

# FAMILIES PLUS

MENTORING KIDS FOR LIFE!



January 2011

## Mentors & Family Friends

Dorothy Allen  
Richard & Linda Bell  
Dennis & Mary Bollig  
Beverly Bull  
Renaef Coffman  
Ursula Craig  
Linda Croft  
Jared & Nicole Davis  
Alisha Johnson & Kurt Roithmayr  
Sheldon & Hazel Kier  
Shane & Mary Jo Lance  
Stephen & Cynthia Lewis  
Diana Matus  
Debbie McCarty  
Lorene McDonough  
Verena McKenney  
Artis Miller  
Lyn & Gini Mosley  
Rita Murphy  
Edward & Cheryl Oeltjenbruns  
Jenifer Oien  
Robert & Corey Rice  
Dennis Schwartz  
Mike & Vickie Street  
John & Reveille Sullivan  
Diana Tayir  
John & Susan Triebwasser  
Ruth White

## Staff

Brenda K. Holland, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Thomas Friel, M.A., L.P.C.  
Mental Health Professional  
Donna Littlefield, MSW  
Mental Health Professional  
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Mental Health Professional  
Dave Shishim,  
Director of Outreach  
Moni Slater, Office Manager  
Dave Armlovich, Web Master

# Mentoring for Life!

by Tom Freil, LPC

Dennis Schwartz is an exceptional mentor in the Families Plus program for several reasons. For one, he's just about the only single male mentor in our program. As a general rule, Families Plus selects families that can provide a full family environment for their mentored child and Dennis has been single since his wife passed away. Dennis is exceptional also because he has been dedicated and persistent in making sure his child has quality experiences like participation in Boy Scouts.

Over a year ago Dennis volunteered to help at the Families Plus Christmas Gift Wrap Party. Among the families there he met Katie Kelly and her son Josh Onken, now 10, and this initial meeting led to an active mentoring relationship that is now in its 13<sup>th</sup> month. With no brothers and three sisters in the home, seemed apparent Josh could benefit from spending time out of the home with a male mentor who was trustworthy, kind, and mature. Josh already had plenty of time with his mother, Katie Kelly, his three younger sister, Charlotte, Siera, and Caelan, and his very involved grandparents.

Josh is now in his final year at Garnet Mesa Elementary School in Delta and is thriving in many ways. His grades are above average in every subject, with recent improvements in math and spelling.

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Dennis has exposed Josh to quite a wide variety of activities from fishing on Grand Mesa and at Confluence Park, to a soapbox derby, to regular Cub Scout meetings, to the Public Library, to boxing lessons at Bill Heddles Rec Center, to a fishing derby, to the movies to see *Avatar* on the big screen, to learning how to bowl. Dennis also arranged for Josh to go to the Christian Church summer camp last summer, another opportunity he probably wouldn't have had without Dennis's support.

Time spent together also includes just low-key quiet times, like having a bite to eat at Wendy's or just sitting around and talking.

Dennis describes his young friend Josh as "really intelligent and well-mannered," and a pleasure to be with. Mentoring and learning from each other is definitely a two-way street, enriching the life experiences of both the adult mentor and the young person.

## Board Members

Bev Gardner, President  
Dawn Reeder, Vice President  
Dennis Bollig, Treasurer  
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Michael Dodson, Member  
Dennis Schwartz, Member  
Sharon Riegel, Member

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## Message from the Director

Families Plus has grown to supporting 48 children through Delta County. The numbers of volunteers getting excited about these children and their healthy futures also continues to grow every month. The number of community members that have in-putted something into these children's lives over the last five years now numbers in the hundreds.

Families Plus is now undertaking to

write a detailed technical guide to encode all that has been learned about using volunteers to help children be successful into a clear manual that can eventually be repeated in other areas.

There are many challenges and struggles, but staff, parents, and volunteers alike could not be more excited about all the small signs of growth and health in all these children.

~Brenda Holland, Director

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING GROUPS FOR PUTTING UP ANGEL TREES IN SUPPORT OF FAMILIES PLUS FAMILIES!



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DELTA CREDIT UNION

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## Dennis Bollig brings experience and insight to the Families Plus Board

It was a Families Plus Angel Tree that brought Dennis Bollig and his wife, Mary, into the Families Plus community. "I decided we were going to do something," says Dennis of this introduction. After donating money for Christmas presents, Dennis talked to Brenda, who told him about the mentoring program and soon after he became a mentor to Damien. Mary also became a mentor for a child from a different family.

