



FAMILIES PLUS

Mentoring Kids for Life!

October 2009 – Newsletter
Community Corner Stones
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Mental Health Professional
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All Eyes Toward A Successful Future

Venus Stratton has started middle school in great style. Her successful passage to this new level hasn't happened without the investment of many along the way. She is being raised by her paternal grandparents, Christy Hayward Lake and Garris Flebbe, who live out in the farmland near Pea Green. She and her grandparents have been supported by the FAMILIES PLUS program since June 2005. Venus came into the permanent care of her grandparent when she was six years old. Like the typical grandparent, they were happy to set aside their empty nest home and reorganize around a child again. All this would not have been so challenging except that Christy suffers with multiple sclerosis, while Garris works in nuclear medicine with a heavy work schedule. After earlier mentors developed



health problems, Cheryl and Ed Oeltjenbruns stepped in to welcome Venus into their home and their hearts. Living in the same general area, Venus has come to feel very comfortable joining them in their home and activities. Cheryl is a licensed social worker, while Ed owns and manages South Main Auto. Both balance work, community activities, and mentoring. Last year they encouraged her along with lots of evening homework. They got her started with her

own refurbished computer supplies by FAMILIES PLUS. Venus belongs to the Delta Methodist Church as do they. This brings them together also for religious activities.

Venus takes her school work very seriously spending lots of time on her homework. She loves animals, friends, and Girl Scouts. She successfully completed Camp Red Cloud over the summer. Venus is thriving and everyone around her is smiling!

P.S.: From time to time Venus could use a ride to activities in Delta from the Pea Green direction. Anyone living in that direction that could give assist with transportation to youth activities would be a most helpful addition to wrap around support that FAMILIES PLUS is already providing. Call the office at 874-0464.

Family Treatment Centers - Bob Lang LPC CAC III

Professional Counseling, Substance Abuse and
Evaluation Services

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ANNUAL PICNIC BEATS ALL THE REST



Everyone in FAMILIES PLUS knows that the Friday before Delta Schools start is always the annual picnic. We start the school year off right with positive talk, school supplies, and load of appreciation for everyone involved. This year was extraordinary because 65% of all participants were present. The turn out was about double the percentage from any annual picnic in the last ten years. Drake Waehner, a grandfather associated with the program, commented, " I

drove right by thinking there were too many cars and too many people for the FAMILIES PLUS picnic and had to see the banner on my way back to believe it." Vickie Street, member of the board of directors, was the Master of Ceremonies for the awards and recognition of the children's accomplishments. Beverly Gardner a member of the board handed out the gifts of appreciation. Pam Bliss and Jackie Parks, also members of the board, made sure all the children won at least one prize in the games. Larry and Kristi Donathan grilled hamburgers and chicken fillets, and grilled and grilled and grilled. Larry is the secretary of the board of directors. Lee Smith, our dedicated and hard working office manager, received a two year plaque and many words of thanks for the huge amount of effort she puts into all aspects of her complicated job. A bouquet of roses was presented to Dr. Brenda Holland for her leadership efforts. This year the Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Lynda Pierce (see accompanying article). The picnic would not have been such a great success without the generous donations from the following businesses in the community that provided the food and supplies:



McDonald's



Thank you for your community support...

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR



FAMILIES PLUS assists kids primarily through volunteer efforts. In the last twelve months, 3,617 documented hours of donated time. Many more hours never get formally recorded. Mixed in all these hours donated with so much heart and sometimes sacrifice, the hours donated by Lynda Pierce stand out. She and her husband Steve are family mentors for Dylan Hood since October 2, 2006. Lynda has persistently tracked Dylan's needs and filled in everything not immediately available to him. She has done homework with him, transported him to soccer, Boy Scouts, and wrestling. When he stays over night in their home, she makes sure he is bathed and gets to sleep on time. She has rounded up friends for him to play with. She has driven him to dentist appointments in Montrose and many other medical appointments within Delta County. From time to time she has offered food supplements to his family from

surplus from a family farm. Probably the most fun event for Dylan has been going "frogging" with him. She and Dylan wander the creek bottoms looking for critters of all kind for him to capture and learn about. Lynda's husband, Steve, also spends numerous hours with Dylan.

Lynda has not only helped this one youth. She has gathered donated toiletries to help families make ends meet. She functions as a "friend to the family" for another participating family. In this capacity, she has helped the parent do paperwork to maintain their insurance and handle business. She successfully helped them reverse an unemployment claim denial so that the family got deserved unemployment benefits to help them make it. Lynda has a big heart for all children. She gives generously of her time and financial resources investing in any child in need. She reflects the spirit of FAMILIES PLUS in investing in children early so that they might have as much chance as children in secure circumstance for a secure future.



ELAINE LANG JOINS THE BOARD

The FAMILIES PLUS board of directors has been strengthened by the election to membership of Elaine Lang. Elaine recently resigned her paid position as public relations coordinator for the organization in order to increase her college credit load. Elaine greatly enhanced the rate of donations and volunteering for children during her year in the position. The board of directors welcomed her with enthusiasm to continue using her skills with the public to promote investment in children. The last name may be unfamiliar to some since Elaine recently married Bob Lang in a private ceremony. Elaine's efficient and effective work as a public relations coordinator was a huge help to the children participating.

