

Friends of Foster Children



San Gabriel Valley
P.O. Box 1105, Arcadia, CA
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August 2011

Issue 2

President's Message

Susan Wittmer

There is so much *EXCITING* news to report this month!

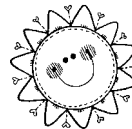
I am excited that some of you will be receiving this issue of the newsletter via email. Our Membership Committee has worked hard to offer this option and set up the mechanism to make it work. And FOFC will benefit from reduced postage and printing costs, making your donations go even further in helping foster youth.

I am excited that The Great Skate Charity Team (new name, same project) hit the road on Friday, July 22nd, as our newsletter was headed to the printer. The team received some wonderful publicity on local news channel KTLA just before they left. We hope some of you were able to see the reports. We wish them well on their adventure.

I am excited that FOFC has a new Sugar Plum Chairman AND I am excited that you will all have the opportunity to meet her and help prepare Sugar Plum tags at our general membership meeting on Saturday, August 6th. This is always a fun meeting – you won't want to miss it.

And I am excited to share with you our Annual Report for the year ended 4/30/11, which is included in this issue. As a special nod to our 35th anniversary year, we have included some very impressive historical facts in the report that will show you just how far FOFC has come since 1976.

I hope that all of you, our readers, will be equally excited about the projects and activities coming up in the next few months. We have something for just about everyone. Enjoy!



Calendar

Thursday, Aug. 4, 2011 7:30 p.m.	Scholarship Committee Mtng. Home of Joan Renken 225 Sharon Rd., Arcadia
Saturday, Aug. 6, 2011 10:00 a.m.	General Membership Meeting/ Sugar Plum Tag workday 1385 Wicks Rd., Pasadena
Thursday, Aug. 11, 2011 7:30 p.m.	FOFC Board Meeting Conference Room 36 S. Kinneloa Ave., Pasadena
Wednesday, Aug. 17, 2011 10:30 a.m.	Foster Caring Committee Mtng. Call Hanne Johnson at 626/795-8962 for location
Friday, Aug. 26, 2011	Deadline to turn in School Supply donations
Saturday, Aug 27, 2011 TBD	Workday for School Supply Sorting and Distribution Call Kathy Stokes or Debbie Fairman

General Membership Meeting To Feature Sugar Plum Tag Prep

We invite members and friends to join us on Saturday, August 6th when FOFC will hold our summer General Membership Meeting. The program for the day will be a work session to assist our Tag Chairman with the

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preparation of Sugar Plum Tags. With approximately 2,000 tags to be readied, there will be ample opportunity for everyone to lend a hand. It is not hard work, just time consuming. Therefore the more volunteers we have, the less time it will take. There will be fun, food and door prizes. Some of our Sugar Plum chairmen will also have sign-up sheets available – we will be looking in particular for volunteers to help with tag writing, which will begin in early September.

Please join us on the patio at the home of Hanne Johnson, 1385 Wicks Road, Pasadena, CA 91103. In order to avoid some of the day's heat we will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. **Please RSVP to Hanne at (626) 795-8962 or email us at fofc@earthlink.net.** We look forward to seeing you there. All are welcome – bring a friend!

(Reminder: If you have started collecting school supplies for our annual collection drive, you may turn in your donations at this meeting.)

We are in full swing! – Back to School Supply Collection

Kathy Stokes

With summer flying by and the start of school rapidly approaching, our back to school supply collection project is in full swing. All of the facilities have submitted their wishes and virtually any school item is needed. One particular need continues to be backpacks. We have found a wholesaler who will sell us backpacks at \$84.00 a dozen (\$7.00 each) which amounts to a savings of \$32.00 per backpack! Wow! We are hoping to use donations to purchase enough for each home to receive as many as possible. As always, all contributions can be put to great use but below are some of our most requested items:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Colored Pencils | Glue Sticks |
| Composition Books | Notebook Dividers |
| Construction Paper | Black and Blue Pens |
| Markers | Large Erasers |
| Notebook Paper (especially college ruled) | Rulers |
| Pencil Pouches | Spiral bound Notebooks – 1, 3 & 5 Subject |
| Pencils – #2, Mechanical & Novelty | |

Not a shopper? You can still help! You may write a check to FOFC and we will use these contributions to purchase the backpacks. Please mail check to our post

office box and indicate that it is for school supplies.

