

Fostering Hope

Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition



Fall 2007

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Spread the Warmth

In the middle of the night, a young boy startles. He waits for his eyes to adjust to the darkness. The outline of the bedroom furniture slowly comes into focus and nothing looks familiar, but that's not unusual. The boy has spent many nights in lots of different shelters and homes.

A St. Louis snow storm blows outside, occasionally shaking the window panes. Over the noise of the howling wind, he listens for the sound of his little brother's breathing. For as long as the boy can remember, he has always checked on his brother at night. Sometimes he's gotten out of bed only to discover the child in the next bed wasn't his brother, or that he was alone. Those nights are the toughest.

The boy worries that wherever his brother is sleeping, the people don't know that his brother often kicks his covers off. It saddens him to think that his brother might be spending the night curled up in a tiny, shivering ball.

Tonight, as he gets out of bed, he hears his bedroom door open. Instinctively he freezes. Through the darkness, his sleepy eyes struggle to see who it is.

She comes to his bed and pulls the covers up around his shoulders. He feels a soft kiss on his forehead. The boy can't remember ever being tucked into bed. As the woman turns, he carefully opens his eyes to watch his new adoptive mom do the same to his little brother in the next bed. His brother will be warm tonight.

He lets out a small sigh and falls back to sleep dreaming about what it will be like to grow up in his new, forever family with parents that love him, where he and his brother will be safe... and warm.

Isn't this what every child deserves? You have the power to create happy endings for children in foster care, just like this. Your donation will fund FACC's efforts to find and support foster/adoptive parents who will provide loving homes for children in need of peace, safety, and warmth.

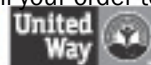
As 2007 comes to a close, will you create happy endings? Could you make room in your heart, if not in your home, for our fragile children? Please take a moment today to send a financial contribution. Whether \$5 or \$500, every gift will make a difference in their lives.

WISH UPON A STAR ORNAMENT

The Wish Upon a Star Ornament, presented in a black velvet pouch, is the perfect gift for a relative or friend, favorite hostess, teacher, or co-worker. It includes a tag to let the recipient know that proceeds benefit FACC's work to find homes for children in foster care. Each star, measuring 4" X 4", is handcrafted from durable aluminum and polished to a high silver shine. The cost is just \$10 plus \$2 for shipping and handling.



Order your Wish Upon a Star Ornament today! Go to www.foster-adopt.org, email your order to heatherhenke@foster-adopt.org or call 314-367-8373.



314-FOSTER-3 or 1-800-FOSTER-3
www.foster-adopt.org



BIG Wishes Do Come True!



LT, Durrell, and their mom, Anneke

For the first time in their lives, five teens who were participants in Project Teen Plus will spend this Thanksgiving with their forever families; like Durrell and LT who were recently adopted by Anneke Bart. "I waited ten years," says Durrell of his adoptive family. "I didn't think this day would ever come" says another. For waiting teens in foster care, each day seems like an eternity. In Missouri, there are approximately 11,681 children in foster care - almost 4,800 are between the ages of 13 and 21.

The youth in Project Teen Plus have worked hard to prepare and transition into their adoptive homes. For some teens, immediate improvement was shown, not only academically but behaviorally and emotionally. "I know I have someone that loves me and won't give up on me" says one participant. He explains that having the stability and relief of never having to move again has contributed to the drastic change.

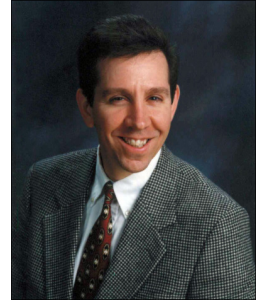
This Thanksgiving not only are the adopted teens giving thanks, so are their new. As Anneke stated, "They have been a blessing and have added so much joy to my life!"

For more information, contact Sheila Suderwalla, Director of Project Teen Plus at 314.367.837, or sheilasuderwalla@foster-adopt.org.

Letter from the FACC President

Dear Friends of FACC,

November is National Adoption Awareness month and the staff at FACC is busier than ever! First—using media coverage to broaden community awareness about the critical need for families to adopt children in foster care. Second—the Little Wishes holiday program is in high gear with Holiday Wishes Shopping Day set for Saturday, December 8th at Westfield Chesterfield Mall. Third—finalizing plans for the 8th Annual Family Ties event on November 24th—an evening of live theatre for children in foster care and their families. Finally, planning is underway for the 2nd Annual Old Bags™ party on April 29, 2008.



