

Friends of Foster Children



San Gabriel Valley
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September 2011

Issue 3

President's Message

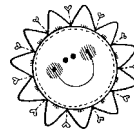
Susan Wittmer

Meet our Sugar Plum Chairman: If you missed the General Membership Meeting on August 6th, you missed a good one. We had a very productive work-day, readying approx. 2,000 Sugar Plum tags, and we introduced Carolyn Cota, our new Sugar Plum Chairman. If you haven't had the opportunity to meet Carolyn yet, let me introduce you.

Carolyn became involved in Sugar Plum long before her family joined FOFC. As members of the National Charity League (NCL), Carolyn and her sister Rachel sat shifts at the Sugar Plum trees with mom Cathy. (*Cathy served as the first official liaison to FOFC when we began our association with the NCL – Pasadena chapter, working with Hanne Johnson.*) Carolyn says the two FOFC activities which she remembers most clearly are covering shoeboxes for the Pixie & Tiger Committee and sitting at the Sugar Plum trees. Participating in Sugar Plum quickly became one of Carolyn's favorite parts of the holiday season.

After Rachel and Carolyn graduated from high school and moved on to college, Cathy Cota decided to continue her volunteer activities by joining FOFC. What a valuable member she has been! (*Cathy has served on our Board of Directors, has chaired the Sugar Plum project, and is currently a member of the Foster Caring Committee, as well as the Sugar Plum Typing Chairman.*) And although the family was busy with work and school, FOFC activities were encouraged whenever schedules permitted.

In 2010, Carolyn graduated from UCLA with a degree in Liberal Arts. She is currently serving an internship at a firm in Westwood, and is considering returning to school for her Master's Degree. In the meantime, she has followed in the family tradition of volunteering



Calendar

- | | |
|---|---|
| Thursday,
Sept. 8, 2011
7:30 p.m. | FOFC Board Meeting
Conference Room
36 S. Kinneloa Ave., Pasadena |
| Wednesday,
Sept. 14, 2011
10:30 a.m. | Foster Caring Committee Mtg.
Call Hanne Johnson at
626/795-8962 for location |
| Thursday,
Sept. 22, 2011
7:30 p.m. | Scholarship Committee Mtg.
Home of Joan Renken
225 Sharon Rd., Arcadia |
| Tuesday,
Oct. 4, 2011
9:00 a.m. to
2:00 p.m. | DWP Charity Fair
Downtown Los Angeles
Volunteers needed—call
Susan Wittmer at 626/358-2070 |
| Saturday,
Oct. 15, 2011
10:00 a.m. | General Membership Meeting/
Sugar Plum Kick-Off
Rosemead Community Center |

with FOFC. Carolyn was elected to our Board of Directors in May, and soon after volunteered to lead the Sugar Plum project. Carolyn says her love for Christmas isn't about receiving gifts, it is about giving, and finding the perfect gift to make someone else happy (and a love of shopping!). Her family has their own tradition of sitting the opening shift on the opening day of Sugar Plum. Carolyn is looking forward to continuing that tradition this year, and being the Sugar Plum chairman will make the experience even more special. With her love for all things Christmas, and a gift for organization,

cont'd on page 2

Carolyn is the perfect fit for the job of Sugar Plum Chair. I urge you all to give her your support and encouragement.

And, from all of us at FOFC, we thank the National Charity League for introducing the Cota family to us, and for providing our organization with so much quality volunteer support over the years. You are our very special friends.

Ralphs Community Contributions Program Begins New Year on Sept. 1st

Susan Wittmer

We need your help. The new program year for Ralphs Community Contribution Program begins on September 1, 2011, continuing thru August 31, 2012. FOFC has already received more than \$500 during the first 3 quarters of the current year, with the final quarterly installment not yet received. We are looking forward with great excitement to another year of program participation, as we hope to expand our list of friends and bring in even more money. But we need your help.

This is important. All of the members who are currently enrolled in the Ralphs Community Contribution Program will remain active until August 31, 2011.

