



WINTER 2010

THE NEWSLETTER OF SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES

HOME COMING



KEEPING THE PROMISE OF FAMILY

MICHAEL AND MICHELE WILLIAMS AND THEIR DAUGHTER, ALEXIS, began their adoption journey knowing that they wanted to expand their family. Upon attending Sierra's orientation and training offered for prospective families, they expressed willingness to adopt up to two children. In addition, they were willing to provide care for children entering foster care and be supportive of initial efforts to return the children to their birth family. Then, in April 2008, they received a call from Sierra's social worker asking them to consider emergency placement for three children, Oscar, America, and Bryan. They readily agreed.

The children came to the Williams home having experienced multiple foster care placements. Initially they had been removed from their birth family the prior year. Once in the foster care system, they endured multiple placements, each causing additional confusion and anxiety for

...continued on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The More You Know 3
 SFF Calendar 4
 Welcome Home 5
 Kids Are Waiting 6
 The Art of Adoption 7
 Champions for Children 11
 Thank You 12
 Expressive Giving 15

MISSION STATEMENT

We transform the lives of children in foster care by building and nurturing permanent families.

Sacramento Center

8928 Volunteer Lane, Suite 240
 Sacramento, CA 95826
 Tel: (916) 368-5114
 Fax: (916) 368-5157
 E-mail: sffsac@sierraff.org

Nevada City Center

138 New Mohawk Road, Suite 200
 Nevada City, CA 95959
 Tel: (530) 478-0900
 Fax: (530) 478-0970
 E-mail: sffgv@sierraff.org

Auburn Center (Placer Kids)

11990 Heritage Oak Place, Suite 3
 Auburn, CA 95603
 Tel: (530) 887-9982
 Fax: (530) 887-9994
 Toll free: 1-888-387-9982
 E-mail: placerkids@sierraff.org

Chico Adoptive Family Resource Center

520 Cohasset Road, Suite 140
 Chico, CA 95926
 Tel: (530) 879-3861
 Fax: (530) 896-1792
 E-mail: sffchico@sierraff.org

California Department of Social Services/Adoptive Family Resource Center

Warm Line: (800) 268-2967
 Fax: (916) 484-0430
 E-mail: dsalisbury@sierraff.org



VISIT OUR WEBSITE!
 SIERRAFF.ORG

ABOUT HOMECOMING

Homecoming is a publication of Sierra Forever Families. Donations and/or correspondence may be sent to:

Sierra Forever Families
 8928 Volunteer Lane, Suite 240
 Sacramento, CA 95826
 email: shanson@sierraff.org

EDITOR

Sara Hanson

EDITORIAL BOARD

Bobby Cobbs
 Cassandra Heyward
 Juli Kramer

DESIGN/LAYOUT

Circle Design

CONTRIBUTORS

Donna Aleccia
 Ann Aune
 Sandy Boyd
 Todd Cirillo
 Kimberly Cox
 Rob Griffin
 Bob Herne
 April Mae Johnson
 Sandy Sertyn

SFF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eric Ratinoff, President
 Alan Wolf, President Elect
 Kate Renwick-Espinosa, Secretary
 Sarah Krevans, Treasurer
 Chuck Horton, Immediate Past President

Bob Earl
 Gregory Finch
 Jerri Hunt
 Sue North
 Debra Panattoni
 Jeanne Reaves
 R.W. "Skip" Reynolds
 Dan Root
 Parker White

Executive Management

Bob Herne, Executive Director*
 Bobby Cobbs, Development and PR Officer*
 Ellen Edelstein, Program Director*
 Linda Merrill, Finance Director*

*Sierra Forever Families Staff

SFF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Julia Amaral
 Sean Anderson
 Fran Barker
 Tom Bogetich
 Dennis Cook
 Debbie Hesse
 Gail Johnson Vaughan
 John Kay
 Chuck Nicholson
 Kathy Van Osten
 John Winters
 David Zorn

THE MORE YOU KNOW... FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In July, the agency changed its name to Sierra Forever Families. Sierra made this change in order to build and nurture forever homes for children and youth as soon as they enter the foster care system before they experience multiple placements and suffer additional losses in their life. We anticipated having a greater impact on meeting the needs of children, but even we were surprised at how quickly the change came.

Today, we are serving 42% more children than this time last year! Even with the State's 10% financial cuts to our rates and the cutbacks that our County and State partners have endured, we have been able to assist more children and youth in foster care.

None of these successes would be possible without the support of our donors, dedicated staff, committed board and families. A huge thank you for making the difference in the lives of children and youth by creating and nurturing forever families!



Bob Herne,
Executive Director, MSW
bherne@sierraff.org

THE PROMISE OF FAMILY continued from page one

the children. Unfortunately, previous attempts to reunify the children with their birth family failed. During that time, a fourth sibling was born and placed into foster care as a newborn.

In April 2008, three of the children, Oscar (2), America (1) and Bryan (5 days old) were placed with Michael and Michele. In October, following an assessment by the county, Jose (3) was also placed in the home with his siblings. From the outset, the Williams' love for the four grew, and so it seemed natural for them to agree to care for them all until they were either reunited with their birth family or could be adopted.