Our Special Friends Committee is coordinating the collection and distribution efforts. Donations can be brought to the general membership meeting on August 6th or call and make arrangements to drop off your donations to any of the following committee members: Debbie Fairman (626/285-4305), Kathy Stokes (626/798-4536), Charleen Albee (626/798-6260) or Steve Wittmer (626/358-2070). **Please put your name on your donation.**

Our packing and distribution day will be Saturday, August 27, 2011 as many schools are starting earlier this year. Please contact Debbie Fairman or Kathy Stokes if you wish to help with packing. We are looking forward to another great year of providing foster children with the essential school supplies!

The Great Skate Charity Team Update

Cynthia Juvinall

The Great Skate team send-off party at Temple City's Live Oak Park on July 17th was very successful. Residents and staff from Trinity El Monte and LeRoy Haynes Center attended, along with FOFC members, and team's family and friends. After we ate, the team explained their project, route, equipment, safety considerations, and then supervised and coached the boys as they tried out the skateboards in the parking lot. The boys especially enjoyed the hands-on portion, and we thank the team for providing them the opportunity to participate.

Several donations came in at the event in support of the team's trip expenses; many thanks to all who have donated so far. In addition to money and gift cards, which will be used primarily for gas and food, the team has received donations of first aid supplies, socks, batteries, and GoPro supplies (for the helmet cam). A complete donor list will be included in next month's newsletter.

By the time you read this, the team will be approx. one week into their projected 21-day trip. They departed for Oregon on Friday, July 22nd, and were expected to push off from the city of Newport on Monday, July 25th. You can follow their journey on Facebook, or the FOFC website fofcsangabrielvalley.com.

The skate team has set a fundraising goal of \$20,000, with FOFC benefiting from their efforts. We can help them achieve this goal by spreading the word about their trip to friends, family, co-workers, or anyone who might be inspired by a group of young people using their talents to make a difference. Donations can be made through FOFC's website via PayPal, or by mailing a check to Friends of Foster Children, P.O. Box 1105, Arcadia, CA 91077-1105. Pledges are also welcomed, and can be based on miles (for example: Five or ten cents (or more) per mile, estimated around 3000 mile trip) or a flat amount. Pledge commitments may be emailed to fofc@earthlink.net, or call Cynthia Juvinal at 626/458-3318.

Good luck to the team, and we wish them a safe and successful trip!

Questions about the Great Skate Charity Team may be directed to "team mom" Cynthia Juvinal at 626/458-3318 or eejclj@yahoo.com.

FOFC Yard Sale Report

Carole Rodenbucher & Debi Mistretta

The shoppers made our day! When all the pennies were counted, our June 11th yard sale netted \$1,074.34 for FOFC's general fund - not bad for a couple days of hard work!

Many people contributed to make this effort a success. First, I would like to thank Debi & Mick Mistretta for the use of their storage shed, their yard, and for arranging pickup of the items that did not sell. Debi was in charge of the Second Time Around Tables at the spring luncheon, and had been storing for FOFC all the items that did not sell, which were offered once more for sale at the yard sale.

To all our wonderful volunteers that helped set up on Friday, worked the sale on Saturday and helped clean up afterwards, many thanks: Candyce Columbus, Debie & George Fairman, Hanne Johnson, Brian Kahler, Carole Kolla, Cynthia & Marc Juvinal, Mick & Debi Mistretta, John & Peggy Ulbrich, Kurt & Joanne Ulbrich, Sherrill Leavitt, and my husband Bob. Thanks to Debi & Mick Mistretta and their good friend Alice Sueoka, who provided lunch, sodas and coffee to help keep up our strength during the long day. Thanks also to Bob & Carole Rodenbucher, who provided donuts in the morning and Steve & Susan Wittmer, who donated

bottled water for the workers (we also sold water to the shoppers, great idea Susan!).

Kudos to Allison Shivley, friend of the Mistretta's, for taking photos Friday evening and posting them on Craig's List. Many people said they found the Yard Sale on Craig's List and could not believe how much stuff we had to sell.