Participants are required to register for the new term at www.ralphs.com or by using a scanbar letter at the register STARTING SEPTEMBER 1, 2011. (Even if you registered as recently as June, July, or August 2011 you are required to register again, ON OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 1, 2011.)

- If you register online, please note that our organization's NPO # is 92558.
- If you previously registered using a scan bar letter and wish to do so again, please contact Susan Wittmer at 626/358-2070 to receive a copy of the letter.
- And of course, this is the perfect opportunity for anyone who is not already participating to sign up and register FOFC as your community charity of choice. Contact Susan Wittmer (above # or wittmerbiz@altrionet.com) or Kathy Stokes at 626/798-4536 if you would like more details.

Why not take a few extra copies of the letter to give to family and friends who also shop at Ralphs. The more people we have participating, the more money FOFC

will earn. Registration will only take a minute, and FOFC will enjoy the benefits of your participation for another year. Every time you shop, we will earn money in support of our programs. So please register quickly, just remember to wait until September 1st.

Save the Date: **Sugar Plum Kick-Off Meeting**

Mark your calendars – you won't want to miss the "official" kick-off of Sugar Plum set for **Saturday, October 15th at 10:00 a.m. at the Rosemead Community Center.** Please note the new location (the building is located at 3936 N. Muscatel Ave., Rosemead, CA 91770, behind the Library). Our next issue will include detailed directions.

Sugar Plum Chairman Carolyn Cota will be in charge of the program for the day, which will include plenty of holiday cheer and lots of opportunities to sign up for your favorite Sugar Plum jobs, if you have not already done so. Traditionally, we have a guest speaker from one of the programs represented on our Sugar Plum trees. This meeting is guaranteed to get you in a holiday frame of mind, so save the date, invite your friends, and make your plans to join us.

The Great Skate Charity Team Update

Cynthia Juvinal

After some exciting news coverage on KTLA before departure, the Great Skate Charity Team left on schedule from Oregon July 25th, successfully reached New York within 3 weeks, and have begun their return journey. Due to medical and employment issues, not all of the original team was able to go. Five young men made the trip in two cars. Unfortunately a car breakdown outside Boise, Idaho lost them about 2 1/2 days, and 2 states did not permit them to skate on the roadway, so they were unable to fulfill their plan to skate every mile coast to coast in 21 days.

Friends of Foster Children is pleased to have received some publicity exposure from this project, and enjoyed the opportunity to open new avenues and connect with a wider audience. When all the funds are accounted for, the team will announce the total that they raised on FOFC's behalf. Stay tuned.

Thank you to team members: Marc Juvinall, Jared Davies, Matt Canzano, Brian Brubaker, & Alex Solis. And **Many Thanks** to the generous donors who helped make this dream a reality!

Monetary Donations

Doris Kading
Harriet Leppok
Franca Scorsone
Marianne Milch
LACERA
(Cynthia Juvinall's Coworkers: Mary, Pam, Glen, Ezza, etc)
Susan Joyce
Carol Moya
Patricia Healy

Supplies & Gift Cards

Bob & Carole Rodenbucher (batteries)
Sherrill Leavitt (first aid supplies)
Debbie Fairman (batteries & sox)
Jim Stevens (Go Pro Battery packs)
Debi Mistretta
Steve & Susan Wittmer
Jane Fall
Donna Puccio
John & Peggy Ulbrich
Keith & Joan Renken

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

Committee

Reports

Special Friends:

Bingo Volunteers Needed

Sherrill Leavitt

As we approach the busiest time of year for most of us, I hope you will give a moment's thought to spending a little time with some of the children we help. Volunteers are needed for upcoming Bingo Nights at Hathaway-Sycamores on Wed., Oct. 26th and Wed., Nov. 16th from 6:45 until 8:15 each evening. FOFC volunteers will supply snacks (I will provide drinks and cups) and will be assisted by NCL volunteers. This means so much to the boys, and they look forward to our visits each month. I hope you can find a little time for them as we approach the holidays. Please contact Sherrill Leavitt at 626/791-8032 if you are available to help. If you are willing to commit farther ahead, I will also need volunteers in the new year – call for dates.

Thank you, and happy Sugar Plum prep!