Last Summer, I told you about new funding from the Missouri legislature and the Children's Division for an Adoption Resource Center. This program was funded in part by a grant from Area Resources for Community & Human Services (ARCHS). FACC now provides parent and teen support groups, plans parent-to-parent networks for respite care, and offers educational advocacy services to adoptive families. These are critical services that provide much-needed support to adoptive families.

The addition of new staff to run these programs has used up every inch of office space, so we have begun to research options for the future including: leasing a larger space, purchasing a building (or have one donated), or possibly building a new facility. Whether or not to bring our resale shop, the KidStore, into shared space is also a consideration—a lot to think about.

While November is traditionally a time of giving thanks, the staff and the board are grateful each and every day for your continued support and for your commitment to our kids. Happy Thanksgiving!

Jeff Haller
Board President

Westfield®
West County

5th Anniversary Celebration

Westfield West County Shopping Center celebrated two big milestones—the 5th Anniversaries of their grand reopening and "A Place to Call Home" on KSDK NewsChannel 5.

Westfield hosted a scavenger hunt, fashion shows, a wine and cheese party, face painting, and a raffle. The grand prize of a four-hour cruise for eight on a luxury motor yacht with food and beverages provided by J. Buck's Restaurant was won by **Sue Pinckerton**. **Francis Carrow** won the second prize—gift cards from mall stores valued at \$400.

At the scavenger hunt on September 20th for children in foster care, Bearemy Bear from **Build-A-Bear™ Workshop** delighted the little ones, as both young and old enjoyed root beer floats donated and served by **Fitz's Restaurant**.

Thank you to the **Westfield West County** stores who donated prizes, **MarineMax St. Charles**, **Sean Phillips of Westfield**, **J. Buck's Restaurant**, and **Fitz's Restaurant**—it was a great celebration of two special anniversaries!





6,000 Little Wishes Available November 15th

KSDK has once again partnered with the Little Wishes Holiday Campaign. More than 6,000 Holiday gift requests have been made by foster children. Gifts range from \$20 to \$200 and include dolls, bikes, games, and more.

How can you grant a Little Wish? Simply visit www.foster-adopt.org, click on Little Wishes, and browse through the children's gift requests. Our FACC staff and volunteers will ensure that the gift is delivered to the child in time for the Holidays.

Remember, Little Wishes make the perfect Holiday gift for friends, family, and co-workers. Really, does your boss need another desk clock or tie? A Little Wishes donation in his or her name could be the perfect Holiday touch! Once you grant a wish online through our secure server, we will mail a Holiday card to you (suitable for gift giving), which announces that a Little Wish has been granted. To view the Little Wishes card, visit www.foster-adopt.org, and click on Little Wishes. Thank you for making the Holidays special for children in foster care.

KidStore Wish List

We need all sizes of:

- NEW socks and underwear
- Winter coats
- Shoes, boots, and tennis shoes
- Infant accessories—strollers, booster and car seats, potty training seats

Thanks to generous grants from **St. Charles River Church**, **Junior League of St. Louis**, and **Cardinals Care**, FACC was able to purchase school uniform shirts and pants for kids in foster care.

Parents were very grateful to be able to outfit their kids for school!

FACC WELCOMES NEW

BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

Board Members:

Anita Klopfenstein, Enterprise Rent-A-Car
Maurice Mahone, Monsanto
Jeff Rosenblum, Outbound Shipping Systems
Kirstie Scheer, Keller Williams Realty
Ed Vazquez, St. Louis City Family Court

Staff:

Connie Doty, WWK Recruiter
Heather Henke, Director of Public Relations
Barbara Kane, Database Manager
Aaron Layton, Support Groups Coordinator
Leslie Lewis, Director of Educational Advocacy
Kimberly Like, Director of Family Development
Maryanne Mica, Family Finding Specialist

Volunteer Corner

Hurrah For Our Terrific Company Group Supporters!