Last but not least, thank you to all the members and friends who so generously donated items for the yard sale (and we sincerely apologize if we have forgotten anyone):

Randy & Karen Lim	Candyce Columbus
Jim Stevens	Joan Renken
Marcie Kading	Bob & Carole Rodenbucher
Don & Dawn Sedam	Mick & Debi Mistretta
Patti Fairman	Steve & Susan Wittmer
George & Debbie Fairman	John & Peggy Ulbrich
Janice Kuch	Kurt & Joanne Ulbrich
Cynthia Juvinal	LACSD Employees

(Anyone needing a Donation Receipt Form for items you donated to the sale, please call Carole Rodenbucher at 626/285-2030 and leave your full name, telephone number and address.)

Committee

Reports

Membership News

Hanne Johnson

FOFC oriented 3 new members in June. These informal get-togethers are meant to be both social and informative. If you are a seasoned member but somehow missed a proper orientation, please join us next time. Let me know if you would like to be included and I will add you to the invitation list for the next orientation.

Please welcome new FULL members Marianne Cherkas and Tanya Zimmerman, and SPONSORING member Kim Weleba:

Marianne Cherkas – Marianne learned of us when she sat at the Sugar Plum Tree as a volunteer from another organization. We impressed her with all that we accomplish and she wants to help. She likes to write and is interested in assisting with our Publicity. Special Friends' projects and helping solicit donations were also of interest to her. She lives in Pasadena.

Tanya Zimmerman is Carole Kolla's La Canada neighbor and has heard a lot about us. She was a foster mom who adopted her foster daughter so Carole encouraged her to give us a look. She is interested in sitting at the Tree and Special Friends projects.

Kim Weleba is a past president and Ways & Means chairman for FOFC. Kim heads the clinic at Hillside - which explains why we do not see much of her. She is interested in helping us with our fundraising projects and has renewed as a Sponsoring member.

A BIG CHANGE to our "Skate Across USA" group. Marc Juvinal has informed us of a name change. Their new name is "The Great Skate charity team". New Email is greatskatecharityteam@gmail.com. You can also follow them on facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/The-Great-Skate-charity-team/242620769098521.

Rosters: Thank you to everyone for your patience. New Rosters are going out now. If you would also like to have an electronic version so that you can print out extra copies for yourself, please send me a message and I will send it along. Many of us have found that having an extra copy for a 2-story house or having one at work or in the car can be quite handy.

Please report all errors and typos to Hanne immediately.

NEWSLETTER ALERT: Based on your requests from your Membership Renewal forms, this newsletter has been delivered both via "snail mail" and the internet, depending on your response. If there were any problems, please contact our Layout Editor, Donna Bonorris, at FOFC@earthlink.net or call Hanne Johnson at 626/795-8962. Thank you!

Foster Caring

Hanne Johnson

We met at the end of May and awarded \$5,795 out of the \$6,195 requested. That meant we only had to turn away one request. With that exception, everyone received what they needed and asked for in May.

Ettie Lee Homes (60 Boys in 6 group homes) received \$820. A gym membership for 6 boys was funded for \$270. A local gym gave them a special group discount. Not only will the boys enjoy strength training, basketball games, and other team sports, they will also have

an opportunity to interact with the local community. The only home without a video game system asked for a PS3 console with an extra controller and a couple of games. We sent the needed \$375. At the third home the boys were complaining that there was nothing to do during their free time. They wanted more items to play with, in addition to the board games and such we funded recently. The boys asked for new pool cues, replacement board game parts, and new paddles, balls and net for their ping-pong table. We funded \$175 and hope they will enjoy themselves.

Hathaway-Sycamores (34 Boys in 2 cottages) received \$900. Rowland Cottage asked for \$300 to go on an outing in celebration of July 4th. They asked for the flexibility to use whatever date fits best in their schedules so that they can go when the most number of boys are available. Whether it will be to a water park or amusement park has not yet been decided. Hunter Cottage requested \$500 for summer outings. They need to plan smaller, separate outings so that the younger boys can go swimming, bowling, or to an arcade while the older ones might go to an amusement park. A 12 year-old boy in Hunter would like to participate in the Boy Scouts. He recently joined a troop and is very excited and motivated. He needed \$100 to purchase his uniform and supplies. We hope he sticks with it and has a wonderful experience.