Membership News

Hanne Johnson

All members, Full, Associate, and Sponsor/Patrons, should have received their new membership cards along with the 2011-2012 Roster by now. If you have not, please contact us. Thank you to members who helped distribute some of the Rosters and saved us some postage. Rosters are also available via email for members who would like to have one on their computer.

Our last newsletter was the first to be sent via email to those members that had requested it. We hope it is working for you. If not, just let us know and we will switch you back. You can also opt for both ways.

Any non-members on our Courtesy mailing list who would prefer to receive our monthly newsletter via email instead of snail mail should also let us know. We will be happy to make the change.

Do not forget to report all changes and corrections. Send an email to fofc@earthlink.net or phone Hanne Johnson at 626/795-8962 for assistance.

Thank you.

Foster Caring

Hanne Johnson

This month we are giving you a report on our last 2 meetings. This will get us back in sync with the newsletter and our reports will be timelier. At our June meeting we funded \$6,510 of the requested \$7,655. In July we were on vacation. August's meeting had \$6,897 worth of requests and we were able to help with \$4,565.

Ettie Lee Homes (60 Boys in 6 group homes) received \$1550 (June) + \$575 (August). These requests came from all their group homes. Season passes to Pharaoh's Adventure & Water Park were funded for \$500, as was another \$450 for a Knott's Berry Farm outing. \$100 was sent for swimming pool toys for the group home with their own pool. Anthony, an Eagle Scout, needed \$500 to attend a weeklong scout camp at Lake Tahoe. We were delighted to be able to support his participation and congratulate him on reaching Eagle status. At our second meeting we funded \$300 for a new BBQ and \$75 for therapy games to help the boys learn how to control

anger and channel their emotions. One of the group homes with an Independent Living Skills program asked for help with new pots, pans and a microwave. We funded \$200 and wish the boys well in their cooking classes. Being able to cook is certainly an essential skill.

Hathaway-Sycamores (34 Boys in 2 cottages) received \$750 (June) + \$900 (August). Rowland Cottage asked for \$400 to purchase gift cards for summer activities to the movies, arcades, etc. They also received \$100 for dishes and utensils for their 18 boys. Hunter Cottage received \$250 for swimming trunks and flip-flops for their 16 boys. Between the 2 cottages they have 14 boys who will be attending public school this September. Each cottage asked for \$50 per boy to cover the cost of locker keys, ASB cards, sports team equipment, PE clothes, school supplies and class pictures. We sent the needed \$700. Hunter Cottage also received \$200 for decorations and plants to make their cottage more home-like.

Hillsides (64 Boys & Girls in 8 cottages) received \$710 (June) + \$990 (August). There had been an influx of new children and others expected soon so \$300 was needed to buy 15 bicycle helmets. Helmets are not shared for health reasons and children leaving may take their helmets with them so that they will be safe riding at home. At this time of year, as children are going home, staff make sure that each child leaves with lots of memories, pictures, etc. As the new children arrive, staff begins to create a space where they can start to accumulate new memories. The treatment staff requested \$200 for scrap-booking supplies. There was also a need for posters (\$80) and other wall hangings for the new children's bedrooms. One newer resident teen is not able to participate with the other boys in his cottage who all have skateboards. We sent the \$60 for a skateboard so he will not be left out anymore. The younger boys were asking for swim gear, goggles, masks and fins, to use in the pool. We helped with \$70. In August we funded \$350 so the Recreation staff could bring back a Derby Car Race activity. They will buy a little car kit for each child as well as some of the supplies. This has been a hugely popular event in the past, even with the girls. Sounds like a great summer activity. New comforters (\$165) are needed for the new residents coming into 2 of the cottages. The children leaving may take their comforters with them if they wish so there is always a need for new ones. The smallest cottage of only 4 boys asked for a Wii system (\$150). They have an older system that does not allow them to play together. A Wii system will give them more interactive and family oriented games

to play together. Another cottage had their BBQ die and we sent the \$175 to buy another. There are still lots of hot weather days ahead where cooking outdoors is a treat. Each cottage gets to decide on a camping trip at the end of the summer. Redwood Cottage asked for help with their camp reservation fees. We were happy to send the needed \$150 so the boys can go fishing, hiking and camp at the beach in tents. They like to rough it.