Oscar, America and Jose had all suffered from severe neglect. As a result, Oscar always carried food with him and was the first to eat. He also required speech, physical and occupational therapies. America, at the age of one was unable to walk or crawl, and could only pull herself around on the floor by her arms. She made grunting sounds to communicate. She also required speech, physical and occupational therapies. As a newborn, Bryan thankfully had not yet experienced the severe neglect of his siblings.

The Williams family lovingly nurtured and cared for the children. They attended multiple therapy sessions with the children for Jose, Oscar and America. As a result of the care they have received, Oscar and America have successfully reached age-level development and no longer need therapy. Big sister, Alexis, says, "I enjoy having brothers and a sister, but sometimes the house is a bit hectic."

There are few families who were willing to take Jose or Oscar separately due to their extensive special needs, much less all four children together. Because of the extraordinary love and devotion of the Williams family, the children are thriving. Michele says, "We are very happy and are enjoying every crazy moment of our new lives."

Because of the extraordinary love and devotion
of the Williams family, the children are thriving...
The Williams family was selected as the Sierra
Forever Families 2009 Family of the Year.



The Williams family was selected as the Sierra Forever Families 2009 Family of the Year. IKEA awarded the family with a \$1,000 gift card on November 21st, National Adoption Day, during events at the State Capitol. Through faithful dedication, the Williams family has worked extremely hard to ensure that the siblings stayed together, were nurtured and provided a stable, loving family...a FOREVER FAMILY.

SFF CALENDAR: EVENTS AND CLASSES

EVENTS: For more information or to volunteer, please call 916-368-5114 ext. 237.

SUNDAY, MAY 30

WALK 'N ROCK FOR KIDS! RALEY FIELD, WEST SACRAMENTO

Join us for a day of fun! The event begins with a morning 5k walk and finishes with a star-studded, VIP reception and benefit concert for corporate partners, supporters and the community at large. This year features Heart and Sammy Hagar. Tickets go on sale January 16 through ticketmaster.com. Corporate partnerships, corporate teams and friends and family teams available. **To find out more, please see article on back page or log on to walknrock.org and sign-up to support us today or contact Kimberly Cox in our office 916.368.5114 ext. 236 or email her at kcox@sierraff.org.**

CLASSES: Classes, trainings, workshops and support groups require a reservation.

SACRAMENTO

Second Monday

EXPLORING PERMANENCY I (Orientation). 6:00-9:00pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114, ext. 221.

Second Wednesday*

SINGLE & GAY/LESBIAN ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS. 5:30-7:30pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114, ext. 262.

Second Thursday*

ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP. 6:30-8:00pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 484-0410.

February 17

CONCURRENT PLANNING WORKSHOP. 6:00-9:00pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114.

March 13 & 20

EXPLORING PERMANENCY II. 9:00am-5:30pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114.

March 24

MANDATED CHILD ABUSE REPORTING TRAINING. 6:00-8:00pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114.

April 20 (Part 1 of 2)*

ADOPTION MODULE. 6:00-9:00pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114, ext. 221.

April 27 (Part 2 of 2)*

ADOPTION MODULE. 6:00-9:00pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114, ext. 221.

May 15 & 22

EXPLORING PERMANENCY II. 9:00am-5:30pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114.

TBD

MENTAL HEALTH MODULE. 6:00-8:00pm. Sacramento SFF Office. Call (916) 368-5114, ext. 221.

TBD

PARENTING CLASS: Behavioral Contracts. 6:00-8:30pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114, ext. 221.

TBD

PARENTING CLASS: ADHD. 6:00-8:30pm. Sacramento SFF office. Call (916) 368-5114, ext. 221.

PLACER COUNTY

Wednesday*

PRE-SERVICE. 6:00-8:30pm. Ongoing. Placer County Children's System of Care. Call Donna (530) 887-9982. Call (530) 889-6794 to arrange for child care.

First Tuesday*

K.S.S.P. SUPPORT GROUP. 6:00-7:30pm. Placer Kids, Auburn. Call (530) 887-3536.

Second Thursday*

FOSTER/ADOPTIVE SUPPORT GROUP. 6:00-8:30pm. Placer Kids, Auburn. Call Laurie Tyrrell (530) 889-6794.

Third Tuesday*

K.S.S.P. SUPPORT GROUP. 6:00-7:30pm. Kids First, Roseville. Call (916) 774-6802

Third Thursday*

PK ORIENTATION FOR FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION. 6:30-8:30pm. Auburn Placer Kids Office. Call Donna (530) 887-9982. Call (530) 889-6794 to arrange for child care

Fourth Thursday*

FOSTER/ADOPTIVE SUPPORT GROUP. 6:00-8:30pm. South Placer at Cirby Hills. Call Laurie Tyrrell (530) 889-6794.

February 20

ADOPTION MODULE. 9:00am-4:00pm. Placer County Child System of Care. PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED, call Theresa Bardakjian at (530) 889-6758 to register.