SUCCESS IS

Accomplishments are defined as the “achieving of something”, or “a remarkable or successful achievement”, or even “a skill or a talent that has been developed.” Whether it is learning to tie your shoe, graduating from high school, or winning the Nobel Peace Prize, all mean one thing to us at Families Plus: SUCCESS! Each child that is involved with Families Plus is shown that each and every accomplishment leads to the next one, and a whole string of small accomplishments equals a lifetime of efforts that brings a rewarding, fulfilling life. Please join us in celebrating just some of the accomplishments of the children in our “family”.

Summer Hood – has all A’s and B’s

Christine Clark – has an A in Spelling

Tory Hovey - has an A in Science

Nicole Ruble - has a B in Math

Kayla Rood - has all A’s

Jarrin Crandall - has an A in Math

Alexis Medrano - has all A’s & B’s

Owen Thomas - has an A in Math

Ryan Janssen - has an A in Reading

Nicholas Boyle - has an A in Science

Antonio Visuano - has an A in Spelling, Math and Social Studies

Vanessa Kettle - has an A in Social Studies

Cassidie Ledford - has an A in Reading and Spelling Reading

Dylan Hood – has an A in Math and Spelling

Cameron Porter - has an A in Technology and Science

Courtney Mattler - has an A in Math and Spelling

Josh Onken - has a B in Math, Social Studies, and Spelling

Zoey Janssen - has an A in Reading and Math

Jose Montoya - has a B in Reading, Math and Writing

STAFFING UP FOR MORE CHILDREN



Tom Friel, M.A., Licensed Professional Counselor, joined the clinical staff of families plus in July. Tom has twenty years of experience working with families and children. Before his semi-retirement, he worked for the Center for Mental Health in Delta as a program coordinator and psychotherapist. Previous to that he serves as a treatment supervisor for the Division of Child and Family Services in Utah. Tom is prepared to coordinated services and health care for the children who will be entering the program this winter and spring. In his free time Tom is an avid traveler, an outdoor recreationist, a stargazer, and member of Delta Fine Arts.



Dave Shishim began in September to represent FAMILIES PLUS as the director of marketing. He comes into the position with almost twenty five years of business management experience. He has worked in business management with Elders of Australia, Farmland Industries of Kansas, and Chaco, Inc of Paonia. Dave holds a B.A. degree in journalism from Rutgers College. Dave has plentiful ideas and lots of enthusiasm toward promoting volunteerism and donation to children.

Women on the move

LOVE CHILDREN... Women on the Move is an open membership Delta County women’s outdoors group. This local group provides a supportive, non-competitive environment to women wanting to explore the Western Slope and beyond. Every year this group of women pays for young ladies to attend camp Red Cloud to help interest them in enjoying and appreciating the out of doors. This year the group has outdone themselves by sponsoring ten girls for camp. The group not only pays the fees but also arranges transportation to and from the camp which is located near Lake City. Sharon Riegel takes responsibility for coordinating the preparations, fee payment, and transportation. Camp Red Cloud is an exciting character-building activity for these young ladies. As a follow up to camp this year, the Women on the Move group organized an all day hike and swim near Currenanti for adults to hike with the children. Summer Hood and Michelle Tucker enjoyed this hike along with the experienced adult hikers. Again everything including transportation was provided by the WOTM. The collaboration between WOTM and FAMILIES PLUS is a great example of a win/win community collaborative effort.

I GIVE.COM just got easler

Every time your purchase on line, most business will send a small donation along to FAMILIES PLUS. This month triggering a donation has become virtually effortless. IGive.com just came out with a new toolbar that will automatically trigger a donation to FAMILIES PLUS from the merchant when you make your purchase. You simply **register** with IGIVE.COM and **designate FAMILIES PLUS** as the charity to receive the donation. That sets in motion a **donation at not cost to you** from the online company anytime that you make a purchase. Shopping never before was such a community spirited and children uplifting event!

CHECK OUT THE NEW WEB PAGES

FAMILIES PLUS has a new Web Master, Dave Armlovich. Dave has invested many hours into updating the web site and giving it more pizzazz. Dave is a genuine IT man. In his real job he works for the U.S. Forest Service as a Geographical Information Systems Coordinator “GIS”. He has been very generous with his time as a volunteer. You will notice that the web site now has the ability to receive donations through Pay Pal. Don’t forget to take a glance at the pictures of the awesome annual picnic.



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Mentoring
 Kids for Life!

FAMILIES PLUS Focuses on Health



FAMILY PLUS, a Delta-based children's nonprofit, recently received a generous grant from the Colorado Health Foundation.

The Denver-based Colorado Health Foundation approved a grant to support the FAMILY PLUS program as it expands. The Colorado Health Foundation is working to make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation by investing in grants and initiatives to help 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.) The Colorado Health Foundation awarded Family Plus \$37,000 to be used over a three-year period. For more information about FAMILY PLUS call 874-0464 or log on to www.familyplus.net.

FAMILIES PLUS Awarded Grant by



the children's nonprofit that pioneered the concept of family mentoring announced today that it has been awarded a generous grant from the Adolph Coors Foundation of Denver, Colorado.

The Adolph Coors Foundation believes in the

importance of self-sufficiency, job training, one-on-one mentoring, character building, volunteerism and encouraging philanthropy. It is a private family

foundation established in 1975. It has awarded almost 4,000 grants totaling over \$154 million to community agencies throughout Colorado. For more than 125

years, Colorado has been home to the Coors family. Many things have changed over the years, but the family's commitment to Colorado remains the same:

they believe in giving back to the community that has been so kind and generous to them.

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