LeRoy Haynes Center (72 Boys in 6 cottages) received \$1550 (June) + \$800 (August). The boys have formed a new basketball team, the Lancers. It was with pleasure we funded the needed \$350 for new regulation team jerseys for all 15 players. They will be playing in a formal league and we wish them well. Staff is determined to use the summer activities to disengage the boys from their video games and engage them in outdoor activities both on and off campus. Plans are being made for swim parties, beach outings, barbeques, hikes, sport tournaments, golfing and the like. The younger boys are hoping for a trip to Knott's Berry Farm. Each of the 6 cottages received \$200 to fund their activities (\$1200). In June we gave them \$300 to purchase a camcorder. It will be used in their vocational program. The boys will do mock job interviews and then get feedback on their tone, language, demeanor, etc. It can also be used to record campus activities, award ceremonies, recitals, birthday celebrations, and sports activities. With their summer recreation program in full swing for all the boys there is a need for more weights, helmets, elbow and knee guards, 15 baseball gloves and flags for flag football. We sent \$500 to help.

Rosemary Children's Services (44 Girls in 5 cottages) received \$1000 (June) + \$600 (August). First time around there was only one big request – help with their August Carnival. Our \$1000 donation helped fund the prizes, inflatable games and disc jockey. We hope the kids had a blast. In August we funded \$500 for a "Zoo to You Wildlife on Wheels" experience. The animals are brought to the facility vs. going to the zoo. The girls will learn about the animals and safety will be discussed. Certificates for manicures and pedicures are great incentives and rewards for the girls. We sent \$100 to buy a few.

Trinity El Monte (53 Boys in 4 units) received \$950 (June) + \$700 (August). With \$500 they can plan some summer activities for the boys. Canteen items are always needed. We sent \$150 to help restock. New soft-

ball gloves will be purchased with another \$300. In August the boys needed new shorts for their physical activities (\$300) and another \$300 for more board games. New pool cues and accessories were also needed and we sent \$100 to help out.

Our committee would like to share with you a letter we received from LeRoy Haynes Center:

Dear Members of the Foster Caring Committee,

Thank you again for providing the resources for the LeRoy Haynes Center summer dance. It was a resounding success with 60-70 guests from our sister agencies in attendance – David & Margaret, Maryvale, Rosemary, and Crittenton. Our boys had a great time planning the event complete with refreshments, decorations, and a DJ. Dressed in their slacks and shirts, courtesy of FOFC, our youth were truly gentlemen as they greeted their guests and enjoyed a night of dancing.

For some this was their last chance to just be a kid because with the end of the school year also comes emancipation and the harsh realities of adulthood. We are forever indebted to you for allowing them to have a wonderful social experience that most will never forget. The boys are preparing thank you notes that will be mailed in the next week or so. We also have a few photos to share, but with so many youth from other agencies, their staff asked us to be cautious in taking photos due to privacy restrictions.

*Most Sincerely,
Jane Woods and Derrick Perry*

Several different thank you's arrived, along with some photos, and not just for the dance. We will have these on display at our next General Membership meeting in October. Be sure to look for them. In the meantime, enjoy:

"Thank you for the Hurricane Harbor season passes just to let you know we enjoy going. I appreciate what you blessed us with."

"Thank you for donating our season passes. I had a great time."

"Thak you for the seans tickets and the chance for us to go."

"I really really apprecite you guys giving us money to sit down and eat out. I really thank you. Thanks from J.D."

"Thank you for the dance. Thank you for the money. Thank you for everything. Love J."

"Thank you for the party and thank you, and I liked the food and songs!"

"I loved that dance you made. Thanks for everything. To the nice people From R. R."

"Thank you for giving us the opportunity to dance with the girls on Saturday. I appreciate the food and drinks you provided for us. The dance made my school year great. I can stop talking about that day. Wishing & hoping we have another dance. Thank you for the wonderful experience. From K."