Gardening, fishing and building are a few of the activities that Dennis and Damien do together. Damien helps get the fishing equipment ready for the season and will learn from helping in the gardens this summer.

Dennis's experiences as a mentor give him insight that makes him a valuable member of the Families Plus Board of Directors, which he joined in October 2010.

His background in auditing and consulting in accounts payable review and import duty drawbacks made him a prime candidate for Board Treasurer, a position he readily accepted. He has been helping fine-tune the QuickBooks bookkeeping to help make office operations as efficient as possible.



Racquetball brought Dennis to Delta County twenty years ago when he first travelled from his home in Lakewood to Montrose to participate in a tournament. After a few years of tournaments, he and Mary found a piece of land they liked and built a house on it a few years later. Their two children and first grandchild, born last October, often lure them back to Lakewood.

Families Plus is fortunate to have the Bollig's in the community as they model positive mentoring practices and bring expertise and a strong sense of commitment to the organization!

## Families Plus Board of Directors welcomes Sharon Riegel



Brenda presents Certificate of Appreciation to Sharon at Families Plus Annual Picnic.

Sharon Riegel joins the Families Plus board of directors after years of already volunteering to help the children participating. She has been the leader of getting kids to camp for Women on the Move, a local women's outdoor group. This group helps Delta County kids to go to Camp Red Cloud each summer with donated entrance fees and adults to drive them to and from the camp site near Lake City.

The hours involved in coordinating and organizing is an impressive number. Sharon has also organized Saturday hikes to help Families Plus children get

some fresh air and sunshine and learn healthy ways to have fun.

Sharon is semi-retired from Federal government employment. She lives near Crawford with her husband, Dick Moore, and near her son's family, Craig and Regan Childs, Jade and Jasper. She owns a guest house and builds custom furniture when she is not busy volunteering around the county. She is active in hiking, skiing, swimming, and llama trekking.

Families Plus will be a stronger organization with Sharon helping lead.

## Great Grades!!

- Courtney Mattler got all A's and B's.
- Owen Janssen got an A in Reading.
- Venessa Lynn Kettle had an 85% grade average.
- Zoey Janssen got all A's and B's.
- Jose Montoya got an A in Math.
- Derrill Rodriguez got an A in Math.
- Damion Kirksey got a B in Science.
- Alexis Medrano got a strong A in Social Studies.
- Kayla Rood got an A in Math and four other classes.
- Ivorie Rose Crandall got an A in Reading and in Music.
- Christine Clark got an A in Reading.
- Summer Dawn Hood got all A's and B's.
- Christopher Quick got a B in Math.
- Charlotte Kelly got 100% in Spelling.
- Caytlynne Suazo got an A in Technology.



*Alexis Medrano was Homecoming Queen!*

## More Awards!

Summer Hood attended the Breakfast of Champions at Cedaredge Middle School.

Eddie Hecht received a Terrific Kid award from Garnett Mesa Elementary School for being a respectful citizen. He also met his goal of reading 200 minutes in December.

Amber and Courtney Mattler were on the Honor Roll at Hotchkiss K-8.

Cameron Quick and Roger Towner were Triple Winners at Garnet Mesa; they met all three criteria for reading goals this quarter.

Dylan Hood received the Bear Den Student of the Month Award for respect at Cedaredge Elementary.

**SUCCESS!**

## Keep up the good work!!

### Wrapping for Christmas brings community together

Early in the Christmas season, Families Plus parents, mentors, staff and volunteers gathered at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Delta to wrap gifts and enjoy the season. Long tables supplied with wrapping paper, ribbon, tape, scissors and gift tags also featured piles of gifts for parents to wrap for their children. With holiday music in the background and chili on the stove, parents and friends took the time to wrap gifts for their children with care.

Presents were donated by members of the community through the Giving Trees at local businesses, started by Families Plus in 2006 as a direct way for community members to support children and

families during the holiday season. Trees were put up at local businesses and decorated with tags listing gift requests. By choosing a tag, a person agreed to purchase the present listed and bring it back to the tree location or to the Families Plus office.

After a good round of wrapping, we took a break to make introductions and announcements, and to have drawings for prizes, which included Drost chocolates, shelves, pine trees that Brenda's husband, Tom Holland, had trekked into the woods to chop down and a full-blown electric train, donated by newly-elected Board member, Sharon Riegel.



