



FAMILIES PLUS

Mentoring Kids for Life!

January 2013 – Newsletter
Community Corner Stones

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MENTORING FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

Joseph Rodriguez is a 9 year old Paonia child who shows great promise. His mother, Anna Rodriguez, is being assisted in raising him by Dave and Jill Knutson who live nearby. Dave and Jill came into Families Plus in 2011 already seasoned in mentoring children. They had previously invested in a child from 1982-1990 with whom they still communicate.



Knutson's and Joseph spend regular time together doing outdoor activities, hanging out in the Knutson home, and doing homework. Jill is a certified teacher and Dave is a natural teacher. They are so committed to Joseph's education that they have agreed this winter and spring to have Joseph in their home during the school week so he can continue this education at Paonia Elementary school where he is making strong academic progress, while his mother needs to be in the Montrose area.

Anna, Joseph's mother reports that "she is developing an extraordinary job opportunity. Anna has been working with Edith Johnston with the DVR for some time. This job opportunity is Anna's first attempt to honor her unique attributes while developing an adequate income."

Although this amount of time with a mentored child is unusual in the Families Plus program, occasionally situations lend themselves to a special arrangement. The Knutson's are entirely invested in making sure that Joseph has a strong education to carry him forward, as is his mother.

Joseph likes to snowshoe, play video games, and feed biscuits to the family dog, Peaches. Although comfortable in the Knutson home, he is always happy to see his mom. Joseph is doing very well in school; he is on the Honor Roll.

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Newsletter Sponsors

**VOLUNTEER
OUTREACH**

Families Plus is conducting an outreach to the community offering volunteer opportunities of all kinds. Staff and Board members are seeking organizations interested in presentation or an informational display. Through the generous contribution of advertisement space by the High Country Shopper, the needs of families are being publicize frequently. Over the holidays, a Families Plus High Country Shopper ad requested help with chopping wood for a families only heat source. Seven different men from this area called to offer help to this family.

Some volunteers give their time once a year, while others are regularly involved. We are particularly in need of families to mentor children and adults to lead one small project during the year. Do you see yourself doing any of these tasks? PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL OR WRITE US with your idea to help children and their families:

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burden of it for someone else.

(Benjamin Franklin)

LOOK HOW THE CHILDREN ARE DOING!!! WOW !!!!

Hotchkiss Honor Roll

3rd Grade – **Joseph Rodriguez**

6th Grade – **Amber Mattler**

7th Grade – **Courtney Mattler**



Courtney Mattler won the poster contest for the Delta Parade of Lights!!!

Kayla Rood is honored as a “Blazing Bulldog”!

Lincoln Elementary and the Kiwanis Club Virtuous Kids are:

Martin Roach – Hard worker and patient

Trenton Lovelace – Kind

Laurie Roach – Respectful

James Roach – Diligent

Jarrin Crandall – Generous



Cedaredge Elementary Bear Den Honors:

Kelly Finley

Cabe Waehner – **ALSO** on the Honor Roll

Garnet Mesa Elementary Honor Roll

Edward Hecht

Crawford Elementary Honor Roll

Cameron Quick



*****WHAT A GREAT JOB KIDS!!! KEEP IT UP!!!!*****

VENUS STRATTON MEMORIAL

Many children have already found and loved a new piece of playground equipment next to the Lions Pavilion at Confluence Park in Delta. It was installed in August by the City of Delta Parks and Recreation Department. The Spin-Around toy allows a child to whirl around as fast as their arms can pump while firmly anchored to the sturdy equipment.



On Tuesday, October 23, a small group of friends and family of Venus Stratton gathered to formally dedicate this toy that was purchased in honor of Venus. Venus died during the summer of 2010 in a bicycle accident at the age of 12. Venus was known for her creative, joyful, and generous spirit. The toy exemplifies her zest for life and for fun. The toy was purchased by the Families Plus memorial fund set up for Venus and with a donation by the Delta Lions Club under the leadership of Sheri Serve. On hand for the dedication were Venus’ grandfather, Garris Flebbe, who took a spin on the toy for Venus, Venus’ Families Plus mentors, Ed and Cheryl Oeltjenbruns, and Venus’ best friend of many years, Anna Fuller. The Families Plus organization continues to support and encourage Venus’ grandparents, Kristi Hayward-Lake and Garris Flebbe, as it is the organization’s tradition to stay with families despite what may come.

KIDS PASTA PROJECT

In late September Families Plus joined with the Kid's Pasta Project to put on a gourmet spaghetti dinner at Scenic Mesa Ranch near Hotchkiss. The dinner was sold out to an enthusiastic crowd of Families Plus supporters. Rita Clagett stepped up to be the auctioneer of around twenty framed pieces of original art created by children who participate in the Families Plus program. The art was created with the assistance of mini-mentor, Lore McDonough who also donated her time and supplies to matt and frame the art. Some of the pieces brought intense bidding before being claimed by their proud new owners. One of the contributing artists was Christine Clark, a seventh grade student at Cedaredge Middle school. She was in attendance to see the excitement her art brought.