June 3, August 26, December 2*

CONCURRENT PLANNING WORKSHOP. 6:00-8:30pm. Placer County Children's System of Care. Call (530) 886-2893.

NEVADA COUNTY

First Wednesday

EXPLORING PERMANENCY I (Orientation). 6:00-9:00pm. Nevada City office. Call (530) 478-0900, ext. 213.

Fourth Thursday*

ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP. 6:00-8:00pm. Nevada City office. Call (800) 268-2967.

Fourth Thursday*

ADOPTIVE PARENT SUPPORT GROUP. 12:00-2:00pm. Marysville. Call (800) 268-2967.

**Childcare available, please make childcare reservations when calling in to sign-up for class.*

REGISTER ONLINE AT SIERRAFF.ORG

WELCOME HOME: RECENT FINALIZATIONS



THE FUENTES FAMILY

Ernest and Shawna Fuentes finalized the adoption of Johnathon, Jack and Laurin Fuentes in October 2009. They join previously adopted siblings, Jacob, Jason and Debbie.

THE STEVENS FAMILY

Brenna and Piper Stevens were overjoyed at the finalization of their big sister, Jordan, age 16, on October 9, 2009.



THE KENNEDY FAMILY

Christy and Takari Kennedy are thrilled to announce the adoption of their nephew and brother, Stephvaun La Mar, age 6, on July 7, 2009.



THE LIPTON-BROWN FAMILY

Scott Brown and Lee Lipton are excited to announce the adoption finalization of their new son, Michael, age 3½, on July 14, 2009.



THE BROWNING-LOVE FAMILY

Lynette Browning-Love is proud to announce the adoption of her daughter, Angela Browning-Love, age 17, on October 3, 2009.



THE MORRIS-HILL FAMILY

On November 21, 2009, after almost two and one-half years of waiting, Don and Cindy are elated to announce the adoption finalizations of their two new daughters, Kaitlyn and Abbygale, ages 11½ and 7½.

KIDS ARE WAITING*



ANDRE (14) is an intelligent, athletic, artistic youth with a variety of interests. Playing sports, drawing, and being active in the outdoors are all activities Andre enjoys. He is charismatic and a natural leader. Andre is very caring and visitation with his older sister is very important to him.

Andre is seeking a structured, patient forever family who is considerate of his past as well as keeping in contact with his older sister. Having a family to participate in activities with Andre is ideal, although he can be content with watching a movie, participating in art activities and relaxing at home. Having consistent role models to keep Andre motivated to utilize his full potential would be great!



STEPHEN (14) is a quiet, friendly young man with a variety of interests. Playing sports, video games and cooking are all activities that Stephen enjoys. Stephen really enjoys racing, and has even won two trophies from racing events. Stephen likes racing so much; he even races little remote control cars too!

Stephen is seeking a structured, patient forever family who is considerate of his past. Having a family to participate in activities with Stephen would be ideal, although he can be content with arts and crafts projects or watching a movie. Having consistent role models to demonstrate appropriate social skills would be wonderful!

*Information current at time of newsletter production.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES AT (916) 368-5114 OR VISIT US AT SIERRAFF.ORG.

GREAT NEWS!

A NEW FAMILY AND A NEW NAME: ELLA'S STORY

When we first reported on LaRoysha three years ago she was a friendly 12-year-old who had been in the foster care system for many years. Separated from her birth family, she and six siblings entered foster care. Many of her siblings found permanence while LaRoysha continued to wait. It was frustrating for LaRoysha to be passed over while her siblings found permanent families. She never gave up hope and worked with her Destination Family Worker to find a FOREVER FAMILY.

In 2008, LaRoysha was placed with Cora. Cora had been fostering youth for many years, adopting many of the girls who came to her home. LaRoysha felt a connection right away with Cora and the other girls in the home. The two discussed a plan for permanence and began to take the needed steps to finalize the adoption. Happily, LaRoysha finalized her adoption in 2009.

At the time of her adoption finalization, she decided that she wanted to change her first name. Cora and LaRoysha talked about many different names until they had a conversation about Ella Fitzgerald. Cora loved Ella the singer, while LaRoysha felt connected to the personal struggle the singer had as a youth: abandoned to the system, she struggled her way through and became a strong, independent female role model...and amazing talent. Today, Ella celebrates permanence through adoption with her mom, Cora, and six sisters.

At the time of the last report, LaRoysha wanted to be a cosmetologist and own her own business. Well, today, Ella is attending the Met, a charter school, and is interested in attending Spellman University in Georgia. What a difference permanence can make in a young life!



THE ART OF ADOPTION



Dear Carol
I can't believe I'm being adopted today. I'm so happy that you found the Caffey family for me. I can't thank you enough. Love
Chris
Caffey



SEE MORE ARTWORK ON OUR WEBSITE AT SIERRAFF.ORG

Do you know an adopted child with a flair for art or poetry? HOMECOMING wants to hear from you! To submit artwork or poems by adopted children, contact Sierra Forever Families at (916) 368-5114.

