

25th Anniversary Celebration for the Duke Wesley Fellowship October 18, 2008

My files show the last time we sent out an alumni update was in July 2005. Hmm...where does the time go? In the meantime, as you well know, Wesley bought a house (we could use that as my excuse for lax newsletter editing...). After a year we're still scraping and painting, remodeling and renovating, and living into the possibilities for what this house brings to our community. In the midst of all the work and the living, I think it's safe to say things are going well. Our looming project is the kitchen.

Meanwhile in the ministry and mission of Wesley, we dedicated another Habitat House in April (our 4th in 6 years), returned to New Orleans over Christmas Break (our 4th trip since the storm), and stayed in Durham for spring break to study issues of Race Relations by piggy-backing on the Freshmen Reading Project, Best of Enemies: Race and Redemption in the New South, based on two lifelong residents of Durham. We are currently hosting a Duke Engage Project for the summer, Food Insecurity in the Wealthiest Nation in the World, where participants are considering the agribusiness industry, dietary habits, and the impact of food distribution on low-income families—considerate of Duke to invite Barbara Kingsolver, author of Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, to be our commencement speaker and to kick off the whole thing. Of course, Barbara didn't know she was kicking off our project...

Other than the "flashy" things, the foundation of Wesley rests on our small groups, Thursday Eucharist (Yes, Paula Gilbert perseveres in one of the longest continuous traditions of this community), Sunday Worship, and spur-of-the-moment fun.

Listed below are a few folks who have done some things that might make you proud. We, of course, attribute their eminence to their good upbringing in Wesley and its predecessor communities.

- Belton Joyner, class of 1957 Methodist Student Fellowship and most recently Chair of the Board of Directors for Duke Wesley, has just been named to the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church, the 9-member body that represents our church's highest judicial body. For an analogy, think Supreme Court of the United States.
- Jennifer E. Copeland, class of 1985 and currently Director of the Duke Wesley Fellowship, received the 2007 Allan Burry Award for Promoting Servant Leadership from the national United Methodist Campus Ministry Association. She was also just named a member of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for the current quadrennium.
- Claire Lauterbach, class of 2008, received the Angier Sydney Sullivan Award from Duke University. The Sullivan Award is presented to one student in the graduating class who exhibits Recognition of Selflessness, Generosity of Service, Nobility of Character, Person of Integrity, and Depth of Spirituality.

- The Duke Wesley Fellowship received at the conclusion of the 2008 academic year, the University Award for Leadership in Service from the Office of Student Affairs.

Ron and I have been living in Toronto, Ontario for close to five years now. In February 2007 we welcomed our daughter Sophia and have found out the truth in the cliché that "our lives will never be the same." She is a delight, a tiring delight! I am spending my days with her. Ron is still involved in forest conservation work in the city and province. On occasion, though not as often as we should, we run into fellow Canadian Wesleyites Chris Jarvis and John David Ashworth. Our guestroom awaits any visitors who want to venture northward.

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Dear Wesleyites,

After eleven years in Texas, I am happily ensconced in the mountains of NC. It's hard to believe I've been back "home" for four years now. Y'all know I love nature joys; I experience so many each day here. I love looking out my bedroom window and seeing the moon rise over the mountains with the bare trees silhouetted against the moon. I've just earned my certification as a Blue Ridge Naturalist from UNC-Asheville, and I taught the botany course for the program this winter. The program has been so much fun; most of the classes are field classes; we hike along the Blue Ridge Parkway, for instance, identifying wildflowers, trees, birds, etc. Teaching botany was a good stretch for my brain. It's been a while since I've used my education and training in a formal setting. The class involved more time and energy than I expected, but I enjoyed every minute of it.

In addition to getting outside every chance I get, I spend time keeping up with the kids and helping Steve with his businesses. Heather is almost 6 and is finishing Kindergarten. She lost her first tooth the other day. I've never seen a little kid as excited about that as she was. She didn't stop smiling and dancing for two days. OK, she smiles, dances, and sings most of the time. She has learned to read very quickly and loves it, but what impresses me most is how much she loves to write. She's always leaving us notes to remind us of things, ask us questions, or just to make a statement.