"Thank you for having a dance at Leroy's boys home it was cool, I had a good time and it would be cool to have another dance your very much appreciated friends of foster. p.s. R."

"Dear Friends and Foster

Thank you for Donating the stuff for the Dance I really had a good time at the Dance I had a blast and it was the best time of my life. Thank you E."

"Thank you for letting us have a dance, and letting us enjoy ourselves. I had a good time and I look forward to more dances. –K."

Acknowledgements

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

Daphne Li Jiuan Fan
Janice Kuch
Liz Leras

Los Angeles Water and Power Employees' Assn., Inc.
Sara Lee Foundation
United Way
Wells Fargo Community Support

- Please see related article for a list of additional contributors to the Great Skate Charity Team.

- A complete list of school supply donors and barbecue contributors will be included in next month's newsletter.

Sugar Plum News

Carolyn Cota



I am very excited and happy to announce that our 36th Annual Sugar Plum Project is officially under way!! On August 6th, we gathered at Hanne Johnson's house for the Tag Preparation day and great fun was had by all.

I would like to take a moment to announce the 2011 Sugar Plum Team and thank them for graciously volunteering their time and talents, and for being so supportive of me as I take on the task of being chairman. I am looking forward to working with you all and getting to know you better.

SP Chair:	Carolyn Cota	(626)524-9171	cdc8688@hotmail.com
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Delivery:	Steve Wittmer	(626)358-2070	wittmerbiz@altrionet.com
Assistant:	Candyce Columbus	(626)932-1906	clcbuddy@yahoo.com

Looking Ahead: Our Sugar Plum Kick Off/General Membership Meeting will be held Saturday, October 15, 2011 at the Rosemead Community Center. Please save this date and plan to attend this important meeting – BRING A FRIEND. The success of Sugar Plum relies on our fabulous volunteers – so please volunteer to type wishes, write tags and of course sit at the tree.



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Volunteer Opportunities:

Tag writing (Sherrill Leavitt, Chairman)

Tag writing opportunities will be available starting in September. If you might be interested in helping, and have not already signed up, please contact me by email, seriouslysillymom@gmail.com, or call me at 626/791-8032. No experience is required, but neatness, accuracy, and the ability to follow instructions are highly prized qualities for tag writers. Thanks in advance for your help.

Calling All Treesitters (Susan Peralta, Scheduling Chair)

Starting on opening day (Friday, November 25) until closing day (Thursday, December 15), we have lots of opportunities for you to sign up for shifts to sit at the Sugar Plum trees. Tree sitters sign up for 2 or 3 hour shifts to log out and log in tags taken from the tree by shoppers, to gather the returned gifts, to accept monetary donations, to replenish tags on the trees, and to answer questions shoppers may have.

The trees are open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays, and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sundays. We schedule two tree sitters for each shift. It is easy to do and great fun, and is sure to put you in a holiday mood. You will be struck by the generosity of those who purchase gifts. If you have not sat before, we have an information packet for you which will explain your job, and which is also available at the tree. If you need a partner to sit with, we will provide one.

The earlier you sign up, the better your availability of dates. Please call me at 626/789-2057 or e-mail me at peraltabb@sbcglobal.net to reserve your spot. I look forward to hearing from you.

Ongoing Projects

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

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)

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)

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



**FRIENDS OF
FOSTER CHILDREN**

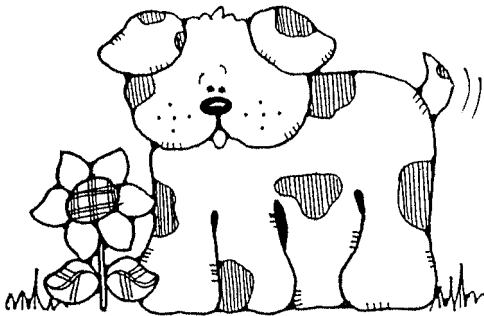
San Gabriel Valley

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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

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Attention, Participants in Ralphs Community Contribution program: You must re-register at www.ralphs.com or use the scan bar letter at the checkout on or after Sept. 1st to continue your support. See details inside.

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