# A Good Year for Funding Families!

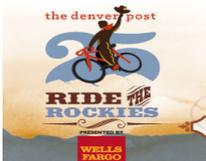
By Dave Shishim, Outreach Director

Despite the ongoing economic recession, Families Plus was fortunate to be able to secure funding for our ongoing operations from many donors in the past year. Among the larger organizations providing support for our continuing services were The Wolcott Foundation, The Daniels Foundation, The Kampe Family Foundation, Denver Post Charities (aka "Ride the Rockies"), the Colorado Health Foundation and The Cocker Kids Foundation.

As a non-profit, Families Plus depends upon the generosity of others to support our good work. Like any other business, Families Plus has utility bills, rent, wages to pay to our part-time employees and other expenses. Throughout the year, we apply for grants from organizations that see the value in what it is that we bring to the people of our community.

A number of smaller donors provide us with many other things as well. We get items that we need to provide our services as well as donations to the families of the children in our program. Gently used furniture and major appliances are always welcome as there is always someone in need. And, new this year, you can now donate your old car or truck, running or not, to Families Plus via the VDAC organization. For more information on this program and how you can get rid of an old car and do good for your community at the same time, contact our office at 874-0464.

In the benevolent and entrepreneurial spirit of their founder, Bill Daniels, the mission of the Daniels Fund is to partner with individuals, organizations, and communities to recognize inherent value, develop abilities, and provide opportunities in order to fulfill our collective potential. Their vision is a world where every individual has an equal opportunity to live a healthy, productive life.



The Ride The Rockies/Denver Post Community grant program funds non-profit organizations that provide services for low-income children and youth through recreation, education, or the arts and/or agencies that offer direct-service literacy programs. Families Plus was awarded the \$5,000 grant that is designated to support a non-profit in a Ride the Rockies host community.



The Colorado Health Foundation™

The Colorado Health Foundation works to make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation by investing in grants and initiatives to health-related nonprofits that focus on increasing the number of Coloradans with health insurance, ensuring they have access to quality, coordinated care and encouraging healthy living. For more information, please visit [www.ColoradoHealth.org](http://www.ColoradoHealth.org). See article on page 5 about Colorado Health Foundation's support of Families Plus.

## WOLCOTT FAMILY FOUNDATION

The parable of the fisherman says, "If you give a person a fish, you feed them for a day. If you teach them how to fish, you feed them for a lifetime." The WOLFF philosophy takes this further: "Teach them to teach how to fish, and together we can feed the world. Teach them how to teach fishing along with cooperative organization and sustainable practices and together we can feed the world with a high quality of life for generations to come."



The Kampe Foundation is a private operating foundation providing programs and

funding to nonprofit organizations in the fields of community development, social justice, sustainable agriculture and environmental issues.



Cocker Kids' Foundation is dedicated to supporting and aiding area youth up to the age of 21 in areas of education, recreation, the arts and athletics. Since 1998, the Cocker Kids' Foundation has funded almost \$700,000 to youth-related programs and children of the North Fork Valley in Delta County, Colorado. From their permanent residence in Crawford, Joe and Pam Cocker, along with an active and involved board of directors, have made sure that the funds have impacted the kids who need it most.

**Thanks to the art students at Lincoln Elementary, Garnett Mesa Elementary and Hotchkiss K-8 for providing artwork for our holiday cards!**

**Thanks to Drost Chocolates of Eckert, Colorado for donating delicious chocolate for our birthday balloons!**

# Thanks!

To all of our donors, large and small, a most deep and heartfelt "Thank You" from all of us and all we serve.



*Two Families Plus children have participated in serving their community through the Kids' Pasta Project. Here, Kayla Rood grates cheese on a plate of home made pasta for a guest. Kayla has worked as both busgirl and pasta chef in her KPP work, which she attends with her mentor, Linda Bell.*

*The mission of the Kids' Pasta Project (KPP) is for youth to serve their community by preparing and selling freshly-made, healthy meals, with the profits going to local causes. KPP provides the opportunity for youth to learn the value of service to community as well as relevant life skills.*

*Families Plus was a KPP partner for a November dinner, and received a \$175 donation from dinner profits.*



## **Colorado Health Foundation supports collaboration between Families Plus and Dr. Janet Moore**

**T**he Colorado Health Foundation is investing in the health of Delta County. Thanks to their support Families Plus and Dr. Janet Moore are able to offer mental and health services to more children in Delta County.