Adam is maturing, but he has the standard 3rd-grade boy sense of humor. He devours any book you give him, especially the Harry Potter series. It's so much fun when he comes to me and says, "Mom, you have to read this book!" Adam entertains us with his talent for magic tricks. He also enjoys reading, math, reading, video games, reading, and Cub Scouts. This spring he's even been taking a French class that he absolutely loves.

If any of you are interested in relocating to the Asheville area, Steve can help you find a home. He has his own real estate business that focuses on people who want to do more of the work themselves and not have to pay full commissions. He also has a seasonal tour business leading trips to the national championship college football game each year. This year we had over 170 Ohio State fans on our tour. Any chance Duke will make that game--ever????

We continue to see Scott's parents frequently. Some people tell me, "It's good that you still keep in touch with Scott's family," but they've been part of my family since Scott and I started dating at Duke. I could no more lose touch with them than I could my own parents. This summer Scott and I would have celebrated our 15th anniversary. Life didn't turn out like I expected it would 15 years ago, but since Scott's death, life has gone on. God has blessed me over and over again. Life is good.

I'm a busy stay-at-home home who is never home. I'm sure many of you can relate to that. This year I expect to continue my naturalist activities, volunteering at the NC Arboretum, doing nature photography, volunteering at the kids' school, being involved in a gazillion activities at church, etc. However, there is always time to spend with friends who come visit! Our home is always open to friends from Wesley.

Love to you all,

Alexandra (Maynard) (Crutchfield) Holland

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The Browns are still in Belleville, IL and doing well. We have been here over 7 years now, hard to believe. I have been with Woolpert Inc. for 5 years and enjoy it a lot. I am a project manager for the facility design group and have been involved in some interesting projects at various military bases. I learn something new everyday about architecture and engineering. Rhonda and I have been married for 7-1/2 years. She is a MOPS coordinator for our church and is having fun making a positive impact in women's ministry. We have 2 kids, Joshua, 4, and Allison, 22 months. Some of you may know what Joshua has been through. He was diagnosed with a DIGG brain tumor when he was 2 months old. The tumor was removed, but came back 6 months later as multiple tumors, leading to chemotherapy for a year. Since June 2005, God has kept the tumors from growing, a major miracle. We, and many others, still pray daily for the tumors to disappear. We are encouraged by Joshua's progress over the last 3 years. He started walking, talking, going to preschool, and even eating. He had been on a g-tube for 3-1/2 years. He still has many delays from the hospitalizations and the tumors, but continues to surprise all of us with what he can do. It is a tough journey, but God has taught us a lot and has carried us through.

Allison is Joshua's helper and companion. She has fiery red hair and will certainly test us in the future, but for now she is a sweet baby girl. It has been neat for us to experience stages with her that we didn't get to experience with Joshua.

I hope the Celebration is a great success. I don't think we'll be able to make it, too hard to travel right now, but we'll be thinking of you.
Peace, Doug Brown '94

I currently live in New York and work for the government of Spain in their international trade office. Basically, after graduation I went to London and worked in a bar and lived with Leslie Griffiths, did a Fulbright in Spain, then moved to New York in September 2006. I worked at a non-profit for a bit, but ended up hating it and switching to my current job.

In July I'm moving out of New York and either to DC or Bologna Italy to start a masters in international relations at SAIS (John's Hopkins).

My current address is 134 Smith St Apt 2, Brooklyn, NY 11201. That will be changing soon though.
Jeff Finch, 05

The past year has been a year of big changes for me. I finished my MDiv and graduated from Candler in May, and stayed in Atlanta for about eight more months. For most of that time, I worked for a non-profit that does refugee resettlement. However, I was also in the process of interviewing for a job through the UMC's General Board of Global Ministries, as a Church and Community Worker. I went through the interview and placement process over the summer and fall, and ended up here in Michigan. I am working as the director of a community center that is in a rural area about 20 minutes outside of Lansing. I moved here in January, and thought that the winter would never end, but it finally has, thank goodness. When I was going through the interview process with GBGM, I met Mary, my girlfriend, on a retreat at Lake Junaluska. Mary is also a Church and Community Worker, at a community center in Baltimore that serves people who are deaf.