Hillside (64 Boys & Girls in 8 cottages) received \$925. The Recreation Department asked for \$330 so they could buy a substantial popcorn machine instead of having to continually rent one. They also needed new chairs for the kids to use when they gather to sit and enjoy the popcorn together. There is a new on-site Yoga and meditation class, which has become quite popular with the kids. Our \$200 will buy 10 needed Yoga mats. There is also a new gardening group of 8 children from various cottages and they are starting to plant their garden. They asked for \$75 for plants, soil amendment and other small supply items. Gardening is almost a guarantee to help kids feel better. Seeing things grow, and taking care of the plants is very rewarding. Tradewinds Cottage needed a new BBQ badly and we were happy to fund it for \$200. Staff reports that BBQs are being used more than ever this year because they have been having more family events. It is nice to be able to help. A young man who does not do well in group activities was given \$120 for a gym membership. The hope is that it will give him a place to work out some of his frustrations and enjoy the fitness activities.

LeRoy Haynes Center (72 Boys in 6 cottages) received **\$1500**. The boys requested \$1,500 to host an End-of-School Formal Dance – on campus this time. The staff feels that the dance will provide 1) an opportunity for the boys to plan an event complete with all the details and a budget, 2) an opportunity to interact with youth from other agencies, 3) the experience of a formal dance, 4) a sense of normalcy, and 5) memories that will last a lifetime. On our FOFC tour earlier in the year, many of the boys asked if they could have another dance. Last year's was a big success. Girls will be invited from Maryvale, David & Margaret, Crittenton Services, Penny Lane, Vista del Mar, and Rosemary's. Our **\$1,500** will cover costs for the DJ, food, decorations, prizes, and table and chair rentals. How could we refuse?

Rosemary Children's Services (44 Girls in 5 cottages) received **\$850**. Requests were mainly from Bonnie, Green and Cottage. We funded art supplies (**\$200**), plus bathroom rugs, trashcans, towels and other small items (**\$300**) for one group. The other cottage needed stainless trashcans (**\$100**) and 2 new computer desk chairs (**\$150**). The last was all about looking their best as the girls asked for **\$200** for new curling irons, flat irons, blow dryers and a make-up bag.

Trinity El Monte (53 Boys in 4 units) received **\$800**. We sent **\$150** so they could get their weight benches reupholstered. They see a lot of activity. Another **\$350** will buy more weights and dumb bells. Staff works hard to make the living areas look nice and received **\$300** to buy plants and decorations for the unit lounge areas.

Pixie & Tiger

Ingerlise Haney

The Pixie and Tiger Committee is gearing up for February 2012 when we will again be distributing Welcome Kits to group homes. Please keep us in mind as you take those wonderful trips to far away places this summer and tuck a few hotel samples in your luggage. Yes, we are collecting hotel samples of soap, shampoo, conditioner, body lotion and tooth paste. This year has been a little slow with samples and we would like to continue to include them in our Welcome Kits. To turn in donations, please contact Ingerlise (Inky) Haney at 626/281-2054, or pass them along to any FOFC board member. Thank you for remembering our committee.

Special Friends

Debbie Fairman

Thanks to the National Charity League (NCL) for doing a fabulous job of collecting beach towels and lotion this year. They collected 396 towels and 394 bottles of lotion, which provided enough for every child at all six homes (LeRoy Haynes Center, Hillside, Rosemary Children's Services, Ettie Lee, Hathaway-Sycamores, and Trinity El Monte). We even had enough for the young people at Youth Moving On (YMO) and a small number for our Scholarship Committee to use as prizes at their upcoming barbecue.

Special thanks to Ginger Loesch for coordinating the sorting and distribution, and to Carole Kolla, Jan Seymour, Janice Kuch, MaryAnn McClain, and Sherrill Leavitt for helping out.

In June, our committee also sent a large batch of brightly colored, one-of-a-kind laundry bags to Hillside for their residents to use at summer camp. Thank you to Harriet Leppik, Mary Nelson, Bonnie Landsberg and her sewing group of Brenda Wakeland, Heidi Jarenwattananon, and Judi Umbro and our friends at the School of Fashion and Design (SOFAD) for assisting with this project.

