

## From Foster Care to Adoption

*By Lora Maraspini, Agape Foster and Adoptive Mom*

In 2001, while in high school, I learned about the need for foster families through my church. I wanted my mom to be a foster parent but my father had recently died and we weren't in a place to take that on. I continued to have the desire on my heart to support these children throughout my life and even started the process twice but had to put it on hold both times due to changing circumstances. I finally had the opportunity to complete certification with Agape in the fall of 2021. I was married and our



*Left to Right: Lia, Lora, Josiah, Brooklyn with Ella in front.*

three daughters were 13, 10 and 7. We were nervous but after all the training and soaking up the information and wisdom from the Agape staff, we felt ready and so supported. Although we knew we would be meeting these children during some of the toughest days of their lives, we looked forward to welcoming them into our family and doing our best to make the process as easy as possible for them. We knew we would fall in love with every child but we wanted to support reunification first and foremost. Because of this, we didn't have plans to adopt but our hearts were open to the possibility.

We said yes to 2 different sibling sets but they ended up getting placed elsewhere. Our next call was on December 6, 2021, and this time we got to receive our first placement, a precious 6 week old baby boy. I had always wanted a son so it felt surreal to be able to have him in my care and experience the baby stage again. I looked forward to meeting his mom and trying to be an encouragement to her. She ended up being unable to work her case plan so his case was moved to adoptions about a year later. We loved him so much that it was an easy decision to adopt him. On May 12th, 2023, my girls and I were overjoyed to finally know he would be part of our family forever.

During our fostering we were able to be united with two of his siblings that are with another Agape family. We have been blessed to get to know them all and look forward to allowing the kids to grow up together.

My son's mom and I have been able to connect through Messenger and I am loving being able to get to know her and share his photos and milestones. My hope is that he will always get to hear directly how much he is loved by not only our family but his biological family as well.

I will be forever grateful to the Agape staff, especially our social worker, Brian, for supporting us every step of the way. There was never a moment that I felt lost in the process. Brian, Nina and Lisa were always just a quick text or email away. I even had to move my family during this time and they helped me make the process as easy as possible, getting all the documents updated and the new house certified. Brian also helped get my son the extra services he needed and always made sure there was nothing we were in need of at all during his weekly visits. I can't imagine going through this process without our Agape Villages family.

### Congratulations Again!

The Manteca/Ripon Bulletin newspaper once again did an online voting survey in their 2023 Readers' Choice contest. Agape Villages is this year's winner for Favorite NonProfit! We are extremely honored to have been chosen again!



# Stories From Foster Care

## Happy Ending For Jose and Lucia

Jose and Lucia have been with Agape for nearly 2 years, having been removed from their home due to neglect. They have been lovingly taken care of by Mark and Danielle. They are now 11 and 13 years old. During their time with Mark and Danielle, their grades at school dramatically improved. And their mother faithfully worked her program, successfully getting off drugs, and the kids were able to visit her. Everyone was thrilled when the kids were able to be reunited with their mom. Not a dry eye in the house!

## Providing Hope for a Better Future

Lisa was only 3 days old when she was placed with Joe and Elizabeth. Sadly her mother tested positive for drugs in the hospital and Lisa could not go home with her. Her dad is not in the picture. Lisa has been with Joe and Elizabeth for 2 months now. So far, Lisa is not exhibiting any drug withdrawal symptoms. She is gaining weight. She has bonded well with Joe and Elizabeth. She is an animated, smiling, happy baby! We don't know what the future holds for Lisa but we are thankful that she is in a safe, happy home now.

## We Need Foster Parents!

### Every Child Deserves a Home

We receive calls almost daily about children needing a foster home. We serve children who've been abused, neglected, abandoned and mistreated in ways they need to be removed from their own families for their protection. These are children who've been thrust into the foster care system, who depend on the mercy of others for their care.

