

LINDA HILLYER

40

YEARS and counting...

By Christi Cowan

There are a few things that might surprise you about Linda Hillyer. What will not surprise you, however, is that Linda keeps meticulous records. After all, as Dawson's Administrator of Membership & Records, Linda has managed Dawson's membership database for the last 40 years.

When Linda first started working at Dawson in 1977, she worked with the Singles Director before taking on the membership duties. Nearly six years into that role, she left to work with her husband, Billy, who was the principal at a local Christian school. They nearly moved to Florida for a job offer but decided to stay in Birmingham since they were nearing the end of an adoption process. Three days after they declined that job offer, they found out that they were about to become parents to a baby girl.



1988

Support Staff

Pat Jones, Receptionist Pat Bloom, Copy Services
Kelley Akers, Financial Linda Hillyer, Data Processing Bea Williamson,
Not Pictured: Nancy Kimbrough, Financial



2024

Linda stayed home with their daughter, Meredith, for several years and then later decided that she would like to go back to work. Just a few minutes after mentioning this to her mother, the phone rang, and Linda was offered her old job back at Dawson. "Gene Turner called me and said 'Your old job is open. Do you want it back?' And I said, 'Yes I do.' And so here I am, 40 years later, still here."

Linda says that one of the best parts of working at Dawson is the environment and the coworkers around her. "For 40 years I have been surrounded by dedicated, Christian men and women who love God and who provide a wonderful work environment. Every day we come together, caring for one another, to do the work of the church."

Linda expressed how much she appreciates the people who make Dawson their family of faith and the fact that so many of Dawson's members are mission-minded. She has also seen the many ways that God has worked in the life of our church. "Your faith gets stronger because you see how God works things out. He may not work them out the way you want Him to, but He works them out."

Linda has seen many things come and go over the last 40 years at Dawson, but the basic bonds of friendship have remained. Linda and Billy are part of the Lenora Pate and Judy Mason Life Group, where they have wonderful friends who always offer encouragement and support.

When it comes to the work week, some of the newer advances have been very welcomed. "When I first came, we didn't have computers," she said. "We used typewriters." Things are easier now, Linda says, since finding and updating membership records requires only a few clicks in Planning Center.

Linda's coworkers are quick to point out that she is a very caring and giving person, who is also very dedicated to her job. Finance Director Marilyn Lloyd has worked with Linda for over 22 years. "She's one of the most giving people I've ever known. If you're in need, she's going to be there to help you. She's just that kindhearted. She's also on top of things. She's a very quick worker. If you need something done, she'll make sure she gets it done for you."

"There's a lot I could say about Linda," says Laine Stidham, Discipleship Ministry Assistant,

but if I had to pick one thing, it would be how much joy she brings. Rarely does a week go by when we don't find ourselves smiling, or often laughing, when we have to investigate something for a new project or seek solutions to a problem. Linda loves the challenge, and we've had some really hilarious times together when doing our best detective work. I'm thankful to work with her!"

Business Administrator Randy Poe shared, "It's so rare, for the world we live in, to have an employee for 40 years. Linda's knowledge and experience are invaluable, and we are so blessed to have her as a staff member."

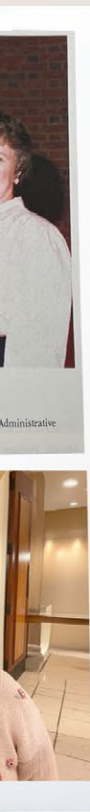
As for hobbies, Linda has a green thumb and enjoys her garden. It's not uncommon for her to bring flowers, plant clippings, or vegetables to share with Dawson staff members. She also loves animals and has a dog and two cats. She enjoys painting, watching medical dramas, and might be a little bit of a daredevil. On her 65th birthday, Linda celebrated by riding all the roller coasters at Six Flags Over Georgia. She wanted to do something even more thrilling for her 70th, so without hesitation, she decided to go skydiving! "I was a little nervous at first," she said, "but I wasn't scared."

Linda and Billy are both appreciative for the life they have together and how Dawson has played such an integral role. "We have achieved an uncomplicated lifestyle that is gratifying to both of us," she said. "Together we have learned to appreciate the small and satisfying pleasures that life offers. Learning how to trust God in all things and how He is with us always—through the difficult times as well as the happy ones. Our love for the Lord has brought us a deep sense of love and gratitude for one another, our family, and our church family."

Linda and Billy live in Homewood, and they have one daughter, one granddaughter, and one great grandson.

When asked about her accomplishments and what gives her joy, Linda beams when sharing that her marriage and family are an accomplishment, and that she has much gratitude for her job here at Dawson. "And," she adds, "I jumped out of an airplane, so I'm pretty proud of that!"

Thank you, Linda, for 40 years of service and dedication to Dawson. Your Dawson family is so grateful for you!



Christi Cowan serves as one of Dawson's graphic designers and also manages the website. She has a background in journalism and print media. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, scrapbooking, and playing with her cats. She loves all things Disney and will probably beat you at Disney trivia.