

FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY

SUMMER 2011

Fatherhood Shared and Brotherhood Begins

Josh and Matthew Dilegame, who have been in a committed relationship for over 10 years, had a strong desire to become parents. After doing research into private and international adoption, they found both to be too expensive and, in some cases, closed to their lifestyle. They began to research adoption through the foster care system and found Sierra Forever Families. They contacted Sierra, and to their delight, they were greeted with kindness by the supportive staff who shared that Sierra is an open agency and about 25% of its families come from the LGBT community. As the opportunities began to unfold, they became optimistic about finally becoming parents.

In 2008, after completing certification and training, they were introduced to Justin (then 3), a loveable little boy who had been in foster care due to neglect. Josh and Matthew knew instantly that Justin was to be their son. "When we first saw him it was as if we'd known him all along," Josh shares about their first visit with Justin.

Becoming parents opened up a whole new world for the couple. Knowing that so many youth in our region are living in long-term foster care, they decided to adopt again. This time, they were matched with Joseph (JJ, then 3),

another little boy who had been placed in foster care due to neglect. Upon meeting Joseph, Josh shares, "JJ immediately ran to us to play and we both instantly fell in love with his personality." At the time, Joseph had very limited verbal skills, but as a result of the care and dedication from his dads, he is now at grade level and enjoys full conversations and being the center of attention.

"When we first introduced Justin to JJ, they instantly bonded and have not left each other's side since." Josh continues, "They have such a strong connection, I think because they can relate so much to one another." Justin (now 7) and Joseph (now 5) love one another so much and are so excited to be brothers.

With a desire to help children living in foster care in our area who are in need of a caring, consistent adult in their lives, Josh has joined Sierra's Wonder Mentoring Program as a Guide (mentor). He and his Explorer (child/youth mentee) have been matched for six months now. Josh shares about his experience, "It is so rewarding to see the excitement and gratitude show in his face every time I pull up to his house." He continues, "It only takes a few hours a month. It's the least I could do for the thousands of kids in foster care."

Josh and Matthew are caring dads who have transformed lives and are enjoying every moment of their new family.

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LEFT TO RIGHT: Josh, Justin, Joseph and Matt in Hawaii; Justin, age 7; Joseph, age 5

For your constant support of Sierra Forever Families we

SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES

7TH ANNUAL

GOLF CLASSIC FOR KIDS

THE GOLF CLASSIC FOR KIDS, SIERRA'S SIGNATURE FUNDRAISING EVENT, WILL TAKE PLACE ON SEPTEMBER 12 2011, AT SERRANO COUNTRY CLUB IN EL DORADO HILLS. Thanks to the vigorous efforts of Jerri Hunt from Waste Connections, Inc., our Golf Planning Committee Chair, this event has sold-out the past two years. Since 2004, over \$500,000 has been collectively raised through the event and more than 100 children have benefited.

With a variety of sponsorships currently available, you can select a level that fits your budget, enjoy a day of golf, and support Sierra's mission to build and nurture permanent families for children in foster care.

FOR SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT APRIL JOHNSON AT 916.368.5114 OR AJOHNSON@SIERRAFF.ORG

THANK YOU TO OUR CURRENT SPONSORS*

- Tournament Partners (\$10,000): Evergreen Flexible Bonding Solutions and Waste Connections, Inc.
- Award Ceremony Sponsors (\$5,000): Pacific Coast Companies and the SureWest Foundation
- Golf Cart Sponsors (\$3,500): Authorized Transmission Remanufacturing, Inc., and Cascade Cart Solutions
- Golf Course Sponsors (\$2,500): Certified Laboratories, Heil Environmental, Kubra Data Transfer LTD, Labrie Environmental Group, Mechanic's Bank, Union Bank, and Toter/Wastequip
- Lunchbox Sponsors (\$2,500): El Dorado Disposal, emailDirect, Impact Plastics, and Waste Connections, Inc.
- Beverage Sponsors (\$1,500): Big Truck Rental, Bridgestone Bandag Tire Solutions, Cushman & Wakefield, Mark Morgan, and Oliver Rubber Company, LLC
- Par Sponsors (\$1,250): Ace Group, Aon Risk Solutions, DesertMicro, Schaefer Systems International, Inc., and the Harlow Family
- Tee Sponsors (\$500): Barnes Distribution, California Refuse Recycling Council, The Evergreen Company, and Donaldson Company
- Hole-in-One Sponsor: Thompson Buick GMC, Placerville

**As of August 1, 2011*



LEFT TO RIGHT: Event host Ron Mittelstaedt with Mark Morgan; Avid Golfers: Cass M., Tom B., Dave L., and Chris C.; "Golfers to your carts" at Serrano County Club

For current information about Sierra events and opportunities to support, please visit us at sierraff.org

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SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE 15 CORPORATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR ANNUAL FUND FROM MARCH 1, 2011 TO JULY 1, 2011. The funds donated (\$84,097) help provide essential support for program and services to children and youth in foster care.