We need families for children of all ages, including sibling groups. Consider today how you can be used to care for children. For more information on foster parenting, call the Agape Villages office at 925-866-3020. Also, see our website at [AgapeVillages.org](http://AgapeVillages.org)



### A Legacy Gift

*Remember Agape Villages  
With The Ones You Love!*

#### WILLS AND ESTATES

For more information:  
[jlkleyn@AgapeVillages.org](mailto:jlkleyn@AgapeVillages.org)

## VOLUNTEERS IN THE Spotlight

Carol Massey-McCants lives in Elk Grove and is an outstanding volunteer for Agape. She genuinely cares about Agape kids, asking how they are doing and how she can help them. She educates herself on current events regarding foster care and how they impact our kids. She works tirelessly, promoting the importance of helping to meet the needs of foster children and families. Carol works with local churches, introducing Agape and advocating for our children. Carol has facilitated collecting Christmas gifts for Agape foster kids for more than 10 years. She has also made generous financial contributions to Agape. We thank you, Carol!



Carol Massey-McCants

## Farewell to Cheryl Youngblood, Welcome to Eddie Marquardt

We say farewell to Cheryl Youngblood, Program Director, and thank her for her years of contribution to Agape Villages. And we welcome Eddie Marquardt as our new Program Director. Eddie has his M.S.



Eduard Marquardt

in Rehabilitation Counseling. Eddie worked for San Mateo County Department of Social Services in various child-related positions for 30 years. After retiring from there, he came to work at Agape for 7 additional years. He then decided to retire. However, the pull to Agape grabbed him and we are thrilled to have him back leading our programs as our Program Director.

During this transition we have not missed a beat due to Eddie's experience with us. Welcome back, Eddie!

### WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS!

If you would like to be a volunteer, please let us know via our website: [www.AgapeVillages.org](http://www.AgapeVillages.org) and use the "Get Involved" button, or call us at [925-866-3020](tel:925-866-3020).



Cinda Hull

# Grateful For Our Families Who Provide Our Kids Safety

By Cinda Hull, Board Chair

As we descend quickly into a busy summer season, it is easy to get caught up in our many activities. For children in abusive homes, summer can be a scary time. School is often a place of refuge where they can be safe, warm, fed and treated well. Summer "vacation" can be hard for them as they often experience hurt, food insecurities and isolation.

I'm so grateful for the parents who have stepped up through Agape to bear the burden for these children who are in great need of the freedom and security that is part of a safe family.

Often, we don't think about the fact that we are able to do most of the things we desire. We are mostly free to do as we please. My hope and prayer is that the children we are able to care for in our organization can see and feel the freedom that they deserve. To be a carefree child, to have a loving home with parents who love them and walk with them in their lives. A family that can show them the love of the Father, and free them from their anxieties and fears.

## DONATING STOCK

We are so thankful to those who from time-to-time donate stock shares to us. This is a win-win as donors get a tax benefit for donating appreciated stocks to non-profits, and young lives at Agape are blessed. For details, call Janet Kleyn toll free at 833-221-1061. Thank you!

As we celebrate the summer and our freedoms, let us remember those that James asks us to care for in his epistle. Let us also pray that God will send us more families who are able to care for a child who needs love.

## The Austin Hooper Foundation Events



Alexis, Austin and Lillian Hooper

The Austin Hooper Foundation hosted their 3rd Annual Dinner and Golf Tournament on March 26 at the beautiful Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa in Sonoma. Agape Villages was happy to be a part of this wonderful

evening. We were blessed to have 3 of our youth attend.

One of our foster youth Jaylon King spoke about the wonderful things The Austin Hooper Foundation has done for him. He especially appreciated the individual guidance and mentoring he has received from Austin personally. How many professional football players will give a foster youth their cell number? Austin will! Thank you, Austin Hooper and the Austin Hooper Foundation, for your continued support and kindness to the youth at Agape.

## Foster Care Awareness Month

May was Foster Care Awareness Month (FCAM) when we took time to acknowledge and celebrate foster parents, family members, social workers, volunteers, mentors, and other members of the community who help children and youth in foster care. We used this time to renew our commitment to helping ensure a brighter future for children and youth in foster care in California.