If any of our activities sound like fun and something that you would like to be a part of now or in the future, please call or email me to join the Special Friends Committee: Debbie Fairman, 626/285-4305, Crafterdeb@aol.com

Scholarship/Emancipation Committee

Steve Wittmer

Our committee members were extremely busy during the last three months reviewing and evaluating student applications for our Scholarship program. The hard work of the selection process is over and the committee now starts the mentoring aspect of our program. Our committee works hard to create and maintain one-on-one relationships with our students, to offer moral support and encouragement along with financial backing. This personal touch is often what is needed to help the student succeed.

New Students: The scholarship committee continues to be encouraged by the number of high-quality applicants

to our program. Meet our new students:

1. Michael T. is enrolled at St. John's in New York and is majoring in Political Science.
2. Maria C. will attend UCLA and intends to study nursing.
3. Carla V. will attend Cal Poly Pomona and intends to study business.
4. Zakir J. will attend El Camino College and intends to study psychology.
5. Karely G. will attend Cal St. Northridge and intends to study business.
6. Jolene T. plans to attend Cal St. Los Angeles and intends to study psychology.

Renewal Students: Our 29 renewal students also cover a wide spectrum of majors. One of our students should be completing his Masters Degree program this year, while eight students will be completing their fourth year of school. We hope to celebrate several graduations next spring.

Scholarship Barbecue: Current and alumni scholarship students, committee members, and invited guests will gather for the 19th Annual Scholarship Barbecue on August 28th. Traditionally, this event has always been a potluck, with committee members providing salads, side dishes, and cold drinks. However, with such a large guest list, our committee could use your help. Your donations of cash or a gift card to Vons, Ralphs or Albertson will help us underwrite the purchase of the meat. Our other need is for gift cards or items to be used as door prizes for the students. Please call Susan Wittmer at 626/358-2070 if you would like to donate a gift. **We would appreciate your donations no later than Friday, August 20th.**

The Scholarship Committee is always looking for dedicated members to serve as mentors to our scholarship recipients. For more information about the FOFC Scholarship/Emancipation program, please call Steve Wittmer at 626/358-2070.

Notes from our Students:

Dear FOFC Friends, Thank you very much for the support you all have given me over the years and not just financially, but emotionally because I felt from you all as if there was a large family (beyond my own) who was there to help me through all the problems and trials that a prestigious and difficult university like UC San Diego throw at its students.

Thank you for all your love and support over the years, Adam R.

Adam recently graduated from UC San Diego and is planning to attend law school. Susan Wittmer is his sponsor.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals, organizations and foundations for their recent donations to Friends of Foster Children:

Donna Puccio
Kroger (Ralphs Community Program)
Lillian B. Stewart Living Trust
United Way

Donations in support of the Great Skate Charity Team will be acknowledged in next month's newsletter.

Ongoing Projects

FOFC has projects that continue on an ongoing basis. Here is a brief recap, along with a contact person.

Used printer cartridges - Cartridges are turned in for store credits, which are used to purchase school supplies. (Kathy Stokes 626/798-4536)

Hotel/sample sizes of soap, shampoo, conditioner & lotion – Collected for use in welcome kits assembled by the Pixie & Tiger project. (Ingerlise Haney 626/281-2054)

Cell Phone Recycling – Used cell phones are recycled for cash, which supports our general fund activities. (Carole Rodenbucher 626/285-2030)

Ralphs Community Contribution Program – Register your Ralphs REWARDS card to our organization, and Ralphs will donate a percentage of your spending to FOFC. (Susan Wittmer 626/358-2070)

Suggestions for future fundraising projects, both large and small, are always welcome. Contact Ways and Means chairman Carole Rodenbucher at 626/285-2030 with your ideas.

Annual Report For the Fye 4/30/11

Following is the annual report of the Friends of Foster Children organization for the fiscal year May 1, 2010 thru April 30, 2011:

Pixie & Tiger

Of all our committees, the Pixie & Tiger Committee has experienced the most dramatic changes over the years. One of our very first projects, started in April, 1977, this committee took cardboard shoe boxes, covered them with colorful wrapping paper, and filled them with small toys, stationery, and grooming and hygiene items. The boxes were used as welcome kits for young people entering the group homes or as incentive prizes when a special reward was called for.