Permanency Services: Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Deacon Charitable Foundation, Hewlett Packard Employee Giving, Kelly Foundation, Parker Family Foundation, Placer Community Foundation, Sundt Foundation, The Thomas J. Long Foundation, and United Auburn Indian Community Fund,

Wonder Mentoring Program: American Building Supply, Hope Productions Foundation, Emmett R. Quady Foundation, Rotary Club of Sacramento, Soroptimist International of Metropolitan Sacramento, and Union Bank.

For more information on our grants and foundation programs, contact: Juli Kramer at 916.368.5114 or jkramer@sierraff.org



SHOP AT RALEY'S AND BEL AIR TO SUPPORT SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES

Each time you shop at Raley's and Bel Air, you can help a child find a permanent, loving home by supporting the mission of Sierra Forever Families. It's so easy!

Here's how the program works:

1) Request a card from Sierra. 2) Go online to register and select Sierra as your charity. 3) Present card to cashier each time you shop. 4) Sierra Forever Families earns up to 4% of your purchase total.

Already have a card? You can go online and add Sierra Forever Families as one of your benefiting charities.

To request a card or to learn how to change your designations, contact: Kimberly Cox at 916-368-5114 or kcox@sierraff.org

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING WONDER BY PARTICIPATING IN THE 2011 WALK 'N ROCK FOR KIDS.

TOGETHER WE RAISED MORE THAN \$26,000!

Now more children and youth in foster care will be matched with caring mentors and enjoy the childhood fun that all kids deserve.



On May 29, Sierra joined 21 other non-profits at Raley Field for the 3rd Annual Walk 'N Rock for Kids event sponsored by Hope Productions Foundation. More than 90 supporters, including Mr. Pickles, walked on behalf of Wonder during the 5K walk event.

Sierra Board and Committee Members, Staff, Wonder Guides and Coaches, along with Volunteers and Friends worked diligently to raise awareness and support for the Wonder Mentoring Program through this event. We are grateful to those who walked and/or raised funds for Wonder! Together we raised more than \$26,000!

SPECIAL THANKS to the local businesses that promoted the event and hosted a Wonder Wall — a display of donation cards collected from patrons. Thank You: Article Consignment Boutique, California Center La Bou Bakery & Café, Mr. Pickles at Folsom & 65th, Rubicon Brewing Company, Sacramento News & Review, and Streets of London Pubs.

FROM OUR DEVELOPMENT & PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER



Bobby Cobbs,
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Family

Much has been written about families. The dictionary defines it in different ways: the basic unit in society rearing children; a group of individuals living under one roof and under one head; a social unit of society's infrastructure; kindred; parents and children considered a group with a shared identity.

If you ask people to describe the purpose of a family you're likely to hear many different answers like: shaping personality and life, protection, guidance, learning how to have a relationship with others, nurturing, belonging; learning how to love and be loved.

Others may hold a more pragmatic view of family such as: preparation for adulthood, passing values and beliefs, traditions, or as a safe place.

Regardless of how you describe family, no one can disagree that there are no substitutes for a healthy, loving family. In every culture around the world, the family holds a special importance and role in the life and future of a child.

But there are many children in our community who do not have a loving and permanent family. Many bounce from foster family to foster family hoping that one day, someone will find them desirable and loveable enough to invite them home to stay...forever.

Family is a gift that is deserved by all children. We at Sierra Forever Families believe that every child should have a forever family; where they feel safe, where their needs are met, where adults in their lives nurture them, where they feel they belong.

Alex Haley, noted author of the novel *Roots*, is quoted as saying "in every conceivable manner the family is our link to the past and bridge to our future."

If you believe that each child should have a home, step forward and take part in Sierra's family by contributing today. Your gift will serve as a bridge to a family and to a promising future for a child in foster care. You can help a child experience one of life's most precious gifts.

There are many ways you can give:

- Give online by visiting our website at www.sierraff.org
- Give by check or credit card
- Make an automatic monthly contribution from an existing bank account
- Consider a gift of assets such as appreciated securities

If you would like more information about ways to give, contact me today at bcobbs@sierraff.org or by calling (916) 368-5114.

"...in every conceivable manner the family is our link to the past and bridge to our future."

ALEX HALEY

10.01.11

CALIFORNIA PLAN YOUR GIVING PROJECT

Recently, Warren Buffet and Bill and Melinda Gates made commitments to give away at least 50% of their estates at death. They have also personally invited many of their peers to consider making similar pledges. Imagine the tremendous impact these decisions will have on charitable organizations for decades to come!

Following in their footsteps, interested individuals across the state developed the CALIFORNIA PLAN YOUR GIVING PROJECT. The vision: to encourage **all Californians to leave the world a better place for the future generations by making a meaningful gift to charity through their estate plan.**

To recognize this special project, the California legislature has declared October 1 as California Plan Your Giving Day (CPYGD). Currently, 200 individuals statewide have pledged to make a meaningful gift to charity in their estate. The goal is to secure 500 pledges before CPYGD 2011. Sierra is proud to be a participating partner with this important effort.

To notify us about your existing or future estate plans, please contact Kimberly Cox or Bobby Cobbs at (916) 368-5114. We will assist with the details to help you join this exciting challenge!

California Plan Your Giving Project: www.CaliforniaPlanYourGiving.com