We created a giving campaign around FCAM and we were blown away by the response. You, as donors, stepped up big time! Our goal was to raise \$50,000 and we (you!) did! These funds will allow us to recruit and train new foster parents who can provide wonderful homes for a lot of kids for years to come. The funds will also support the many other vital works of Agape including a master's level social worker in every home every week.

A special thank you to all of the sponsors who helped make FCAM

successful: Vinay Kruttiventi (Vinay Kruttiventi Foundation), Stephanie Wedge (Rockford Realty), Poppy Bank, DeAnna Armario (Armario Homes),



Vinay Kruttiventi and daughter, Ariha, with Janet Kleyn.

Katie Nelson Moe (Connect California Homes), John Muir Health, Senior Helpers, Rick and Marcella Silva (Dirt is Gold), Kim Damiani-Cech (Summit Financial), Tom Dote (Farmers Insurance), Jeff Leuchi (ProForma), Shelley Goldblum (Boisset Wines), Mary Whipple (Whipple, Mercado Law). More than \$13,000 was contributed by our sponsors.

We had a wonderful event to celebrate FCAM at SideTrack Bar and Grill in downtown Pleasanton on May 9. It was a great night celebrating and highlighting the need to help foster kids.

Thank you again to everyone – individuals, churches, and sponsors – everyone who helped make FCAM a huge success. We're looking forward to next year.



