

Member Spotlight

Jenny Truesdale-Give A Kid A Chance

Good Shepherd does so many wonderful things that people may or may not be aware of happening. We would like to begin an effort to occasionally highlight members and some of the organizations and events they are passionate about. Our first member spotlight is Jenny Truesdale who works with Give A Kid A Chance (GSKAC). This organization provides school age (Pre-K-12thgrade) children in Cherokee County the basic school supplies and backpacks for the upcoming school year. This program gives these children confidence to pick out the backpack of their choice, along with school supplies and the team provides them with words of encouragement for the school year.

From the start of GAKAC in 2006, GAKAC offered backpacks with supplies in bags, new clothes, socks, and underwear, along with medical, haircuts and lunch. They had 2 locations, Hillside and 1st Baptist of Canton. In 2020 and 2021 (COVID years), they did a drive thru in the parking lots, so the kids could still get backpacks and food. For those 2 years, there were no volunteers; only members of those churches helped. In 2022, the program shifted to add a 3rd location - Hillside, Revolution in Canton and new location Revolution in Jasper. They allowed volunteer helpers again, and the children were able to pick out their own backpacks, in addition to picking out their own supplies. This was big and the kids loved this. They continue this way of distribution in 2023 and have now added a new position of Family Buddy. A family buddy is a person that went with the family to pick up backpacks and supplies. They direct them to a room where the kids can do arts/crafts and games, while the parents went and received more information and food from the vendors.

Jenny recalls the emotions of the kids on pick-up day, "I mostly remember seeing kids acting shy about getting to pick out backpacks, but when they are done, they have the biggest smile on their faces. So sweet! Last year, I recalled a child that came up to me when we were starting to clean up. He didn't speak, but during arts and crafts he made a wooden boat with a little sign in his own handwriting that said, "GAKAC thank you for caring". I told him your welcome and went to find his parents." This is what this organization and volunteering are all about!

Jenny thinks GSLC has been donating supplies and backpacks since GAKAC started. She remembers seeing a t-shirt dated 2011 and Good Shepherd was on that shirt. GSLC continues to contribute supplies and backpacks each year and a few people volunteer at the event.

This year will be Jenny's 10th year! "I love seeing the children pick out their supplies and backpacks, it touches my heart that GAKAC is here to help families that can't afford it. It is a great organization to donate to and volunteer for; it is for only one day, but is so rewarding, and you will bless others and be blessed along the way."