SPECIAL PERSON'S DAY AT SCHOOL: RYAN'S STORY

One year ago Ryan was to be adopted. The night before his finalization his adoptive family advised that they could not go through with the adoption. Bill, who had been their Social Worker, immediately coordinated with fellow staffers, Todd and Anastacia, to find a respite home for Ryan. The W. family, who previously adopted through Sierra, stepped forward. Everyone worked to recertify the family for the immediate placement of Ryan. Sierra staff then worked with Ryan and the family to help stabilize and support the new placement. Amazingly, the W. family adopted Ryan in September 2009!

For Special Person Day (SPD) at Ryan's school, Ryan chose Todd to be his Special Person. Todd was honored by this amazing invitation and joined Ryan and his class for a Thanksgiving feast and accompanying music. Ryan gave tribute to Todd and told his class how much Todd helped him through his past difficulties – Ryan wanted everyone to know that Todd was always there to talk with him, even when it got hard...



Ryan and Todd

RYAN SHARES:

ONE DAY while getting off the noisy bus completely exhausted I realized I still have what seemed an endless hill to climb, I reached the top and, giving a yawn, walked up the 40 step stair-case. I opened the door and, with a small gust, cold air that smelled like Mrs. Dash, cinnamon and brown sugar blew in my face. My foster parent Bonnie was waiting for me. She made me a snack and then told me that I was going to a different home. Bonnie and I talked while I packed my things, yet again. After that, I got in the car and sat as close to the window as I could.

After a long drive in the car, we got to Nevada City. I was put in another foster home. Those first five days I lived in Nevada City, I was nervous. Then I met my new social worker Todd (social worker for Sierra Forever Families). I was scared when I first met Todd because I was not sure if I could trust him, but he was always there for me.

Todd influenced me to never give up. When I was sad he always helped me. When I was having trouble in school or at home he would talk to me about it. One day Todd told me that my new

foster home wanted to adopt me. Once again I was unsure and excited.

Todd went to my adoption and told me that every thing

“Todd made my dream of being adopted come true.”

will be all right. The adoption was over in just five minutes in court. I am grateful that Todd was my social worker. I am happy with my new mom, dad, and sister Amy, along with our animals; three Llamas, one goat, one miniature horse and one really big horse, not counting all of the chickens, duck, goose, fish, turtle, dogs and cats.

Now every time that we drive by the Court House in Nevada City, I have the memories of that day Todd made my dream of being adopted come true. Knowing I didn't climb that hill for nothing Todd gave me a new life in Nevada City and every time I go to Sierra Forever Families building I still remember the first time I met Todd. He gave me the gift of life – the answer to every adopted child's dreams.

Every time that I go to therapy I go to his office and try to see if we can talk. Todd is not my social worker anymore, he is more like a very good friend. Todd comes over to my house once in a while, sometimes to see how I am doing or if there is something on my mind that I have to get out I will talk to him. Todd always makes me feel proud.

SFF STAFF STORIES: Wonder

WELCOME THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE SIERRA FAMILY!

Sierra Forever Families has “adopted” the Wonder program – a one-on-one mentoring program focused on providing consistent, caring relationships for children living in foster care. This is a perfect fit for both Sierra and the Wonder program, as Wonder’s mission [*To strengthen the emotional and social well-being of children and youth in foster care by building relationships with caring, consistent adults.*] and values [*No child goes through foster care alone.*] mirrors ours.

Wonder matches kids in foster care, one-on-one, with caring adults who know how to listen, support, and guide them through fun, age appropriate experiences in music, the arts, sports, volunteer service, dining out, and nature. They spend at least eight hours a month together for a year or longer, allowing each child the chance to help plan and actively participate in a wide range of activities and conversations. For some kids, these experiences will be “firsts” – filled with excitement and self-discovery. For others, it’s an opportunity to explore personal interests and talents. For all of them, it’s the stability of a consistent adult who encourages them to try something new, engages them in conversations, and enriches their lives. It’s a connection with an adult who believes in them.

A WONDER MOMENT

“He wrote a paragraph on his “Hero”...about me! I told him that he just made my year and that was the best surprise that I had ever received. That, right there, is why I am a Wonder Guide! To know that we, as mentors, are making a difference in a child’s life.” – Guide talking about Shaquille (13-year-old boy)

JULIE GUSTAFSON ran the Wonder, Inc. Journey Program as its program director beginning in August 2008 and continues on with Sierra as the Wonder Program Coordinator. Her duties and responsibilities include recruiting, screening, training, and monitoring progress of volunteer mentors, called Guides, and their mentoring matches, as well as coordinator with Wonder’s independent contractors, called Coaches, who support each match.

When asked how the Guides impress her, Julie responded that they are a unique group of extremely caring individuals who are depended upon to be a consistent presence in the lives of children in foster care. “The Guides know how to be playful and have fun, too, while knowing how important they are to the kids. In fact, 60% of the Guides have volunteered to continue being a mentor and 40% of those are in their third year or longer!”