# Memorial & Honor Gifts

FEBRUARY 23, 2023 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2023

## IN LOVING MEMORY

### ERLINDA ACOSTA

Gene & Mary Copeland

### DOROTHY ALLEY

Jerry & Karel Baxley

### ALL THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED FROM COVID

David & Kathy Spegal

### ALLEN ASHLEY

Billie Ashley

### ALMEDA AVEDIKIAN

Michael & Rena Avedikian

### IRENE BARLEBEN

Peter & Juliet Nicklin

### H.M. BARNES

Don & Barbara Barnes

### ROY & BETTY BARTLETT

Christopher & Brittney Nunes

### TAHJ BRUCE

Rich & Malia Bruce

### EARLIE & MARY BUSTER

Gene & Mary Copeland

### MARK COWAN

Vern & Rose Mary Cowan

### RICHARD DEATHERAGE

Norman & Rebecca Cole

Elmer & Doris Prout

Norman & Mary Wilson

### JOHN DIGGS

Jeanne-Marie Jones

Napa Church of Christ

Danah Nelson

### WILMA FLACH

Judy Deatherage

### BETTY HANNAH

Peggy Ornelas

Elmer & Doris Prout

Norman & Mary Wilson

### ERNIE HARDMAN

Sue Kingsbury

### AL HIGDON

Janet Kleyn

Ginger Sparks

### BILL HOLT

Betty Hall

Sandy Hames

### MADELINE JOHNS

Phyllis Tackett

### WILLIAM & VAUGHNCELE KISER

Mark & Dianne Kiser

### BEVERLY KLEYN

Agape Villages Board of Directors

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Sandra Cobb

The Family of Beverly Kleyn

June Followill

John & Callie Fox

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Eddi Marie Julian

### FLOY PAFFORD

Oakdale Church of Christ

### DALE PECK

Kathie Muniain

### SHIRLEY RILEY

John Rogers

### DEANNA SENFT

Jerry & Karel Baxley

### DON THOMAS

Sarah Rockey

### ARLEY TURNER

John Rogers

### STEVE WATTS

Austin Watts

### FRANCES WIEGAND

Janet Kleyn

Tom, Nia, Trey and Summitt

Wright

## IN HONOR AND RESPECT

### DICK & MAUDINE ADY

*With Love & Appreciation!*

- Danah Nelson

### BECKY COLE

*Happy Birthday!*

- Barbara Stoffle

### MARY & GENE COPELAND

*Happy Birthday to you Both!*

- Marlene Peck

### NADINE WOOD GREFF

*Happy Birthday!*

- Norman & Rebecca Cole

### DAVID JOHNSTON

*Happy Birthday!*

- Jon & Meredith Johnston

### JANUSHA KRISHNAN

*Happy Birthday!*

- Ranjeet Kowel

### BELYN LAI

*Happy Birthday!*

- Cara Foley

### MY FAMILY

*With Love for My Family!*

- Connie Amarillas

### OUR LORD JESUS MESSIAH!

*All Honor and Glory!*

- David Yeamans

### MARLENE PECK

*Happy Birthday to a Special Friend!*

- Gene & Mary Copeland

### MILENE RADFORD

*Thanks for the postal treasures!*

- Sarah Rockey

### SARAH ROCKEY

*With Honor and Respect!*

- Donald Hanson

### SARAH ROCKEY

*If more humans were like Sarah, the world would be a much better place!*

- Darin Haydock

### WALLACE WONG

*With Honor and Respect!*

- David Gilpin

## Memorial or Honor Gift

The enclosed gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is given in

Memory of,  or in Honor of:

### PLEASE NOTIFY:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to deceased/honoree: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Providing Better Futures

Agape Villages • 3160 Crow Canyon Place, Suite 120 • San Ramon, CA 94583

# Agape Foster Family Picnic 2023

Agape hosted our annual family picnic on Saturday, June 3. The day was sunny and full of smiles. We had an amazing group including resource families, potential resource parents and donors. The entertainment was wonderful. Morgan with All About the Farm was a great success. Morgan brought ducks, chickens, goats, and rabbits for everyone to pet and feed. Everyone enjoyed seeing the animals. Lizzie and her crew with Day Dream Balloons kept smiles on everyone's face with balloon twisting, glitter tattoos and face painting. The trackless train from Fun N Games gave the kiddos a fun little ride. SHOTS Photo-booth made the experience memorable with cute photos for everyone to take home. Golden Ice Cream was there to help cool down the day for our families and friends.



Agape was so excited to have a couple of our donors attend this year. Sabine Lemmo of Fostering Wishes attended with her wonderful family. Fostering Wishes has been a wonderful support to Agape. Fostering Wishes provides our new placements with duffle bags which contain toiletries, water bottles, school supplies, and other age-appropriate items. Along with the duffle bags, Fostering Wishes also provides our kiddos with gifts for the holiday season. This organization has a huge holiday drive which includes over 75 businesses hosting a Holiday Tree display.



Lillian and Michael Hooper of The Austin Hooper Foundation also attended our festivities. The Austin Hooper Foundation helps children in care with an emphasis on aging out. We have been blessed with the kindness of the foundation. The foundation has provided Nike backpacks and Nike shoes. The foundation has also taken part in helping some of our children find their career passion. The picnic was a great success! Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make this happen. We are truly blessed.



Sabine Lemmo, Lisa Foster, Lillian Hooper and Lisa Florence

## Gift Bags for Children

What a wonderful way to start the day! The Agape Manteca office received a kind soul at our front door, bearing gifts for our foster kids. Mr. Johari began our morning with a smile and two bags of goodies for our children. The bags were filled with school supplies and fun toys. Thank you so much for taking the time to brighten everyone's day.



## Crab 'N Go

Once again, we could not have our very successful crab feed in person this year, but thanks to the Roseville Church of Christ and their many volunteers, we were able to have a drive-thru Crab 'N Go event again this year. The food was terrific! Our thanks to the many people who bought tickets. And our thanks to the volunteers who cooked, cleaned up, served meals, sold tickets. All were enthusiastic, glad to help kids. A special thanks to Goldrush Getaways for their very generous sponsorship of \$2,500. More than \$9,500 was raised!

## Sacramento Assoc. of Realtors

A huge thank-you to the Sacramento Association of Realtors (SAR) for funding our foster care program once again! A generous grant of \$1,500 was received in March. Thank you again!

## Manteca Sunrise Kiwanis

Agape is grateful to receive a \$1,000 check from Manteca Sunrise Kiwanis. We appreciate this very much!



## Thank-you and Goodbye to Jen Oxe!



We say farewell and best wishes to Jennifer Oxe who has been our enthusiastic part-time fundraiser in the Tri-Valley for 9 years.

Prior to this, she was an active volunteer. Pending a replacement, please contact Janet Kleyn at 925-487-0968.

**BE KIND WHENEVER POSSIBLE.  
IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE.**

SO MUCH  
TO BE

# THANKFUL

FOR!