- Historical Fact: At its peak, when MacLaren Hall was open and one of their primary recipients, the Pixie & Tiger committee filled around 1,000 boxes per year. Over the years it is estimated that the committee distributed more than 16,600 boxes.

Now the committee has dispensed with the shoe boxes, and meets only once a year to fill and distribute Toiletry Kits whose filler items come from the Sugar Plum trees and individual donations. This year the committee, chaired by Ingerlise Haney, distributed 190 toiletry kits and 29 boxes or bags of extra items to 6 facilities, which included the young people at Youth Moving On. A typical toiletry kit contained soap, washcloth, toothpaste & toothbrush, chapstick or lip gloss, deodorant, body wash and lotion for girls, and white socks, along with sample sizes of shampoo and conditioner, lotion, etc.

This committee proves that the smallest of things can make a big difference.

Special Friends

The Special Friends Committee, which was chaired by Debbie Fairman, is hard to quantify in terms of numbers. They are a project-oriented committee that carries out a number of special projects throughout the year. They employ a large number of our FOFC members with their many varied volunteer opportunities. In the last year they:

- distributed more than 200 beach towels and bottles of sun screen for summer fun (which were collected for us by the NCL);
- threw a circus-themed End-of-School Year party for the youth at Hillside.
- provided School Supplies to more than 350 kids, collecting over 15,000 items with a value of more than \$10,000.
- collected and distributed more than 200 pounds of Halloween candy and treats.
- distributed DVDs and snacks to 5 facilities for the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.
- sewed laundry bags for summer camp, and tote bags and pillowcases for Easter gifts.
- hosted 10 Bingo Nights for the young men at Hathaway-Sycamores.

Over the years, the Special Friends Committee has cost our group very little in terms of money (they usually work with a budget of \$2,000 to \$2,500 per year), but they have touched many, many young lives.

Scholarship/Emancipation

The Scholarship Committee, chaired by Steve Wittmer, started their year last May announcing awards to 35 students. As the year progressed, they added 2 additional students for a total of 37.

- The committee disbursed total awards of \$ 59,050.
- 3 students graduated this year, bringing our total to 29 graduates since May 2003.
- 18th Annual Barbecue held in August brought together 68 students, committee members and

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guests – our best attendance ever. (Several students have requested that we organize MORE social events – could have something to do with the home-cooked meal and the wonderful prizes.)

- We currently have 3 students in graduate school, and 8 more who are on track to graduate within the next year.
- Historical Fact: In FOFC's first full year, ended 4/30/1977, the scholarship committee gave out \$1,800 in awards. Since then, they have given out more than 600 awards totaling more than \$747,000. Almost 3/4 of a million dollars!!!

The Emancipation Program, which is also administered by our Scholarship Committee, disbursed more than \$6,900 this past year.

- Funds were used to provide assistance to 5 youth at YMO with apartment furnishings including vacuum cleaners, irons, bakeware and cooking utensils, linens, paper goods and cleaning supplies.
- 9 young women emancipating from Rosemary Children's Services into various local transitional living programs received similar assistance with household needs and educational supplies.
- 6 emancipated youth received crisis funds for assistance with rent, food & living expenses.
- Historical Fact: Our emancipation project, which originated in 1992, is the newest project of FOFC. In less than 20 years, we have disbursed more than \$200,000 in emancipation funds.

Foster Caring

The Foster Caring Committee, chaired by Hanne Johnson, is a committee whose sole purpose is to spend money. At each meeting, they review and evaluate requests for financial assistance submitted by 6 facilities: Hillside, Hathaway-Sycamores, LeRoy Haynes Center, Trinity El Monte, Rosemary Children's Services and Ettie Lee Youth & Family Services. These requests range from inexpensive items such as birthday party decorations and arts & crafts supplies to the substantial outlays required for group outings and celebrations. The Committee funded 152 requests this past year and spent \$43,868.71 in doing so. This total included medical expenses of \$657.00, educational expenses of \$655.00, facility and recreational equipment expenses of \$11,821.25, enrichment expenses of \$15,519.20, special group activities and outings of \$8,289.10 and miscellaneous other expenses of \$6,927.16.

- Historical Fact: The Foster Caring Committee was not one of our original committees – it was started on May 1, 1983. In their first year they had a budget of \$3,500, and they spent all but 56 cents of that.
- Historical Fact: We are in the process of compiling exact figures for how much the committee has disbursed in its 28 year history. However, in the past 10 years, the Foster Caring Committee funded requests totaling more than \$557,000.