Peace, Andrew Highland, 2002

After 28 years of school/training I finally have my first real job! I accepted a faculty appointment in the division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology at Emory University last July. I have both clinical responsibilities as well as a basic science lab focusing on bleeding disorders. I am active in a local church and spend a lot of my free time playing softball, golf, tennis, or watching the Braves. I hope to make it back for the reunion in October.

Shannon Meeks, '97

Much has happened in the past couple of years both personally and professionally since I last wrote a "letter to Wesley." On the less interesting professionally end, I was put forward my department for both tenure and promotion to associate professor in the fall of 2006; after the year-long College review process, these were granted in the spring of 2007! Ironically, this would have been much more significant if more important (personal) things in life hadn't been occurring at the same time! As many of you know, Tom Manning and I began dating back in 2004; Tom was a colleague of my parents who contacted me about doing a retirement celebration for them in the summer of 2004. We began planning that event and never stopped talking! After dating two and a half years, Tom proposed the weekend before Christmas of 2006 while we were in Roanoke, Virginia; we were married in Lexington, North Carolina on June 16, 2007. We were truly blessed to be surrounded by so many family members and friends--including a number of Wesley folks. Honestly, I never knew I could be so happy; Tom is incredible man of deep faith and I feel so blessed to call him my husband! Unfortunately, neither Tom nor I have been able to find a job so that one of us can relocate. Tom lives in Winston-Salem and I live in Raleigh. We have both been applying for jobs, but thus far haven't had any luck in finding a match. So, we are together every weekend (usually Tom coming to Raleigh), and during the summer I can work remotely from Winston-Salem. Hopefully something will turn up soon. In the mean time, we just try to enjoy every minute we have together, trusting that God will soon open the right door for one of us.

Hope all of you are doing well, and I look forward to seeing many of you in the fall at the Wesley Anniversary Celebration!

Take care.

Cammev Cole Manning ('96)

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Hi Wesleyites,

Our family is doing well up here in Maryland--we're in between Baltimore and DC, in Columbia, MD. I'm still in seminary, at Wesley (appropriately) and will probably graduate in 2010, and be commissioned as an elder. I love school and my so-called part-time job as "Minister for Worship and Evangelism" at Glen Mar UMC in Ellicott City, MD. It's supposed to be 15 hours a week, but that's a metaphor akin to the 6 days of creation. Our website is glenmarumc.org, and if you follow the links, you can hear some of my sermons. I preach about once a month, including one Sunday when I had to preach on about 7 minutes notice when our associate pastor fainted. That actually had been a literal nightmare of mine, having to preach a sermon without notice, so, I'm glad God found a way to get rid of that fear. I'm doing everything on the staff but consecrate and baptize and it's really amazing. I'm Associate Editor of the Wesley Journal (the campus newsletter) and will be editor in the fall, and also going to school full time--since the kids will both be in school all day.

Eric, miraculously, is OK with being married to a workaholic, such as I, and is still working at NIH. He's recently been promoted to supervisor of his unit, and I'm still not too sure what he does. It has to do with computers and teaching and science. Our children are wonderful (Nathan 6 and Lydia 4) and consistently make us laugh and confound us. Nathan is still passionate about airplanes and art and God-talk. Lydia is this girly-girl who wears dresses almost every day and insists on picking out her own clothes. The end result is usually a Punky Brewster meets princess effect. She approves when mommy dresses up for church and assesses my outfit with a professional's eye. As I write this, she's singing a song about spring at the top of her lungs and eating pink yogurt. Feed my email addiction. Keep in touch.

Mandy and Eric Sayers (and Nathan and Lydia)

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Dear Wesley Alums,

Just a quick update for all: Holly and I had our first child on December 15, 2007. Riley Katherine Ross ([Link to Pictures](#)) has been the center and joy of our lives since, well, before she was born. The day that we found out we were pregnant, I was attending an info session for Fuqua's EMBA programs. We took the coincidence as a nudge (and since Durham is much closer to Apex than Chicago or Philadelphia) and I decided to apply exclusively to Fuqua. I got in and started my EMBA this March. Free time has been in limited supply since December, but marriage, parenthood, church, school, and work are all blending together reasonably well. I'm still working at Signalscape, but moved out of engineering into the role of Director of Operations last year. The reduced travel load has definitely been a blessing.