## Gift from the Orangevale Church

We are so thankful to the Orangevale Church of Christ for donating a portion of the proceeds from the recent sale of their church property. What a blessing!

## Tickets to the Zoo

Our thanks to The Alliance: Defending the Cause of Kids & Families for generously donating 50 tickets to the Sacramento Zoo for our kids and families. What fun! Thank you!

## Give Back Day

Thank you to Erik's DELICAFÉ in San Ramon for hosting a "give back day" for Agape. It means the world to us to know we have community support - and \$500 was raised for our foster care programs.



## Danville/Sycamore Valley Rotary

We received a \$2,500 check from the Danville/Sycamore Valley Rotary to support our programs to provide critical help to children in foster care. Thank-you for your consistent support over the years. Pictured at right is Daniel Kodam, Past Rotary President with Janet Kleyn.



## BayEast Association of Realtors

Thank you so much to the BayEast Association of Realtors for their generous \$500 donation to Agape Villages. We appreciate realtors and their foundations for recognizing and continually supporting non-profits like Agape.



## Spring in the Valley

It was Spring in the Valley on May 6 when the Ripon Church of Christ hosted our annual event. It was a beautiful event with fresh flowers everywhere. Our Tri-tip & Chicken dinner, prepared by Steve Vawter of the Martinez Church of Christ, was finger licking good. Ally Baca, a former Agape foster youth who recently graduated from Cal Poly Pomona, was our speaker. She was honest, sincere and motivational! We are proud of her! All in all, truly a memorable evening, raising \$3,500. Thank you, Ripon Church of Christ. Thank you, Manteca Advisory Council.



## Rutherford Management Company

Rutherford Management Company reached out to Agape Villages. They have a history of donating to foster care agencies in the area and wanted to continue to give back to the children in need in the community they work in. Employees organized a fundraiser and used the donations to purchase baby items such as cribs, diapers, baby wipes, car seats, bottles, baby clothes and more to donate to Agape! We are so thankful the Rutherford Management Company team has a heart for kids in foster care.



## Pleasanton North Rotary

A longtime supporter of Agape, our programs and events, Pleasanton North Rotary once again came through for the kids at Agape - this time with a \$2,000 check for our Enrichment program. We are truly grateful! Pictured at right are Billy Buckley, Rotary President, Jen Oxe and Deb Covert, Rotary Foundation Chair.



## Safeway Foundation Gift

We were thrilled to receive a very generous grant of \$5,000 from the Safeway Foundation. The Safeway Foundation is dedicated to bettering the lives of people in their neighborhoods, and partners with local organizations like Agape to strengthen our community. Thank you, Safeway.



## WithLoveBoxes

Lucy from Mt. Eden High School in Hayward, CA donated 50 of her "WithLoveBoxes" to Agape children! Thank you, Lucy, for the difference you are making in the world.



## Living Skills Program

Our Living Skills Program is designed for foster youth ages 15 – 21 years old, teaching them skills they will need in adulthood. Upcoming classes include: Learning to barbeque and follow simple recipes; Learning budget-friendly physical exercises such as soccer; Learning relaxation techniques and coping skills, helping them to manage their emotions.

## Gift from Boykin Burkley, LLC

We are grateful to Boykin Burkley, LLC for their very generous gift of \$2,500. This gift will bless the lives of many young lives. Thank you!

**BOYKIN Burkley, LLC**



## Donate Your Car Today!

Our car donation program provides vital support to our work. Call CARS toll-free, seven days a week at 1-855-550-4483. Or, go to our website below to reach them. Every donation makes a difference!

[WWW.AGAPEVILLAGES.ORG](http://WWW.AGAPEVILLAGES.ORG)

## Big Day of Giving

Each year the Sacramento region hosts a Big Day of Giving which people all over the country can participate in, online. This was held on May 4, 2023. In less than 24 hours, more than \$2,500 was raised for Agape. Our thanks to everyone!