Sugar Plum

Our Sugar Plum holiday project, chaired by Gigi Andrew with assistance from Cheryl Peralta, exceeded expectations in 2010. In spite of the state of the economy, we collected more than 5,300 gifts from shoppers and outside groups, which was almost identical to the previous year's results. These gifts filled the wishes of 431 specific children, provided facility needs and clothing items to 10 facilities, and provided an ample inventory of items to be used by our Pixie & Tiger and Special Friends committees for their projects. We were excited to add a new facility to the Sugar Plum trees this year: the Transitional Independent Living Program (TILP) of Hathaway-Sycamores. Their 26 residents were included on the children's wish tags, and TILP received facility tags which provided them with a wide array of dishes, linens, housewares, gift

cards, and small appliances to help them furnish apartments.

- Historical Fact: Sugar Plum, the original project of FOFC, has collected more than 146,000 gifts in its 35 year history.

Ways & Means

We receive funding each year from several local foundations, including the Angell Foundation, Berger Foundation, and Forest Lawn Foundation which provide most of the funding for our Scholarship/Emancipation committee, and a good portion of the funds doled out by our Foster Caring Committee. The rest of our budgeted money comes from individual donations and fundraising activities. The Ways & Means Committee is our fundraising committee.

Chaired by Carole Rodenbucher, the Ways & Means Committee was busy all year long with some of our regular, small fundraising projects, which included cell phone recycling and See's Candy sales. Then they outdid themselves in March with the "Friends are the Flowers in Life" spring luncheon. The committee raised more than \$8,300 at the luncheon alone. They were responsible for a grand total of more than \$12,600 for FOFC's general fund through their various events, which also included the solicitation mailing in the November/December newsletter.

Publicity and WebSite

We have been very lucky the past several years to have had Candyce Columbus working to provide publicity for FOFC activities including Sugar Plum, the Scholarship Program, and the recent luncheon. This year she received much assistance from Carole Kolla, and together they got FOFC's name out in several local publications which had not previously featured us. We took another exciting step forward this year when one of our new members Daphne Fan translated our Sugar Plum article into Chinese and we received mention in the local Chinese press.

FOFC took great leaps forward this year in the development of its website. We had been making half-hearted efforts for years to get off the ground with the website idea. Thanks to Gigi Andrew for finally making our website a reality, and thanks to Chi Nguyen who has been acting as our Webmaster this year. Once our board caught on to what a powerful tool the website could be, Chi has been fielding requests and suggestions at every meeting about how to use our web presence to the best advantage. We recently added the capability to accept donations on-line through PayPal, and have already reaped the benefits of this feature. Check out our website - it is bright, it is colorful, and it is still a work in progress as we fine tune our message to reach everyone out there in cyberspace.

Membership

After reading of all we have accomplished during the past year, an outsider might think we have a huge roster full of eager volunteers. In fact, we have fewer than 100 members, with a core group of active members that numbers between 40 – 50. What we lack in size, we clearly make up for in enthusiasm.

The Friends of Foster Children organization is sincerely grateful to all the members, friends, contributors and volunteers who helped to make this year successful. Thank you all.

- Information was compiled by Susan Wittmer, President and Kathy Stokes, Treasurer from reports provided by committee chairmen. Additional information and/or copies of this report are available upon request.

FRIENDS OF FOSTER CHILDREN

San Gabriel Valley

P.O. Box 1105
Arcadia, CA 91077-1105
626-445-4542
FOFC@earthlink.net

Friends of Foster Children is a non-profit, all volunteer organization founded in 1976 to enhance the quality of life for abused, abandoned, and neglected children in the San Gabriel Valley.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:	Susan Wittmer
Vice President:	Chi Nguyen
Secretary:	Carole Kolla
Treasurer:	Kathy Stokes
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Carolyn Cota	Susan Peralta
Sherrill Leavitt	Steve Wittmer
Mary Morales	
Layout Editor:	Donna Bonorris



Please join us on Saturday, August 6th for a General Membership Meeting and Sugar Plum tag workday. Many hands make light work. All are welcome. Details inside.

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