Julie earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from California State University, Sacramento. She has worked extensively with youth programs for Camp Fire USA, Girl Scouts of Tierra Del Oro, and the Sacramento Mentoring Program.

KECIA SAKAZAKI comes to Wonder as its Program Assistant with four years of experience as a Community Health Educator for Planned Parenthood working with teens on pregnancy and HIV prevention. She spent two years as the program manager of a Central Coast group home for boys aged 13-17. As the Program Assistant, Kecia is responsible for the tracking, recruitment and enrollment for the children in foster care and coordinates the quarterly group outings.

Kecia was hired just two weeks before the annual Camp Wonder – a two-night, three-day, fun filled experience at Grizzly Creek Ranch in Portola. Watching the Guides interact with the kids, helping them to have fun, made her realize how important the Wonder Program is. “All children need adults who care and who can be a positive influence in their lives. In the past, I’ve worked with teens that are already involved in the Juvenile Justice System and what appealed to me about Wonder was working with younger children. Helping to prevent the younger ones from going down that path, is very important to me.”



Julie Gustafson,
Wonder Program Coordinator



Kecia Sakazaki,
Wonder Program Assistant

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE... FROM THE DEVELOPMENT & PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER



Bobby Cobbs,
Development & Public Relations Officer,
MSW, CFRE
bcobbs@sierraff.org

GREAT THINGS ARE HAPPENING AT SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES. On July 1 Sierra Adoption Services changed its name to better reflect what we do in helping transform the lives of children living in foster care as we build and nurture permanent families. New name – same great mission!

The name change was not the only great thing that happened on July 1. Sierra “adopted” Wonder, Inc., an outstanding mentor program for youth living in foster care. Now, Wonder is a part of the Sierra family.

We are delighted to welcome everyone involved with Wonder and invite everyone to get involved. I invite you to volunteer by becoming a Guide (adult mentor) for an Explorer (foster youth) on a year-long Journey. Approximately 90 foster youth are on their year-long Journey with a Mentor. Yet over half that number are still waiting. It could be the best 8-10 hours per month you spend.

This past year has been a year of challenge and change. We all were affected by the recession. But we are grateful to our many friends who continued to support our mission with their volunteer service and gifts. Thanks to you, we were able to sustain our efforts to help transform the lives of children living in foster care by building and nurturing permanent families. Sierra served 294 children last fiscal year. We continue to work with children, especially those languishing in long term foster care who otherwise have little hope of getting their own forever family before they emancipate, alone, into adulthood.

Looking ahead, we are excited about opportunities 2010 will bring. We are committed to helping even more children than last year. We invite you help us by becoming a parent, becoming a mentor, or donating in support of our mission to children. With your help, we will transform young lives!

If you would like more information about how you can help, contact us at (916) 368-5114 or visit us on-line at www.sierraff.org.

GAIL CATLIN LEADS EFFORT TO CAPTURE *SIERRA STORIES*



Gail Catlin

Gail Catlin, a long time supporter of Sierra, has volunteered to create a unique program with a mission to capture Sierra’s stories. Gail will be interviewing a number of Sierra’s donors, volunteers, mentors, families, children, staff and other friends in the community to hear and collect their tales of involvement with Sierra. Through gathering stories of our supporters and those whose lives have been touched by Sierra, Gail will be able to create a “Story Book” to be used to recruit additional supporters and ultimately help place more children.

Gail and her husband Ben have been generous supporters of Sierra for over seven years. Now, Gail is helping us through one of her passions: story telling. Gail consults, teaches and publishes in the areas of organizational and community development. Specializing in individual and organizational change, Gail uses the power of story to transform those she works with.

Gail has completed her doctoral coursework in the School of Cultural Anthropology and Social Transformation at the California Institute for Integral Studies in San Francisco, focusing on both leadership and the transformative power of story. She created and produced the Sacramento Storytelling Festival, Storytelling Institutes 2003-2006 and the Legacy Stories Conference 2006.

Through the stories, Sierra hopes to develop story books – and even a Sierra DVD – that can be used to share the Sierra Stories to recruit additional supporters with the goal of placing more children in foster care with loving forever families.

Thank you, Gail, for sharing your unique talent to use the magic of story to transform lives.



**CHAMPIONS
FOR CHILDREN**

A Sierra Forever Families Program

CFC:REPORT

Champions for Children represents special donors who make a significant impact upon childrens' lives with contributions of \$5,000 to \$24,999. Our Champions are comprised of individuals, businesses, foundations, organizations and groups helping to give and raise substantial support to help Sierra Forever Families fulfill its mission. Last year 41 Champions for Children generated \$310,000 in gift support.

INTRODUCING THE 2010 CHAIR: JACK PADDON

For over seven years, Jack Paddon has helped support Sierra Forever Families as an active Champions for Children supporter! Jack Paddon AIA LEED® AP is Chairman of Williams + Paddon Architects + Planners, Inc. in Roseville. Williams + Paddon provides sustainable architectural, master planning and interior design services. In 1981, Jack Paddon and Jim Williams established Williams + Paddon and together have guided their firm over nearly three decades in providing value enhanced services for their many clients.