***** Volunteers are love in motion! *****

(Author Unknown)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS EXPANDS

The Board of Directors elected two new members to the Board at their regular bimonthly meeting on January 15, 2013 – **Dave Armlovich and Al Hale**. **Dave Armlovich** already has six years of volunteering for Families Plus to his credit. He manages the Web Site, <http://www.familiesplus.net>, and lends his technical expertise to computer challenges in the office. Dave is a GIS expert at the U.S. Forest Service, an avid outdoorsman, and frequent volunteer in the community. He recently returned from two weeks of hiking up to 18,500 feet in the Himalaya Mountains.



Al Hale was also elected to membership. He is trained as a mechanical engineer and settled into western Colorado for business management positions. He is currently semi-retired in the Delta area. He brings to the Board of Director previous experience in working toward organizational excellence on the Board of Directors of Arrowhead (Cimarron). His business management skills and attention to detail will be in valuable in advancing toward the Board goal of achieving nonprofit excellence.



RESTRUCTURING COMPLETE



Families Plus started out their new fiscal year on October 1 with a new organizational structure in place. Dr. Holland has shifted out of clinical services and into a program management and development role. She will be developing a treatment manual, integrating Families Plus services with other children's services locally and statewide, raising operating funds, working with the Board of Directors on their increasingly important role, and managing publicity and volunteer recruitment.

She has been replaced in clinical leadership by Mariah Emond, M.A., LPC, CAC II. Emond has been a leader in the mental health care community of western slope Colorado since 2005. She was awarded her Master's Degree in the Science of Counseling at Alaska Pacific University in 2005. She had previously earned a Bachelors of Science in Occupational Therapy by Colorado State University in 2002. She has a prominent treatment role with Drug Free Delta County and provides occupational therapy to students of Delta County Public schools. Currently, she is progressing in doctoral Health Administration program with the University of Phoenix. Mariah oversees the clinical services of Families Plus and also works with a few of the participating families. Three other licensed mental health care providers also work with the children and their families – Tom Friel LPC, Karen Wolfram LPC, and Suzanne Horning-Rieder LPC.

Dawn Reeder, the current president of the Board of Directors has accepted temporary responsibilities as the acting Executive Officer of the organization while funding is secured to fill this position.

TUTORING

Many Families Plus children struggle in school. Volunteers step up to meet with them once or twice a week to help them with their school work – one on one. Can you help?



LABELING/FOLDING IN YOUR HOME

We mail out three newsletters and a Christmas drawing from children. Volunteers label and stuff these in to Envelopes in their home.

If you can help, call 874-0464 or Email to allamericanfamilies@gmail.com

FUNDING CORNER

Colorado Health Foundation

Families Plus has just entered the third year of a large grant from the Colorado Health Foundation designed to increase the number of under-served Coloradans who regularly receive primary, mental or oral health care. Since November 2011, Families Plus has added 14 children to receive long term services with the program. Local pediatrician, Janet Moore, MD, a partner in this grant, provides weekly free clinics at the old Delta Middle School for uninsured and underinsured children. With an appointment, parents can get a free health screening and needed immunizations by calling 970 874 9715. Families Plus along with Dr. Moore are working to make health care accessible to all children in Delta, County.

The vision of the Colorado Health Foundation is to make Colorado the healthiest state in the nation. To achieve this vision, the Colorado Health Foundation invests in grants and initiatives to health-related nonprofits that encourage healthy living and increase the number of Coloradans with health insurance. The organization also works to ensure that Coloradans have access to quality, coordinated care as well as operating medical education programs to increase the health care workforce.

Wolcott Family Foundation Supports Local Children

The Wolcott Family Foundation granted \$5,000 to Families Plus during their annual meeting in November. This foundation is a three generation, family-run organization, convinced of the power of small groups to make a significant difference in helping people change their world. A guiding principal of this organization is the parable of the fish: "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 Wolcott Family Foundation has chosen to support the Families Plus program that invests in many local children by organizing small groups of supporters to invest in each child. Families Plus is a homegrown mentoring program designed to help parents raise strong and healthy children when their circumstances are challenging. Families Plus wraps volunteers and needed supplies around these families and children, always aiming toward healthy development. Through this program, deserving children in Delta County enjoy the benefits of mentoring families, tutors, fees for sports and activities, summer camps, and the watchful eye of a mental health care professional to guide healthy development and steer around problems.

The Wolcott Family Foundation promotes social change and environmental stewardship. While based in Denver, many family members active in the foundation live in the Delta County area.

