



FAMILIES PLUS

Mentoring Kids for Life!

August 2010 – Newsletter
Community Corner Stones

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Courtney **M**attler is truly a rising star. She and her family joined FAMILIES PLUS in July 2008. One of their first activities was the annual picnic before school started. At that picnic Courtney met Vickie Street who was on the board of directors of FAMILIES PLUS. At that moment an instant connection was made. A relationship was born. Vickie and Mike Street volunteered to mentor Courtney the next week. Courtney lives primarily with her mother Cecilia and step-father Joe Hurla. She has a little sister, Amber, and a little brother, Nathan. Her father, James Mattler, lives in Delta.

Vickie is an associate pastor at the United Methodist Church in Cedaredge. She retired back to Delta County after a first career in television broadcasting and began a second career. Her husband Mike is the President of the Cedaredge Cemetery Board and shares a love of art with Courtney.

At first Courtney was shy and awkward when she spent time in the home of her mentors. Gradually she has become supremely comfortable when she spends times with them. In fact Vickie and Mike have become comfortable friends for the whole family. Cecilia and Joe asked Vickie to marry them during the summer of 2009 and join them on this very special day. Courtney attends Hotchkiss K-8. She is an honor roll student. She loves to participate in sports - baseball, basketball, and soccer. Even though it was a stretch for her, she decided to go to Camp Red Cloud this year under the sponsorship of FAMILIES PLUS. The night before departure Vickie was on the phone with her to help her gather her courage as it was slipping. Courtney did great and came home more than thrilled with her Red Cloud adventure. Courtney thinks a lot about being a scientist for NASA. And she will shine brightly on her path in life.

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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! Please join us in celebrating just some of the accomplishments of the children in our “family”.



Christina Clark and her Mini-Mentor, Lorene McDonough do art projects together almost every week.

Christina won a 1st place ribbon and \$25.00 prize for a painting she did of flowers. She also won 2nd place on two more of her paintings one of a tree with a river and the other of sunflowers. Christina sold all three paintings for \$25.00 each.



Summer Hood



Series of Successes

Summer Hood you are truly amazing.

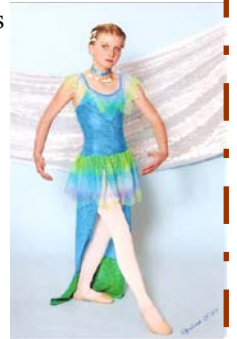
Summer Hood dramatize Eleanor Roosevelt in a school history project...



Summer worked very hard and kept very busy last school year. All her efforts came to bloom in the spring. Summer was nominated twice for the Bear Den Award at school. This award recognizes good grades and good citizenship.

In May Summer graduated from the Stars Program at the Assembly of God church. She had been striving for this goal since she was five years old. She had worked every year to study, memorize Bible versus, and participate in spiritual development.

It was not easy but Summer also danced in the ballet, Peter Pan, under the leadership of Jenna Rose. Even though she had never danced ballet before she was a line leader in the performance on her part. Summer was very much assisted to accomplish this by her mini-mentor, Diana Tayir. Diana is a retired professional dancer. She took Summer to every class and encouraged her as she felt overwhelmed with all the new demands. The costs of this training were donated by Bruce and Nancy Hovde. **YEAH SUMMER!** You are truly amazing.



Tory Hovey was on the A & B HONOR ROLL

Alexis Medrano is an A Student

Cave Waehner is an A student

Courtney Mattler had 5-A's & 1-C

Summer Hood had all A's & B's



Cave Waehner earned a computer

Ryan Janssen and his mentor John Triebwasser built this dog house...



Ryan Janssen, Owen Thomas, Jose Montoya and his sister, Damion Kirksey, Leroy & Ezekio Zavala, Samantha & Alexis Crosby and Christopher & Cameron Quick all completed their swimming lessons.



Josh Onken, Charlotte Kelly and Nicole Ruble went to





New Counselor Joins FAMILIES PLUS

FAMILIES PLUS is pleased to announce that Karen Wolfram, a long-time employee of the Delta County School District has joined FAMILIES PLUS.

A graduate of Florida State with her BA in Child Development, Karen worked in childcare and became intrigued with finding out why some children had a very difficult time relating to others. That curiosity led to a degree in psychology from the University of Northern Colorado. Karen brings with her a broad-based portfolio of experience in many areas of family and child psychology. She has worked for a number of agencies in both Delta and Mesa counties in addition to her experience with the school district. Reflecting back on her years with the school district, Karen says that she really enjoyed working with the children and their parents and she looks forward to the opportunity to continue building and developing those relationships.