"Helping children and youth living in foster care find a permanent loving family is important. I am delighted that we have been able to help transform the lives of children over the years," said Jack. "Champions for Children is a great way everyone can get involved. I am amazed to see how committed all of our staff have become to raising support throughout the year to help the kids at Sierra. I encourage everyone to become a Champion for Children."

Jack is committed to community service and has been involved in many efforts over the years to improve the quality of life for our neighbors locally and internationally. In addition to chairing the Champions for Children effort, he currently serves as a board member for the Foundation for African Medicine and Education.



Jack Paddon, CFC Chair

Our heart-felt THANKS AND APPRECIATION are extended to the following teams, companies and individuals whose generous gifts and pledges of \$5,000 to \$24,999 for this fiscal year* help transform the lives of children:

- Abbott & Kindermann, LLP
- Air Systems
- Julia Amaral and Mark Strate
- Arata Brothers Trust
- Bank of the West
- California Backyard
- Campbell's Soup Co.
- Caring Heats Society of Auburn
- City of Roseville/Grants Advisory Commission
- Dr. Kevin Chang's "A Race to Give a Place to Live"
- Gary and Sally Doupnick
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation
- Evergreen Flexible Bonding Solutions
- Norman and Arlayne Fifer
- Elfrena Foord and Bruce Hester
- Harbison Mahony Higgins Builders, Inc.
- Jenkins Insurance Group
- Gail Johnson Vaughan and John Vaughan
- Livingston's Concrete
- Loveall Foundation for Children
- M & M Whitmire Foundation
- Massie Family Foundation
- Merrill Lynch/Bank of America
- Nicholson & Olson CPAs
- Eric and Patrice Ratinoff
- Kate Renwick-Espinosa
- Ronald McDonald House Charities
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management
- Soroptimist International of Sacramento
- Stuart Foundation
- Sundt Foundation
- SureWest Foundation
- Target Stores
- The Thomas J. Long Foundation
- U. S. Bank
- United Way California Capital Region
- van Loben Sels/Rembe Rock Foundation
- W. F. Hayward Company
- Waste Connections
- Williams + Paddon, Architects + Planners Inc.

*AS OF JULY 1, 2009 TO JANUARY 7, 2010

THANK YOU

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to the individuals, companies and foundations

SIERRA'S GOLF CLASSIC FOR KIDS A HUGE SUCCESS THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS!

On September 21, 2009 144 golfers had a great time playing 18 holes at Serrano Country Club in El Dorado Hills and ended up raising over \$125,000 which will make it possible for over 20 children to find their own loving forever families.

The tournament could not have been successful without the dedication and hard work of the Golf Committee, led by Jerri Hunt with Waste Connections, Inc. and the volunteers on the committee and at the tournament. Thank you to Karen Yip with Vision Service Plan and her team for providing excellent volunteer efforts for the past several years. Thank you volunteers!

Lee Elder, legendary golfer – first African American to play in the Masters – was our celebrity golfer for the day and teed off the 4th hole with each foursome. Special thanks to Bart Volen, with Volen Properties, for bringing in Lee plus asking Michael Jordan, with Lee's help, for a signed basketball. The ball was auctioned off for \$5,000...the cost to place one child!

A special thank you to Jerri Hunt and Ron Mittlesteadt with Waste Connections for their great job in recruiting sponsors for the event. In a difficult year with a history-breaking recession, the tournament was sold out and the event was a great success.

A HUGE thank you goes out to the over 48 sponsors plus donors and participants. WASTE CONNECTION, INC and LIVINGSTON'S CONCRETE, INC., Tournament Partners, led the sponsors. Other sponsors included:

Dinner Sponsors

Bank of America -
Merrill Lynch: THE CAL GROUP
Evergreen Flexible Bonding Solutions

Golf Cart Sponsor

Shartsis Friese, LLP

Eagle Sponsors

Downey Brand, LLP
Littler Mendelson, P.C.
Morgan Stanley
US Bank
W.F. Hayward Company

Golf Course Sponsors

Labrie Environmental Group
Toter, Inc.

Lunch Box Sponsors

Greenberg Traurig
Impact Plastics
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney
Shingle Springs Coffee Company
Sue Farris - El Dorado Disposal
UniFirst Corporation

Birdie Sponsors

Big Truck Rentals
CB Richard Ellis
Heil Equipment Company
Mechanics Bank
Sacramento Rendering Company
Schnitzer Steel Industries, Inc.
SureWest
Union Bank

Beverage Sponsors

McNeilus Truck and Manufacturing, Inc.
Visionary Integration Professionals

Par Sponsors

Anthem Blue Cross
Aon Risk
Bridgestone Bandag - Rick Cecconi
Cascade Engineering
Drivecam
Greg and Linda Grant
Wells Fargo Insurance Services

Tee Sponsors

Davis Grimm Payne & Marra, Inc.
Donaldson Company, Inc.
The Evergreen Company
Hunt & Sons, Inc.
Jenkins Insurance Group
Mack Trucks
Nor-Cal Logos
Pro-Air
Riverview International Trucks, LLC
Robert Half International
West-Cal Concrete, Inc.
Zep Superior Solutions

In-kind Sponsors

California Backyard
Barefoot Winery
Harrah's Lake Tahoe
Lee Elder and Michael Jordan
Southwest Airlines
Alan Wolf



TOP: Volunteers Theresa Ferrini, Jan Lucas;
CENTER: 2009 Tournament Golfers awaiting start;
BOTTOM: Lee Elder tees off the 4th hole

that make it possible for us to find permanent homes for the children who wait

WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU...

