

FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY

FALL 2012

November is National Adoption Month

November is recognized as National Adoption Month – providing a platform to build awareness of the tremendous need for families to come forward to provide permanence through adoption. Nationally, there are more than 400,000 children living in foster care. The largest population in care is in California, with nearly 56,000 children and youth living in foster care; more than 3,000 reside in the Greater Sacramento Region.

On **November 14**, a four-hour public awareness vigil will be held at the California State Capitol, north steps, from 11:00am to 3:00pm. Government officials, child advocates, community and business leaders, and adoptive families will participate in the “Calling Out of Names of Children Who Wait,” each reading aloud one hundred names and ages of children living in California foster care. Over 5,000 names of children and youth, who are ready and waiting to be adopted, will be read. This annual vigil touches the lives of those who participate and those who are recognized.

PlacerKids will host National Adoption Day at the Historic Courthouse in Auburn on **November 17**, from 9:00am to noon. Participants will be joining family courts across the nation that open their doors and whose judges volunteer to finalize the adoptions of thousands of children from foster care. Several local children will join their forever families as their adoptions are finalized at the event in Auburn.

Also taking place on **November 17**, the Heart Gallery of Sacramento will host its annual free event at The Citizen Hotel, 926 J Street, from 6-8:00pm. The Heart Gallery of Sacramento is a collection of beautifully photographed portraits of children living in foster care in our region and who are awaiting families. Additional portraits will feature families who have adopted children from past Heart Gallery showings. Guests will enjoy appetizers and wine and hear directly from adoptive families, adoption experts, and child advocates about the benefits youth permanency has in the lives of waiting children. This event is free.

In keeping with the celebratory spirit of National Adoption Month, Sierra Forever Families and PlacerKids wholeheartedly give a huge THANK YOU to our families who have opened their hearts and homes to transform the life of a child. They are truly amazing!



Portraits featured in Heart Gallery of Sacramento: AT LEFT Siblings Jayden, Jayla, Tyra and Tyrese; AT RIGHT Brothers Bruce and Joseph

For your constant support of Sierra Forever Families we

OKTOBERFEST: Brats and Polka for Fundraising!

DesCor Builders, one of our Champions for Children leadership teams, hosted their second annual Oktoberfest on October 12. "Prosit! Prosit! Prosit!" was the theme for the evening: "Cheers" to the more than 250 folks who gathered to celebrate.

The event was a huge success as DesCor staff, community members and friends of Sierra enjoyed an authentic Bavarian Oktoberfest celebration. Festivities included traditional fun with polka music and great food, including delicious brats with sauerkraut, hot potato casserole and beer.

DesCor's founders and Oktoberfest hosts, Brad Des Jardin and Neil Cordero, were resplendent in lederhosen and Tyrolean hats as they welcomed their business associates and guests. The construction company's mission is: *To Build a Lasting Legacy of Great Buildings and Even Greater Relationships*. The founders also strive to be a model of success and leadership in the community. "We believe there is no better place to create success than in a loving home and that's why we have partnered with Sierra Forever Families," stated Des Jardin.

With special thanks to Katie Gill for her enthusiastic organizing and staging, Sierra commends Brad, Neal and the entire DesCor team for supporting Oktoberfest. Thanks for your creativity, hard work and dedication to the children we serve. Prosit!

RHYTHM 'N RIMS 5K WALK FUNDRAISER

On October 28, Sierra took part in The Sacramento Kings Rhythm 'N Rims. This 5K morning walk and evening event served as a FUNdraiser to benefit Sierra Forever Families and 13 other local nonprofits.

"We are thankful for those who joined us to raise funds and awareness for children in foster care," said April Johnson, who coordinated Sierra's participation. "It's amazing to see a community come together. I'm so pleased that, **together, Sierra raised more than \$28,000!**"

While Sierra is grateful to everyone involved, we wish to acknowledge the special efforts given by:

- Adoptive parents Stephanie and Denise along with Robb, Marc and 13-year-old Tyler
- Matching gifts from Swinerton Builders, Inc. (formerly HMH Builders) and Katy and Dale Carlson
- Local businesses Dendera Marketing and the California Center La Bou Bakery and Cafe
- Board Members Katy Carlsen, Parker White, Jeanne Reaves, Jim Eldridge, Kathy Van Osten, Debra Panattoni and Dee Hartzog
- The Lanie Albrecht Foundation for a generous donation to Wonder
- Wonder Guides Ed McCune and Dana Christy who raised more than \$1,000 each

And our sincere THANKS to The Sacramento Kings Foundation and every one who walked and/or contributed on Sierra's behalf.