**D**r. Moore has had a pediatric practice in Delta for approximately five years and has been offering free health clinics for over three years. With her passenger van and equipment trailer, she travels to local communities to serve children ages 0-18 who are underinsured or who have other barriers to health care such as a lack of transportation. Dr. Moore provides well-child checks and immunizations and also tends to chronic health conditions. Having done this on a volunteer basis so far, Dr. Moore will now have support to expand these services thanks to the Colorado Health Foundation grant.

**I**ncreasing the number of children on the Medicaid and Children's Health Plan Plus (CHP+) insurance rolls is one of the intended results of the grant. With the assistance of

the Family Literacy and Resource Program, Dr. Moore is working to get uninsured children into insurance program as is the Families Plus program.

**T**he Colorado Health Foundation grant also provides resources for Families Plus to increase the number of families we serve and continue our extensive commitment to helping with challenging family circumstances. Comprehensive services to children provided by Families Plus include helping them become academically successful, finding ways to keep behavioral problems from interfering, accessing skill-building activities and time with mentoring families and helping



*This trailer, equipped with medical supplies in a portable cabinet, facilitates Dr. Moore's rotating school-based clinics in Delta, Hotchkiss and Cedaredge.*

families be able to provide what the children need.

**T**he Colorado Health Foundation grant allows for these great community programs to continue and expand the work we are doing over the next three years. We look forward to working together to improve the health of children in Delta County and thank the Foundation for its support!

## **Families Plus and the Cocker Kids Foundation Present Internet Safety Program**

Fueled by a grant from the Cocker Kids Foundation, Families Plus presented an Internet Safety program the Heddles Center in Delta this past October.

Computer educator Cedar Keshet of Paonia presented the program and Dave Shishim, Families Plus Director of Outreach, gave an encore presentation to the Delta Rotary Club a few weeks later.

In both instances, the presenters focused on common sense things that parents can do to protect their children from some of the more dangerous threats that a child can encounter while online. Knowing who your children are communicating with, what websites they are visiting and encouraging computer use in a common area of the home as opposed to in the child's bedroom are only a few of the more practical and less technical things that parents can do to help protect children from some of the people that prey on children online.

In addition, Ms. Keshet introduced the audience to the United States Department of Justice' I Safe program, a series of practices and habits that focus on the human side as opposed to the technical side of Internet usage. Among the more prominent ideas presented were the facts that practicing good computer etiquette is a natural extension of good manners. Don't say mean things about people online just as you shouldn't say mean things in person. Don't write anything online that you wouldn't want other people to hear you say as once you put something in an email and send it off you have completely lost control of where it may go.

Encouraging an ongoing open dialogue between parent and child is absolutely critical so that if confronted online a child will feel confident and comfortable in going to his or her parents for help. And in turn the parents will feel completely comfortable approaching the authorities should that be warranted.

For a copy of the presentation, please contact Families Plus at 874-0464.

Kids for Life!

Mentoring

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# Wanted: Healthy Kids!

If you know of anyone or any organization or service club that might be interested in helping us with any of these things please let us know.

- Volunteers to work at the quarterly Commodities Distribution that Delta County Health and Human Services administers.
- People able to drive children and their family members to and from doctor's appointments.
- Mentors, mini-mentors or friends to the family.
- Sponsor a child to go to summer camp. (Nineteen Families Plus kids went to summer camp last year! A \$100 camp fee can sponsor one child for camp next summer.)

**DO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY NEED HEALTH CARE?**

**ARE YOU UNABLE TO GET THE HEALTH CARE YOU NEED?**

**IS IT HARD TO FIND A DOCTOR, DENTIST OR CLINIC TO SERVE YOU?**

**IS IT DIFFICULT TO ENROLL FOR INSURANCE AND HEALTH PROGRAMS?**

**Delta County School's FAMILY LITERACY AND RESOURCE CENTER HAS HEALTH ADVOCATES WHO HELP FAMILIES ACCESS HEALTH PROGRAMS AND CONNECT WITH SERVICES AND COVERAGE**

**CALL 874-9517 FOR MORE INFORMATION**

*This health advocacy is a free service provided by the Colorado Health Foundation, the Family Resource Center Association of Colorado and the Family Literacy and Resource Program.*