Dr. Brenda Holland, Executive Director of FAMILIES PLUS said that she is "very excited to have someone of Karen's expertise - and someone with her specific experience - with many of the children currently enrolled in the FAMILIES PLUS program - join the FAMILIES PLUS team."

Karen, a native of Florida, got her first exposure to Colorado on the many vacations her family took to escape the heat and humidity of a Florida summer. Those vacations shaped Karen's attitude that "Santa shouldn't wear Bermuda shorts" and that there "should be distinct seasons in the year." In addition to her work, Karen enjoys motorcycles - specifically Harley Davidson motorcycles - traveling, camping and hiking.

Karen joins both Dr. Holland and FAMILIES PLUS therapist Tom Friel as mental health professionals on the FAMILIES PLUS staff. With enrollment in the FAMILIES PLUS programs now approaching 50 children we know there will be plenty to keep all of our professional staff busy. If you get a chance, stop by sometime and say hello, and welcome, to Karen Wolfram.

Tom Friel – Experiences Enough for Two Lifetimes

While many of you will recognize Tom Friel's name from any of a number of FAMILIES PLUS events, you probably have little idea of the scope of Tom's experience. With a Bachelor's degree from San Francisco State University and two Masters' degrees (one from San Francisco State and one from Western State College in Gunnison). Tom has certainly done his share of time in the classroom and it shows in his certification as a Licensed Professional Counselor and a clinical member of the American Mental Health Counselors Association. His experience in the field includes work as a therapist, counselor and case manager in a variety of settings and situations in the Southwestern United States and the list of his post-graduate training and development in extensive continuing education and training. In short, he knows what he's talking about.



What else you don't know about Tom is that he grew up in Northern California and traveled, lived and worked in Central and South America for years. Tom taught English as a Foreign Language in Bogota, Colombia. Built adobe and cinder block houses in Somoto, Nicaragua. He also worked as a letter carrier, house builder & renovator, restaurant manager, and minor playwright with a professionally produced play to his credit. Good research and writing skills. Tom's interests include history, astronomy, photography, hiking and backpacking. He is active in community organizations including the Black Canyon Camera Club, and Delta Fine Arts Council. In addition, he is a member of National Association of Photoshop Professionals.

Tom, we're certainly glad that you added FAMILIES PLUS to your considerable resume!

ALMOST FIFTY

Is it the struggles of the times? FAMILIES PLUS has had a surge in referrals. We have added five children in the last six weeks with three more waiting to be assessed for participation. We are hitting the fifty child mark! Delta County is wonderfully supportive of it's children. We are excited to invite you to help with mentoring, delivering friendliness and gifts to families, donating appliances, giving rides to appointments, purchasing Christmas gifts or a number of other small actions that show that Delta does care about children. (With each child we need four dedicated volunteers to support their needs.) If you haven't had your "heart melted" lately, we welcome you to join us in helping raise these lively, funny, and fun children. (Contact us at 874 0464, allamericanfamilies@gmail.com)





Walmart Hosted Pepsi Fund-Raising Wagon for the Benefit of FAMILIES PLUS

BIG NEWS our local Walmart in Delta agreed to host the Pepsi fund-raising wagon for the benefit of FAMILIES PLUS on Saturday, July 10. In addition Walmart donated a gift certificate to help purchase our food and beverages.

What this means is that FAMILIES PLUS volunteers and staff sold various Pepsi food and drink products in the Walmart Delta parking lot from mid-morning until late afternoon. Proceeds from the sale went to FAMILIES PLUS and will help fund our programs for children including helping to defray some of the costs of sending some of the children to Camp Red Cloud.



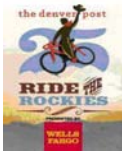
Pepsi provides the fund raising wagon as a public service to non-profit organizations and Walmart agreed to let us use their very heavily-trafficked parking lot as a venue for the wagon. On a summer Saturday, the Walmart store drew thousands of customers and many of them purchased food from FAMILIES PLUS children.

A Note of Thanks

All of you for supporting us by buying and donating at our Pepsi Fund-Raising Wagon. The event was such a success and we appreciate all the support...



FAMILIES PLUS Awarded Grant from Ride the Rockies




FAMILIES PLUS was awarded a \$5,000.00 grant from the Denver Post Community, the parent organization of Ride the Rockies. Ride the Rockies endeavors to fund one organization in each of the host communities that the event stays in overnight. Organizations must be non-profit and provide benefits to their respective communities. Organizations then submit grant requests outlining why they feel their particular organization is worthy of the grant. Grant funds come in large part from the entry fees that each individual cyclist pays in order to participate in Ride the Rockies.