A tremendous THANK YOU to the following companies, foundations, and individuals whose collective contributions of \$25,000 to \$149,999.99 have transformed the lives of children so far this fiscal year:

Bob and Nancy Earl
Stuart Foundation
Raley's Family of Fine Stores



**HEROES
FORCHILDREN**

A Sierra Forever Families Program

SACRAMENTO CHILD ADVOCATE KATHY VAN OSTEN RECEIVES 2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ AWARD



Kathy Van Osten

Congresswoman Doris Matsui selected Sacramento's Kathy Van Osten to receive the prestigious 2009 Angel in Adoption™ award for her outstanding advocacy on behalf of adoption and foster care issues. Kathy Van Osten is a veteran lobbyist with Rose and Kindel who has used her passion, skills and talents to improve the lives of thousands of children living in foster care in California by creating incentives to adopt.

"When the State removes a child from his or her biological family, that child belongs to all of us," Van Osten said. "We are the parents. When reunification isn't possible, we must make sure they have permanent, loving families. To fail that measure is to fail that child.

"Outcomes for children leaving foster care without permanent families are dismal: within two years, 50 percent of these kids end up homeless, in jail, or dead. Those statistics are unconscionable. We must do better for these kids," Van Osten added.

Kathy Van Osten has a personal connection to the needs of children and youth living in foster care. In the 1940s, her mother lived in a group home where she was neglected and endured harmful, damaging conditions. In 2003 Kathy vowed to honor her mother's strength by joining the Board of Sierra Forever Families, where she worked to prevent other children from experiencing the harm that her mother endured.

The Angels in Adoption™ program seeks to draw global attention to the positive difference adoption makes in the life of a child. Angels in Adoption™ is orchestrated by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI), a non-partisan organization dedicated to raising awareness about the tens of thousands of orphans and foster children in the United States and the millions of orphans around the world in need of permanent, safe, and loving homes through adoption. Kathy Van Osten received her award at the Angels in Adoption™ awards ceremony in Washington D.C.

Thank you to Kathy for her work in bettering the lives of children in foster care – she is a true hero.



CAR DONATION: 1-866-321-KIDS (5437)

Donate your car, truck, or boat to Sierra Forever Families and receive a tax deduction. Your vehicle will be towed away free of charge. Most vehicles are accepted. For more information, please call 1-866-321-5437. Your vehicle donation will help to secure a permanent adoptive family for a child who waits.

2009 NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO MADE NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY 2009 A HUGE SUCCESS!

November is recognized as National Adoption Month. With nearly 500,000 children and youth living in foster care across the country there is a tremendous need for families to come forward to provide permanence through adoption. In California, there are over 62,000 children and youth living in foster care and, of that, over 4,000 reside in the Greater Sacramento Region.

On November 21, National Adoption Day, Senator George Runner and Assemblyman Roger Niello co-hosted an Adoption Resource Fair at Sunrise Community Church. The purpose of this event was to provide a call to action for area families and individuals who are considering helping a child by becoming an adoptive parent. Many families attended and are moving forward in the process to help provide permanence for children and youth in foster care.

Also on November 21, Sierra Forever Families along with Aspiranet Foster & Family Services, EMQ FamiliesFirst and the Adoption Day Steering committee hosted a Calling Out of Names at the State Capitol, concluding the event with a candlelight vigil on the north steps. Government officials, child advocates, community leaders, adoptive families and former foster youth joined together for this meaningful event. During the event, speakers read aloud from a list of names of children living in California foster care.

At the historic courthouse in Auburn, ten children were finalized into seven families while friends gathered to celebrate adoption and forever families.



LEFT: Community leaders, child advocates and families gather at the Capitol;
RIGHT: Assemblyman Roger Niello recognizes A Lifetime of Love Art Contest Prize Winner Lauren J.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY.

Make a miracle, today and tomorrow.

Help ensure that waiting children in the future are placed into permanent, loving homes.

Remember Sierra Forever Families in your will.

In doing so, you will join a growing number of our friends who, over and above their regular support, have taken steps to help Sierra Forever Families remain strong and successful. Call Bobby Cobbs with questions at (916) 368-5114 ext. 234.

When the next generation of children don't have to move from home to home, they'll have you to thank!

EXPRESSIVE GIVING

EXPRESSIVE GIFTS MADE BETWEEN JULY 1, 2009 AND JANUARY 7, 2010

Happy Birthday!