- Robert Earl Ross

I hope everyone is doing well and looking forward to the Wesley 25th anniversary celebration! On May 11, I received my second Duke degree, this one from the law school. But I'm not done with Durham just yet, as I will stay here to study for the North Carolina bar exam this summer. In August, I will move to Jacksonville, Florida, to clerk for a federal appellate judge for a year. After three years of living in a cave, I need a good dose of sunshine and beaches! This is an exciting time - I cannot wait to start career #2. Peace, Abby Dennis T'01, L'08
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The Tippens family is doing well.

Terry ('84) is completing his eighth year as senior pastor of First UMC of Winder, GA (an hour NE of Atlanta, 45 minutes W of the University of Georgia).

Wife Missy sold her first full-length novel to Steeple Hill, the inspirational romance division of Harlequin Books, and it was published this past February under the title, *Her Unlikely Family*. Booksellers may not have a copy on hand any more (because they were selling like hot cakes--no, actually Steeple Hill publishes a new series of four novels for the shelves each month), but you can possibly get one online at Amazon.com, OR, you could go directly to the author's website, MissyTippens.com, and ask to purchase a copy from her. (Tell her Terry sent you and she'll sell it to you for \$5 plus shipping and handling. :)) Seriously, our family is very proud of Missy. (And, seriously, the books are for sale, and seriously, check out MissyTippens.com.) She worked at this for ten years before breaking through as a published novelist. And she HAS received rave reviews for her debut novel, and it HAS sold well. I'm not much of a reader, and I loved it. It's a really good story, and I think it would make a great movie if anyone's interested in writing the screenplay.

We just got word from her editor in New York that her second novel has been accepted after many revisions, and it will be published in the summer of 2009. Missy is thrilled that she will not be a "one-hit wonder". Missy's own titles have not been used either time, but the publishers know what they're doing, so Missy feels good about their title choices. This second book will be called *His Forever Love*. Yes, we detected a pattern there, but like I said, they know what they're doing. I can't wait to read this one in its finished version. Look for it in the summer of 2009.

Our youngest, Michelle, 5th grade, won first place in the 18-and-under category of our city-wide poetry contest for a poem called "Night" (following in mom's footsteps?). Our 7th grader, Tyler, will be playing #1 singles for the middle school tennis team next year, and will be recognized in June for qualifying for the Duke Talent Identification Program. AND, our high school, senior, Nick, will be attending Duke this fall--our son is gonna be a Blue Devil! We were thrilled when he was accepted early admission in December. He played #1 singles for the Winder-Barrow High School tennis team, finishing undefeated in the region and 21-1 overall. The team went to state for the third year in a row, but alas, lost to one of those loaded Atlanta private schools. What's that? Duke is a private school? Wait--I thought it was THE University of North Carolina (like my bumper sticker used to say). Well.... at least it's United Methodist, isn't it? And thank God for financial aid (and compound interest). Go Devils! Terry Tippens

Greetings from the chilly upper midwest. It's been 7 years since I moved out to Minneapolis and I've come to really love my chosen state. Most of the time, anyway; right now I mourn having a spring that arrives in May rather than March!

I continue to work as a nurse practitioner, but I've recently changed jobs. After nearly 10 years in primary care working with the underserved, I needed a change, preferably one that would bring less stress and hours at the office. I now work for our county public health department, which does tuberculosis treatment, refugee and immigrant screening, as well as STD/HIV testing and treatment. It's a great clinic run by nurse practitioners, and I now work 32 hours/week for a much more balanced and sane and less stressful life. I realize some may find specializing in STD treatment to be odd, but I really enjoy this niche. I can continue to commute by walking/light rail, which also suits me well.