Financial Contributors

(This trimester)

Anschutz Family Foundation	Les & Ann Renfrow	Domino's Pizza
Colorado Health Foundation	Hellman Motor Company	High Country Shopper
Wolcott Family Foundation	Steven & Kathryn Hinchman	Kids Pasta Project & Auction
Harold & Margaret Porter Family Fund	Delta Lions Club	Wags World of Printing
Wells Fargo	Don's Market	Artis Miller
Edson & Mary Holland	Delta County Fed. Cr. Un.	John & Linda Ottino
Larry & Julia Griffith	Richard & Judith Rheinhard	Samuel & Lana Kevan
Tracy & Cathy Cheatham	Elena Goldstein	Robert Bartoletti
A & B Machining	William & Nancy Snowdon	Lisa Joss
Ritta Schlappe	Oxbow Mining	Laura Holland
Leticia & Pierre Corbasson	Dave Shishim	Dawn Reeder

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Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience and just plain loving one another. (Erma Bombeck)
.....

Anschutz Family Foundation supports the young

The Anschutz Family Foundation is providing financial support to Delta County children through the Families Plus wrap-around mentoring program. Families Plus has been granted \$7,500 toward drawing in volunteers and resources aimed at helping children in challenging circumstance to develop self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency is a focus of investment both for Families Plus and the Anschutz Family Foundation. The Families Plus program helps children succeed in school, join into sports and skill building activities, and enjoy time with a mentoring family that also promotes skill building.

The Anschutz Family Foundation supports Colorado nonprofit organizations that assist people to help themselves while nurturing and preserving their self-respect. The Foundation encourages endeavors that strengthen families and communities and advance individuals to become productive and responsible citizens. There is a special interest in self-sufficiency, community development and programs aimed at the economically disadvantaged, the young, the elderly and the disabled. The Foundation is also dedicated to funding efforts in rural Colorado.

Families Plus is a locally developed outreach to children that has been providing intensive and long term supports to Delta County children for many years. Family mentors volunteer regularly, while others offer help once a year to help with a repair or deliver a mother's day gift. Please call the Families Plus office, 115 Grand Avenue, 874-0464, if you would like to help.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES



Art is a big part of Christmas at Families Plus. School children drew close to one thousand pictures of families celebrating Christmas that were mailed out in clear envelopes as children's gift to the community. Tom Holland donated a wildlife photograph for the Families Plus personalize Christmas card sent to those who donated and volunteered in 2012 for children. The Delta United Methodist Church contributed their public gathering space for the annual gift wrapping party. Parents of the children who participate, joined together for a chili lunch, Christmas music, and wrapping of the donated presents for their children. This year 67 presents were collected for Families Plus children and their siblings. Toys for Tots, lead by Marianne Hennessey, provided some of the gifts this year. The President of the Board of Directors, Dawn Reeder, donated an original Christmas display named "mountain man" for silent auction. Big O Tire conducted the auction in their place of business. Mountain man was claimed by Ritta Schlappe, pictured above, for her bed and breakfast. Christmas dinners for Families were donated by the participants and staff of the PACE program housed at (Horizon's Nursing Home, by Delta Lyons Club, by an anonymous group). Michael and Audra Guerrero and their daughter, Camryn, drove from their home in Aspen to provide gifts and food for a complete Thanksgiving and Christmas celebration for a Cedaredge Families Plus family who was especially challenged this holiday. The family wanted to experience the true meaning of Christmas giving. Michael and Audra are former residents of Delta County and graduates of Delta High School. Delta County cares about its children.

PROJECT LEADERS NEEDED:

Different volunteers step up to coordinate:

- Annual picnic,
- Mother's Day gifts,
- Father's Day gifts,
- Birthday Balloon,
- Christmas Wrapping Party, or
- Christmas Gift Collection

If you could lead one project:

Call us at 874-0464 or email us
allamericanfamilies@gmail.com



DELIVERIES IN YOUR TOWN

We deliver mother's day gifts for children to give, and also Father's Day gifts, and our birthday celebration balloons.

In May, in June and in October we need deliveries made in your communities.

If you can help, please call us at
874-0464 or email us
allamericanfamilies@gmail.com

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE THE NEWSLETTER EMAILED TO YOU,
PLEASE EMAIL US AT allamafricanfamilies@gmail.com**

****Volunteering can be an exciting, growing, enjoyable experience. It is truly gratifying to serve a cause, practice one's ideals, work with people, solve problems, see benefits and know one had a hand in them.*** (Harriet Naylor)*

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

I am pleased with the opportunity to serve as the acting Executive Director of Families Plus, as the President of the Board of Directors. I find it valuable to invest my time in this program because the needs are so great in this area and Families Plus is doing such a good job in providing for children. The Board of Directors as a group is reorganizing and expanding to be able to better communicate the strong impact of the Families Plus program throughout Delta County and to draw in more of those with abilities, those with love for children, and those with commitment to make Delta County a healthier community. The Board of Directors meets every other month with working committees meeting most every month. We have set as our goals to bring the organization into a nonprofit excellence status and also to gather the increasing funding and donation support needed for the children served.



**Families Plus
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