

# Student develops green plan

Environmental awareness the goal for HOPE Inc. building

BY WAYNE QUESENBERRY  
Staff writer

As one of the requirements for her graduate degree at Emory & Henry College, Carol W. Doss needed a capstone project. The one she chose — a green plan for the HOPE Inc. building in Wytheville — is proving beneficial on several levels.

"The idea was to work with an organization to develop a plan to help that organization in some way," noted the Glade Spring resident. "It also was to help us learn more about ourselves and our leadership abilities."

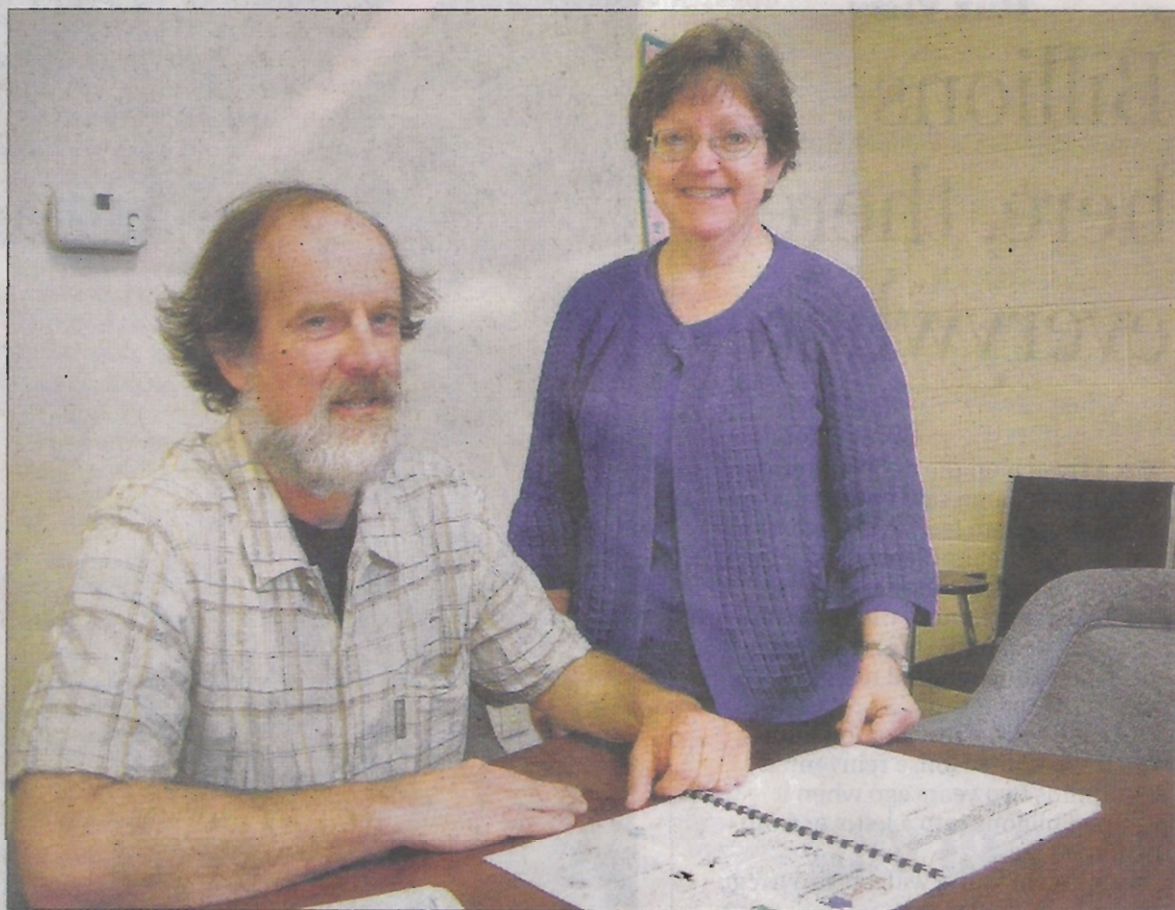
She is among the college's first graduating class in the Master of Arts in community and organizational leadership program. Doss and 11 other students will receive diplomas next month.

As coordinator of the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable in Abingdon for more than seven years, she already had a special interest in water conservation and quality and other environmental issues. Doss was directed to HOPE Inc. by Dr. Tal Stanley, director of the master of arts in community and organizational leadership program at Emory & Henry, former minister in the Wytheville District of the United Methodist Church and friend of Andy Kegley, executive director of HOPE Inc.

Late last year, Doss met with Kegley to discuss a possible project for her degree requirement. They eventually settled on a plan that Doss would develop to make the building more energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

Exorbitant utility bills, Kegley said, prompted him to suggest the study. His organization is responsible for the maintenance, utilities and insurance on the building.

"Initially, we're renting the building and hope to buy it at some point," Kegley said. "It's a wonderful facility but it's not a



Carol Doss, a graduate student at Emory & Henry College, discusses her green plan for the HOPE Inc. building with executive director Andy Kegley. Doss completed the project as part of the requirements for her master's degree in community and organizational leadership.

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very efficient building. We're not proud of that."

HOPE — an acronym for Helping People Overcome Poverty's Existence — is a nonprofit human services organization located in the former Appalachian Power Company offices on West Main Street.

It's a certified housing counseling agency providing foreclosure prevention counseling, homeless intervention and homeless prevention and a housing program that provides emergency food and shelter.

The agency also builds homes that are sold to clients at low interest rates and manages several rental units. Overseeing the Wytheville Farmers Market is another function of the organization.

The HOPE Inc. building also houses the United Way of Wythe County, the Benevolent Medication Program, Appalachian Independent Center, District Three

Governmental Cooperative, Goodwill Industries of the Valley's Workforce Development Program and Dislocated Workers Program, Mountain Community Action Program, Occupational Enterprises and Smart Beginnings.

The organization serves the counties of Wythe, Bland, Smyth, Carroll and Grayson and the city of Galax.

Doss spent months developing her green plan for the building. She toured the HOPE Inc. offices, interviewed Kegley extensively, talked with employees and clients of the different agencies in the HOPE building and consulted APCo officials and energy experts.

After drafting an initial plan from her research, Doss presented it to the board of directors of each of the nine agencies located in the building. Her work was included in the capstone presentations last week at Emory & Henry College.

"The project took a lot of time," Doss said. "Andy was a big help in giving me direction. I was encouraged by the response to make changes to the building."

Among her plan's recommendations in the first level were lowering the temperature of the building's water heater, turning off lights when not in use, unplugging space heaters when not being used, conserving water and additional recycling. Level two recommendations will require more time and money to implement.

"This has really helped me," Doss said. "I learned a lot about energy and I learned a lot about myself as a leader and how I can become a better leader."

Kegley added, "The plan is very beneficial to us. It will help us in applying for funding to acquire the building."

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