Otherwise, life hasn't changed too much. I continue to date Doug and I am very involved in the life of his kids, Griffin (age 10) and Eva (age 8). The two of us took a long vacation to Italy in the fall, where we did the usual tourist things. We also hiked in the Italian Alps (the Dolomites) and the Italian Riviera (Cinque Terre) and Tuscany. We both continue to be involved at our Episcopal church and in our dinner group, a committed community that now consists of 14 adults and 9 kids! We may need to start renting space to accommodate all of us, and renting a cabin has become quite the challenge. Doug and I enjoy outdoor activities, strategy games with friends, and time to relax at the movies when we can!

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25 years have gone by and yes I am still in Durham. LOL. Never thought I would still be here after all this years. Well I guess it's time to write something for the alumni newsletter since I have never done so. (I know, bad alumni.) Not much to tell. I work at Duke now and have done so for the last 8 and a half years. I do computer support for the Department of Surgery at the Medical Center. I was waiting tables part time also for several years but last year Nikos closed unexpectedly and after being out of the biz for 6 months I decided not to return to it when the restaurant reopened a month ago.

So life is mostly work and the gym. Yeah somewhere along the line I became a gym rat and go almost every day. Those of you who were at the last reunion already know that but for those who didn't I am not the same skinny kid from a million years ago. So the gym and taking care of the three kids take up most of my free time. My partner and I, Maxie, have been blessed with three children: Katie, Lucky and Penny.

Katie, an 8 year old lab mix came to me from my niece in Atlanta right before she gave birth to her first child. She is the easy going low maintenance one Lucky a lab/pit two year old was an abandoned dog that a family in West Durham found but could not keep. I adopted and went through three months of hell trying to tame this wild animal into a house dog. Much to my surprise and delight he is .now one of the sweetest dogs in the world and every morning lays his head on Daddy's chest for his morning belly rub. Penny, a pit/boxer mix is the baby and is a recent addition to our household. I was

walking the other two one day and was thinking how blessed we were to have them. The thought went through my head that one day in the future, possibly a year or two, God would put another animal in my path and I would know that I was meant to care for it. 5 minutes later a sickly mange infested fireball walked across the street and into my heart. She is all better now and is actually trying to help Daddy type this as she loves to jump up and rest her paws on my leg while I work on the computer.

Maxie and I have been together for a little over three years now. We have been living together for a year and a half. We met on line and were just friends at first but it quickly grew into something more. Although North Carolina won't let us get married we are very much an old married couple who hope some day the rest of the country will follow California and Massachusetts' example. That's as political as I will get for now but if you ask me I will talk your ear off about how glad I will be when our 8 year national nightmare is over. By the way Maxie is the sweet quiet one who keeps me grounded but who won't hesitate to tell me when I am full of it. A fact I am sure many of my friends over the years are thrilled to hear.

That's about it. As far as church going I kind of got burnt out with church politics at Lakewood. UMC. Unfortunately there were some nasty PPR committee meetings over ministers who got dumped at Lakewood. I hear through the grapevine that the church is no more, which is a shame, because it was such a great interracial church that had such potential. I will spare you the nasty details of the church fights which Jenny had to patiently listen to the other day while I was working on the Wesley computer, but I am sure you all have your own committee meeting horror stories

I run into Jenny, Jamie, E.B., and Mike occasionally at various Wesley functions but am really bad about keeping up with folks but promise to try and do better. I think of all the great times and all the funny stories of Wesley often. Will be here for the reunion so hope to see you then and if not feel free to drop an e-mail from time to time. Take care.

Peace,
Mark (hipps001@mc.duke.edu)

Dear Wesleyites,

Every year, I say the same thing: happy to be here, still working on my Ph.D., my how the children have grown. As for those children, they are 12 and 15, middle school and high school, self sufficient in ways that make life more manageable for me, but also involved in more complicated extracurricular activities that make life more hectic for me. To compensate, I multitask by running while Hannah practices soccer, grade papers while Nathan takes his To-Shin-Do class, or read during staff meetings. Probably shouldn't tell anyone that last one.

Should finish the Ph. D. this semester—I know you've been hearing that for the last three or four semesters, but I really mean it this time. Truth is, it's written; I just have to get my committee to like it as much as I do. I'll start working on them in the next few days and we have until early December. Should happen.

Come to the reunion. I miss you all.
Jennifer E. Copeland, '85