

# CAP Connection

A newsletter for volunteer alumni of the Christian Appalachian Project

Spring 2009



## Bill Mills responds to a new calling

*As many CAP volunteers have experienced,* following God's will can take a person to unexpected places. These days that isn't only happening in the Volunteer Program; it's happening in CAP's leadership.

In February, CAP president Bill Mills announced to the staff that God's call was pulling him away from CAP and toward more time with his family. Former volunteer Randy Beckham will take over as the president on May 11, Bill's



*The Mills Family*

last day.

Bill joined CAP as president in 2003 after acting president Jerry O'Daniel carried the organization through challenging times. At that time, Bill and his wife, Christie, were raising their two daughters. Bill says CAP became the center of his universe.

Kathleen Leavell has seen CAP benefit in many ways from Bill's leadership. "Bill took us to a new (Continued on page 2)

## CAP alum becomes new president

*Randy Beckham arrived at CAP in 2007 as a retired president and CEO of Traditional*



*Rita and Randy Beckham volunteered with CAP in Johnson County.*

*Bank and a new long-term volunteer.* But 10 months of volunteer work wasn't enough for Randy. He joined CAP's development staff and was soon promoted to Director of Christian Partners and Volunteer Programs.

Randy and his wife, Rita, live in Mt. Sterling. They shared their business expertise with CAP as volunteers with Rita helping in the president's office, human resources and special (Continued on page 3)



*Erika Hajiantoni*

## Volunteer leads CAP's Creation Care Initiative

*Do you drink your coffee from a Styrofoam or ceramic cup?* Ever carpool to work? Have you installed compact fluorescent light bulbs in your home? Erika Hajiantoni has been posing those questions to CAP employees and volunteers as part of the "greening" of CAP.

When Erika began her volunteer assignment in child and family development, her extensive background and experience in environmental issues caught the attention of her program manager and eventually CAP's president, Bill Mills. Within weeks she was overseeing the new Creation Care Initiative. "It's our response to caring for God's creation," Erika says.

"For me, this is a lifestyle. It's a consciousness that's with me all the time," she says. She

(Continued on page 2)

## Volunteer leads CAP Creation Care Initiative

*(Continued from cover)*

grew up with a family that recycled and she has learned that, “Based on the choices you make, you can make an impact.”

As a volunteer, Erika feels she was in the right place at the right time to combine her concern for the environment with a need Bill Mills had already identified for CAP. She says her goal is to educate people about environmental issues and how the organization and individuals affect the environment, something she feels is important because God gave us only one earth.

One of Erika’s first tasks

has been to develop a recycling program. That includes eliminating items that could end up in the garbage. “We want to get away from the throw-away culture,” she says.

One example of how that is happening was at this year’s WorkFest where CAP reduced the use of paper and Styrofoam products to nearly zero. CAP encouraged students to reuse lunch bags, refill the water bottles CAP provided and have one meat-less day during the week.

A next step for CAP will be an energy audit of all the organization’s buildings. The

audits will identify weaknesses in the buildings that CAP needs to address.

The organization is also working toward fueling its vehicles, especially the larger ones, with bio-fuels. With a grant, CAP is investigating the use of waste vegetable oil or bio-diesel.

“We smile when we think of all our alums out there who were promoting this decades ago when it ‘wasn’t cool,’” said Kathy Kluesener. “Well, you can be proud to know your seeds have taken root and come to fruition!” Perhaps CAP’s example will bolster a trend that can affect the well-being of the entire Appalachian region.

### Send us your news, message, memories or prayer requests

Please send us any message you would like to share in an upcoming edition of the CAP Connection to: Volunteer Program, 4192 North Wilderness Rd., Mt. Vernon, KY 40456 or [volunteer@chrisapp.org](mailto:volunteer@chrisapp.org).

Name:

Phone:

Street address:

City:

State:      Zip:

Years you volunteered:

E-mail:

Your message:

## Bill Mills responds to a new calling

*(Continued from cover)*

perspective, helping us to recognize and utilize some atypical resources that God was sending us, such as local businesses and partnerships with spiritual organizations,” she says. She also saw his love and dedication for volunteers inspire the staff.

All of that was happening while the Mills family was growing. Bill and Christie adopted their third child, Joshua. Joshua deals with a number of developmental and physical challenges, requiring considerable family effort.

As the Mills family helped Joshua, they also met two-year-old twins, Brooklyn and Bailey who were looking for a home. Their adoption was finalized in December, increasing the family to five children.

In his letter to the CAP family, Bill wrote: “Over the course of three years, my family has experienced significant

change. I must also admit that my heart, my personal passions and my focus have changed as well, and I never expected it. So when I look to the future, it is quite obvious that my primary ministry is now my family and everything I do professionally must support and complement the needs of my family.”

Bill will continue to be a part of CAP as a member of its board of directors.

That ongoing involvement and influence is encouraging to Kathleen. “We will continue to grow and be challenged with his ‘out of the box’ thinking.”

In his letter to the CAP family, Bill wrote: “I leave under the assumption that God used me to help CAP, and that He used CAP to shape me for the personal ministry that has become so prevalent in my life.”

## From Across the Mountains

**Linda (Sprick)** and Peter Kruse, write that all is well with their busy family in Ohio. Linda is president of Synod Women's Group, which keeps her traveling. She is also serving as an interim with St. Mark and Brandt Lutheran churches. Peter is still pastor at First Lutheran in Donnelsville and is also serving as interim at St. Mark and Brandt. He is working on his Doctor of Ministry thesis and is leading the Kazakhstan task force. Daughters Addy, 11, and Joy, 8, are growing and learning.

