, April 30, Board of Visitors member, Bennett Brown, hosted a pig picking for our campus and community. Over 320 pounds of roasted pig fed nearly 150 people the best barbecue we've ever tasted. We've already warned Bennett that we're gathering a petition to make this an annual event. Thanks, Bennett!



BoV Member, Bennett Brown, serves BBQ to a hungry crowd.

Investments for this last quarter have improved over last quarter numbers. At the end of the seventh month of the fiscal year, bequests have been a blessing and have made a real difference in our financial picture. Our staff continues to work hard to find ways to conserve resources, cut unnecessary spending and at the same time, provide the best care possible for the children and youth who live on our campus. With twelve new children arriving on campus within the last three weeks, we are now at nearly full capacity with only two available beds.

One of our largest expenses on campus comes in the form of utilities, making one of our greatest immediate needs the funding to provide more insulation and energy efficient heating and cooling units in most all our buildings.

With the warm weather, grounds upkeep is in full swing and work is being done to get the pool ready for use by Memorial Day weekend.

We continue to be grateful for the food we receive from Harvest Hope Food Bank in Greenville, SC. The grocery items, meat, frozen food and vegetables this organization provides for our cottages helps tremendously with food costs.

Summer also means a trip to Camp Thornwell for our maintenance staff. A day of clean-up, yard work and general maintenance on the buildings and equipment was necessary.

The construction on the addition to Anita Cottage is going well. The addition now has a second floor. Siding is going up and the roof is being added.