A big thank you to **Time-Warner Telecom**, **Vantage Credit Union**, **Global Payments**, and **USTRANSCOM** for donating hundreds of backpacks and school supplies to foster/adoptive families. Many thanks as well to **United Healthcare**, **Pfizer**, **Conner Ash accounting firm**, and **Senior Pearls Youth Group employees** for volunteering at our KidStore to ensure that foster children have access to good-quality, fashionable clothing.

Many wonderful volunteers also helped FACC this summer by sorting through donated school supplies and clothing, volunteering at our KidStore, and supervising foster/adopted children at SkyZone. We truly appreciate their gift of time!

Volunteer Opportunities

During the holiday season, we receive thousands of wish requests from foster and adopted children. Last year, over 7,700 wishes were granted in November and December. It's wonderful, but A LOT of work for our small staff. We depend heavily on volunteers to help us process these wishes in our office. If you are available on weekdays in December, please consider helping FACC grant holiday wishes. You could also help at our Holiday Wishes Shopping Day at Chesterfield Mall on Saturday, December 8th. Contact Shelley Thomas-Benke at shelleythomasbenke@foster-adopt.org or 314.367.8373 for more information.



Barnes & Noble Chooses FACC As Holiday Charity

Buy Books and Help Raise Funds for Foster Care Children!

Barnes & Noble bookstores in St. Louis, St. Peters, Fairview Heights and Cape Girardeau will host a **Book Fair** to help raise money for FACC.

If there are books on your Holiday shopping list, please shop at any participating Barnes & Noble on **November 16, 17, or 18**. Tell the cashier that you are shopping with the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, and FACC will receive up to 20% of all purchases that day!

In addition to the Book Fair, the **Barnes & Noble Holiday Book Drive** invites customers to purchase new books for donation between **November 1st and January 1st**. All bookstores in St. Louis, St. Peters, Fairview Heights and Cape Girardeau will be collecting books.

Barnes & Noble and FACC will distribute the donated books to foster children through its member agencies in Missouri and Illinois.

Help give the gift of literacy to every foster child in our area. Your donation today will help enrich a child's life.

On behalf of all the children we serve,

THANK YOU!

BARNES & NOBLE
www.bn.com

Fostering Hope

Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition is a not-for-profit agency which strives to create permanency in every foster child's life by recruiting and supporting foster/adoptive homes in the St. Louis metropolitan community.



SAVE THE DATE!

Old Bags Party™ - April 29, 2008

What could be better than a night out with your girlfriends to enjoy yummy food and cosmopolitans, take home a new or gently-used designer handbag (with names like Coach, Prada, Louis Vuitton, Kooba, Gucci, Cole Haan, Fendi, Burberry, Dolce and Gabanna), and help find homes for kids in foster care?

To receive an invitation to **Old Bags™**, be a sponsor, or donate a bag, email debbiegenung@foster-adopt.org. Donations may also be dropped off at **Doncaster Studios**, 8001 Clayton Road, 63117; or **Lusso's** at 165 Carondelet Plaza, 63105.

Junior Board News

Junior Board members have been busy! In July, they hosted the first annual **"Let's Kick It"** tournament. More than 200 players and volunteers enjoyed friendly kick ball competition, and delicious food and drinks. The tournament raised about \$8,000 to support FACC's work to find families for children in foster care. Thanks to these generous sponsors: **Marti & Nanci Daesch, Renee Hall, Renaissance Financial, Richard Markow, Lyndon Sommer, and Thomas Foods.**

Thanks also to the players, volunteers, and **Bhavik and Priyal Patel** for a great tournament; and to **Sharon Ludwig** who donated half her 50/50 winnings to FACC! To the "losing" teams — "There's always next year!"

In August, Junior Board members participated in their second service project — **A Parents' Night Out**. Foster parents enjoyed an evening to themselves while their children had a blast jumping on trampolines, enjoying snacks, and playing games at **SkyZone**. Junior Board members joined FACC staff to play with the kids and to ensure they had a fun and safe evening. **Thanks to all the volunteers and to SkyZone for donating the facility for our kids.**

Up next: Junior Board members will help wrap holiday gifts and read to children at the **Barnes & Noble Book Fair on November 17th**. Please visit any metro area Barnes & Noble store to purchase the books on your Holiday shopping list. FACC will receive up to 20% of the purchases.

To learn more about the Junior Board, contact Debbie Genung at 314.367.8373 x38, or debbiegenung@foster-adopt.org.