## Our Professional Service Statistics

### Current Year Statistics

(1/1/2023 to 6/26/2023)

- 87 – Foster Children Served Year-to-Date
- 19 – New Children in Care this Year
- 54 – Foster Children Currently in Care
- 54 – Certified Foster Families
- 4 – Adoptions Facilitated

### Since We Began in 1958

- 6,633 – Foster Children Served
- 4,000 – Through Sierra Children's Home
- 2,633 – Through Agape Villages
- 588 – Foster Families who have Partnered with us in Foster Care

## What We Do Together Does Matter!

It is with pleasure and honor that I return to Agape Villages in supporting the children entrusted to us for protection, development and nurturance during the delicate stages of their youth. We are challenged to work together to ensure that they receive the full complimentary support, encouragement and direction to become healthy, well-adjusted, productive, and happy individuals in their young lives.



Edward Marquardt, MS  
Program Director

I am grateful for our families that have opened their homes to care for the children and to assist them in this process. There isn't a higher calling than to influence and prepare young lives for their future endeavors and purpose, knowing that the impact that you make may never be fully recognized and fully appreciated. But your intervention in their lives will, and does matter; it does have long lasting and eternal consequences that benefit them, society and their adjustment to adulthood. Thank you.



## Manteca Golf Course

**\$400 – FOURSOME | \$100 – INDIVIDUAL**

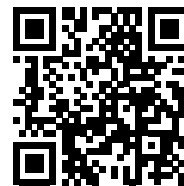
*Team Sponsorship Competition (Team Captains)*

### Details:

- 7:00 a.m. Registration
- 8:00 a.m. Shotgun Start
- 4 Person Team Format/Scramble

### Includes:

- Driving Range, Golf Cart, Prizes, Food, Raffle



[AgapeVillages.org/Golf](http://AgapeVillages.org/Golf)

Call Nina at  
209-430-0323 to Register

or

Register online with the  
QR Code or link to the left.

Joy in life comes from focusing on  
having right relationships, not on being right.

## Agape Villages

3160 Crow Canyon Pl. #120  
San Ramon, CA 94583  
925-866-3020

**Janet Kleyn, MBA**  
*President and CEO*

**Edward Marquardt, MS**  
*Program Director*

## Board of Directors

Cindae Hull, Chair  
Walter Bruce, Secretary & Treasurer  
Janet Kleyn  
Cheryl Lee  
Danah Nelson  
Gloria Robertson  
Sarah Rockey  
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## Our Mission

"Agape Villages mobilizes community resources to provide quality homes, innovative solutions and the highest of professional services to disadvantaged children and their families to meet their needs, maximize their potential and lead toward a better and brighter future.

*64 Years of Caring Through Sierra Children's Home/Agape Villages*



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San Ramon, CA



*Janet Kleyn, President*

### 1 TIMOTHY 6:18

"Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

Remember,  
Online Giving is Available  
on our Website  
[AgapeVillages.org](https://www.AgapeVillages.org)

# The Legacy of a Christian Mother

*From the President, Janet Kleyn*

My mother, Beverly Kleyn, passed away on March 22, 2023, one day short of her 96th birthday. I was blessed to be born into a loving, Christian home, loved and wanted before I was even born. What confidence and security comes from knowing that.

A lot of my passion for the children at Agape comes from appreciating the childhood I had. I want that for every child. My father passed away in 2000, and my mother moved so that she lived just one-half mile away from me for the last 22 years of her life.

My mother was the loving, devoted mother of 4 children, 8 grandchildren, and 16 great grandchildren. She was a faithful daily Bible reader her entire life. She began every day with the prayer of Psalms 118:24, "Today is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it." My mother was hospitable, generous and kind. She taught us of God and the abundant life.

Hers was a life well lived. Her legacy of faith, love and family lives on in all of us. She frequently said, "I have complete assurance of God's promises. My citizenship is in heaven."

It was a blessing to be her daughter. I miss you, Mom.

Editor's note: It's been said, "If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants." Janet's life and ministry has been so impactful because of the values she's received from her parents and the inspiration they have given her all of her life.



*Beverly Kleyn*



[AgapeVillages.org/Donate](https://www.AgapeVillages.org/Donate)