**Julie (Williams) and Steve LeBrun, '86-'88**, report that their family is thriving in Kentucky. Julie continues to work on her Master's while employed by Eastern Kentucky University. She coordinates youth ministry at St. Clare parish. Steve is enjoying his second year as assistant principal at Lexington Catholic High School as well as serving on the St. Clare parish council. Daughters Kristen and Stephanie are studying at Hanover College in Ind. Twins Sarah and Kerry are juniors at Lexington Catholic and Casey is a freshman.

**Janet (Lagerman) Huehls, '93-'94**, and her husband, Kirk, live near Worcester, Mass with four children. The newest addition is Grace, who is almost two years old.

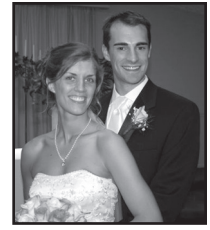
**Melany Burgos-Morris, '98 - '99**, gave birth to Maya Emilia on April 28. She writes that she is taking some time off from teaching to stay home with Maya.

**Nate Birkhead, '04**, and Shannon Sizemore were married in June, 2008 in Prestonsburg, Ky. The two met at Camp Shawnee while Nate was volunteering as a camp counselor and Shannon, a former camper, was working at the camp. After returning home, they began a long distance relationship that led them to believe God had intervened on the day they met.

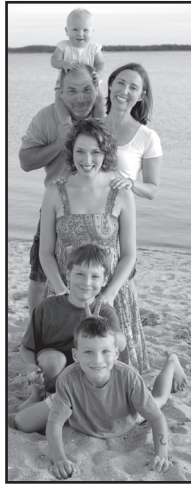
The couple now lives in Bloomington, Ind. where Nate is pursuing a doctoral degree in Political Science at Indiana Uni-

versity. Shannon is an RN at Bloomington Hospital's Center for Women and Children. They extend many thanks to God, friends and family, as well as the Christian Appalachian Project for all the support that helped progress their friendship into a committed relationship with one another and God.

**Robyn (Brian) O'Neal, '00 - '01**, and her husband Brad welcomed their son Luke Brian O'Neal into the world on August 18, 2008. Robyn writes, "We praise God for a beautiful and healthy baby!!"



*Shannon (Sizemore) Birkhead and Nate Birkhead.*



*Janet (Lagerman) Huehls with husband, Kirk, and family.*



*Brad and Robyn (Brian) O'Neal with their son Luke Brian O'Neal.*

## CAP alum becomes new president

*(Continued from cover)*

projects. She later joined the CAP board, of which her father, Harrison Peet, had been a founding member.

During their volunteer time, Randy and Rita said they got to know a part of their own state that was, in some ways, a world away from what they had always known.

Kathy Kluesener believes Randy brings to his new position a beautiful awareness of volunteer life. She has observed that he's great at spending time with people, really trying to understand and listen to questions, concerns and personal stories.

Amblyn Allen agrees. Although she recognizes his financial experience as a ben-

efit, she says: "What makes me excited about Randy being CAP's president is his tremendous warmth, enthusiasm, and passion. Anyone who meets him will immediately recognize what a big heart and caring spirit Randy has."



## WorkFest volunteers return

WorkFest again filled a month in the mountains with approximately 400 students and 32 short-term crew leaders and cooks. The work resulted in more than 20 repaired, improved or rebuilt homes. Perennial crew leader John Trokan (above), from Mt. St. Joseph College in Cincinnati, once again brought his leadership and home repair skills to share with college students as they learned what it's like to move beyond where you're comfortable and serve for the greater good.

**CAP Connection** is published quarterly by the CAP Volunteer Program. If you have news to share or story ideas to suggest, please send them to one of the following:

**Beth Dotson Brown**  
(CAP Volunteer '90 - '91)  
Contributing Editor

**Kathy Kluesener**  
(CAP Volunteer '73 - '80)  
Admissions Coordinator

**Amblyn Allen**  
(CAP Volunteer '05 - '07)  
Volunteer Recruitment  
Coordinator

volunteer@chrisapp.org  
1-800-755-5322  
fax 606-256-5942  
www.christianapp.org

## CAP recruiter moves on to serve future generations

We bid farewell to Amblyn Allen as she leaves us for graduate work at St Mary's University in Minnesota where she will prepare to become a high school teacher. She has taught us much and will leave behind a vibrant

spirit of selflessness. Everyone deserves an unforgettable teacher who introduces them to the difference they can make in the world. We can't wait to get Amblyn's future graduates as volunteers!!!



## CAP adds seven volunteers

*CAP welcomed seven new volunteers at orientation in January. The group includes: Staci Bloemker, Shannon Alford, Kelly Curtis, Samantha Hebenstreit, Beth Gehret, Bob Becker and Jenna Boyd. We ask that you keep them in your prayers as they carry on the mission we all share.*

## Thank you

Thank you to everyone who has assisted our traveling volunteer recruiters, Amy Schill and Amblyn Allen, during the past few months. We especially want to thank:

Rachel Steingass '97-'99  
Roy Lanham (multiple WorkFests)  
Theresa Elliot '97  
Stacie West '03-'04  
Mary Kopa (multiple WorkFests)



### Volunteer Program

4192 North Wilderness Road  
Mt. Vernon, KY 40456

Change Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Lancaster, KY  
PERMIT NO.  
25