FAMILIES PLUS was recognized in a ceremony at the Delta Center for the Performing Arts and presented with a check for \$5000 in front of an audience comprised of some of the day's 2000 riders. These riders, who had ridden from Grand Junction the hard way – over the Grand Mesa – applauded loudly when Families Plus Executive Director, Dr. Brenda Holland was introduced and FAMILIES PLUS was announced as the winner of the local grant award. On hand for the ceremony were two of FAMILIES PLUS clients who joined in accepting the check from the Denver Post Community.



CKF

Cocker Kids' Foundation 

Awards Grant To FAMILIES PLUS

The Cocker Kids Foundation of Crawford, CO announced that it was awarding Families Plus a total of \$1,650. Funds received from the Cocker Kids foundation will be used specifically to assist children in Families Plus' program in the North Fork valley towns of Crawford, Hotchkiss and Paonia and the surrounding area.

The Cocker Kids' Foundation is a non-profit, community supported foundation 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.

Families Plus intends to utilize a portion of the granted funds to produce a "safe computing" workshop for children to be presented in conjunction with back-to-school activities later this summer. Attendees and their parents will be instructed in how to safely participate in online activities and avoid the risks that come with journeys into cyberspace.



Venus Stratton Memorial Fund Established

A fund to raise money for a memorial for Venus Stratton has been established at the Paonia State Bank in Paonia.

Venus Stratton Memorial Fund
c/o Paonia State Bank
PO Box 597
Paonia, CO 81428



A *Special Thank you to Richard & Linda Bell* for always being there to help deliver Fathers Days, Mothers Days gifts and balloon/candy delivery at Families Plus Birthday Celebration.

**Thank you
Richard & Linda**



Thank You

to everyone that donated vases for the roses that were given to the mothers on Mothers Day.



Thank you Cedaredge Ward Relief Society of Austin, and Paonia, Hotchkiss Methodist Church, Mariah Clark, Bonnie Amin, Maggie Shishim and Diane Perry for all the wonderful cookies you baked for the gift for Father's Day.

Anna Fuller Attended the Horse Camp.

Samantha Crosby, Alexis Crosby,
Venus Stratton attended the Explorer Camp.



Ryan & Owen Janssen, Christopher Quick,
Roger Towner & Alex Tutor attended the
Discovery Camp.

A big **thanks** to Artis & Dick Miller, Toni Peterson, Shane & Jo Lance who donated their time and money to provide transportation to and from camp.



Families Plus wants to thank the good women of *Women on the Move* for all their hard work to send many of our Families Plus children to Camp Red Cloud this summer. Without their help, camp wouldn't have happened.

A **Special Huge Thanks to Sharon Riegel** who donated countless hours to find funds, register campers, find drivers, set up schedules and even drive kids herself!

(Nicole Ruble, Ivorie Crandall, Caytlynne Suazo, Michelle Tucker, Ivy Waddington, Courtney Mattler, Christina Clark and Ben Hecht attended Discovery Camp funded by Women On The Move.)

A big **thanks** to Elaine Brett, Sharon Riegel, Claudia King, Kim Wasilkowich, Betsy Shepherd, Dennis & Mary Bollig, Inge Lange and Margaret Musgnung who donated their time and money to provide transportation to and from camp.

FAMILIES PLUS Volunteers Help Distribute Commodity

June 24th marked the third consecutive Delta County Commodity Distribution where volunteers from Families Plus played a role in helping the county distribute food to needy families.

The county obtains non-perishable (canned and dry goods) food from the US Department of Agriculture on a regular basis and stores that product for distribution at regularly-scheduled events. These distributions are held quarterly (December, March, June and September) at locations in Delta, Hotchkiss and Cedaredge. Qualifying individuals must be in a certain income level which varies by the number of dependents in a household.

According to Dave Shishim, Families Plus Director of Outreach, "volunteering to assist at the distribution gives all of us a chance to help out. There are few events where you can see your volunteer labor going directly to aid people who are in need



so than at a regular commodity distribution. It's also a way for us to give back to the county and provide assistance to the Department of Health and Human Services - which, in these tough financial times, is completely strained to the maximum trying to provide services to those in need. By providing volunteers to assist with this task, we take a very small amount of pressure off of the county who would otherwise have to take staff away from other important projects. In addition, helping out at these events has a way of putting things into perspective as you can easily see how tough some folks have it."

Volunteers to assist with the distribution are always welcome. If you'd like to help out with a couple of hours on Thursday morning up to four times a year, please contact Dave Shishim dave.familiesplus@tds.net or call the Families Plus office at 874-0464.