Diana Capaccioli

Rose and Jorge Capaccioli

Miles Cooley

Leslie Cooley

Happy 19th

Christina Saunders

Linda Saudners

Happy 50th

Alan Wolf

Bobby & Cheryl Cobbs

Chris and Cynthia

Adamson

Curtis & Debra Johnson

Debra Panattoni

Don, Dianne & Jerry

Pauser

Henry Meier

Jeff Rose

Juli Kramer

Linda Merrill

Matt and Lee Ann Herrera

Nick Frey

O.J. & Tammy Vallejo

Roger & Richelle Cochran

Scott and Therese Grubb

Susan & Peter Colby

Bob Herne

Jim Axton

Bob and Lavonne Wolf

James and Shari Scheller

John & Judith Panneton

Dr. David McInnes

Daniel and Laurie

Demeyer

David and Marcy Wolmutter

Bob & LaRue Maddox

Ron and Jan Madison

Alan and Terri Wolf

On Memory Of...

James Connor

Anonymous

Robert B. Dow

Jeff and Kristi Hunter

Suzanne Walker Hansen

Elizabeth Smithwick

The Hollingsworths

Marilyn R. Kregel

Phyllis Klomparens

Robin Klomparens

My Wife Ruth Linnane

William Linnane

Dain Marshall Micheletti

Chris and Jeanne

Christopherson

In Loving Memory of my wife

Barbara Ann Scott who will

celebrate her 1st birthday

in heaven

David R. Scott

In Honor Of...

Champions For Children

Jim and Meg Miner

Bobby Cobbs

LeRoy McLaughlin

Abbey Engstrom

Mark and Anne Engstrom

Merry Christmas

Jodi Barkely & Jean Gifford

Michael and Jeanne Barkely

Diane Knorr

Carol Steffes

Amy, Corri, and Mona at
Monogram Services

O.J. and Tammy Vallejo

Jeanette Schmidt

Clay Schmidt

Happy 50th Anniversary Walt
and Margaret Schorno

Marian Jewett

Aleta and Xea Smith

Anonymous

Our Forever Family

The Staas Family

Scott & Brandi Staas

Diane Stanton

Chuck and Geri Willis

Kevin and Tricia Tourville

O.J. and Tammy Vallejo

Welcome Home Christian

Steven Weise

Good luck in the coming year

Sierra Forever Families

Bill and Linda Greig

Kristi

Alan Campbell

VOLUNTEER PROFILE:

2009 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR JAN LUCAS

In January of 2002, Jan Lucas visited the Auburn office of Sierra Adoption Services and made a donation that she has repeated every month since through the Electronic Fund Transfer program. Wanting to know more about Sierra and how the agency helps children in foster care, Jan accepted an invitation to attend an orientation session at the Sacramento center where she met the agency director and staff. Impressed by the camaraderie of the staff and the mission of the organization, Jan volunteered to help whenever she was needed and do whatever task was needed, no matter how mundane it might be.

Jan earned her Bachelors of Arts and Masters Degree in Educational Media from California State University, Sacramento. She taught school for 4 years before obtaining a Library Credential and becoming the Loomis School District Librarian, a position she held for 11 years. When faced with returning to the classroom, Jan decided it was time for a new career – owning and operating a bookstore. Well, one store led to another and Jan found herself with stores in Auburn, Rocklin, and Sacramento. She finally retired from that business in 2002 and looked for other ways to occupy her time – lucky for us!

Jan has helped Sierra with all the golf tournaments and auctions, stuffed thousands of envelopes, and contributed hours and hours of data entry. Her boundless energy and good will are infectious and inspirational to the development staff and other volunteers.

Thank you, Jan!



Jan Lucas



Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #1234
Sierra Forever Families
Sacramento, CA 95826

8928 Volunteer Lane, #240
Sacramento, CA 95826

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SUNDAY.MAY.30.2010



WALK 'N ROCK FOR KIDS

RALEY FIELD, WEST SACRAMENTO

THE WALK

The day kicks off with a morning 5K walk. This portion of the event allows us the opportunity to secure unlimited revenue by rallying our constituents to create teams and raise funds on our behalf. The more revenue we are able to generate, the more our mission will benefit. Creating a team is a simple way to make a positive impact in the lives of our community's children.

THE CONCERT

The evening will lend itself to a star-studded, VIP reception and benefit concert for corporate partners, supporters, and the community at large. This year features Heart and Sammy Hagar. Tickets go on sale January 16 through ticketmaster.com.

JOIN US: BECOME A CORPORATE PARTNER OR FORM A TEAM.

There is no registration fee to participate or minimum amount to raise

CORPORATE TEAMS are endorsed by a company. Employers set a goal for their company and encourage employees to make individual teams to raise those funds. There may even be an opportunity for matching gifts.

FRIENDS & FAMILY TEAMS set a goal and raise funds through personal contacts such as family, friends and neighbors

Log on to walknrock.org and sign-up to support Wonder, a program of Sierra, today or contact Kimberly Cox in our office 916.368.5114 ext. 236 or email her at kcox@sierraff.org.