Some of the more than 80 participants who walked on behalf of Sierra

For current information about Sierra events and opp

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SIERRA 2nd ANNUAL APPRECIATION PICNIC

Every year Sierra pauses to recognize the people who are part of our Sierra Family: our adoptive families, donors, mentors, volunteers, and staff. On Saturday, October 6, Sierra hosted its second annual Appreciation Picnic with more than 300 people who help comprise the Sierra Family. The picnic is our opportunity to show appreciation for all who work so hard to enrich the lives of children in foster care. "It was heart warming to see so many families and supporters coming together and having such a great time," shared Executive Director, Bob Herne.

The event was enjoyed by all who attended and included a disc jockey who spun great tunes, face painting provided by the wonderful Sugar Plump Fairies of Auburn, a lively bounce house and obstacle course provided by BounceyHouse Rentals in Roseville. The day was bolstered by energetic visits from the Sacramento Kings mascot Slamson and a fire truck, courtesy of the Roseville Fire Department. The food was tasty and plentiful, thanks to the catering staff at Raley's Family of Fine Stores.

Every member of the Sierra Family experienced something special. Our faithful volunteers enjoyed a day off thanks to the efforts of more than fifty volunteers from the Roseville Kiwanis Key Club, employees from Accenture, UC Davis students from Lambda Omicron Xi and Alpha Sigma Phi, and teen students from Woodcreek and Colfax high schools. For donors, this was a unique opportunity to witness the impact of their gifts. Wonder Matches shared an afternoon of fun and "firsts" along with families who were able to celebrate and feel connected. Staff and board members took pleasure in seeing the results of their hard work.

During the celebration, Sierra Forever Families honored six families. "We work with so many amazing families and, for that, we are truly grateful. In past years, we honored one family as the Sierra Forever Families' Family of the Year. This year, we were inspired by the stories of six families," said Herne. "We look forward to sharing their stories with you in Sierra's next Homecoming Newsletter."

We are so grateful to all of you who make up the Sierra Family. Thank you for the many ways you offer your support. We hope everyone who attended had as much fun as we did.



Festivities and fun galore at this year's annual picnic!

'Tis the United Way Season!

Sierra Forever Families has been a certified partner of United Way for more than 20 years. We participate in their annual autumn workplace giving campaign by joining their kick-off events for the California State Employee Charitable Campaign and the United Way California Capital Region (UWCCR) general campaign. UWCCR has nearly 140 partner nonprofit organizations which are invited to various campaign events. This season, we actively participated in events at United Parcel Service, Employment Development Department, Department of Motor Vehicles, Secretary of State Office, Department of Veteran Affairs, US Army Corp of Engineers, Franchise Tax Board, Department of Managed Care, Department of State Hospitals and Intel.

Does your company participate with United Way? If so, you can make an easy pre-tax payroll deduction to transform the lives of children in foster care. Enter our UW number, 3173, on the participation form. Your on-going support is a vital investment in children considered the most at-risk group in our community. For more information on how you can participate, please contact Juli Kramer at 916.368.5114 or jkramer@sierraff.org. For more information on United Way visit unitedway.org.

ortunities to support, please visit us at sierraff.org

FROM OUR CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



Kerry Wood, CFRE
Chief Development Officer
kwood@sierraff.org

Welcome Kerry Wood, CFRE

SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES' NEW CHIEF DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Sierra Forever Families is pleased to announce the appointment of Kerry Wood as the agency's Chief Development Officer. In her new role, Wood will lead the Development Department, support Sierra's Board of Directors and serve as a member of the organization's senior leadership team.

Wood has more than 18 years of experience in philanthropic development, leadership, nonprofit marketing and communications. She served with the Foundation for California Community Colleges, Mercy Foundation and the Crocker Art Museum. In 2008, Wood earned the Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE) certification, a designation held by only 5,500 professionals in the world. In fall 2011, she was named "Outstanding Fundraising Professional of the Year" by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), California Capital Chapter, as part of National Philanthropy Day.

"Wood's notable background will prove beneficial to the expansion of the organization's philanthropic support and, most importantly, to create increased permanency opportunities for children, youth and families served in northern California," said Executive Director, Bob Herne.

I'm thrilled to be a part of the Sierra team, and I look forward to the opportunity to work together with you to serve many more children and families in the future...

Wood, an adoptive parent, brings a unique perspective and personal alignment to the mission of Sierra Forever Families. She understands firsthand the transformative impact permanency has in the lives of children and youth. Wood shares, "As an adoptive mother and the child of a former foster youth, I am deeply moved by Sierra Forever Family's mission to build and nurture forever families for foster children in our region."

"I'm thrilled to be a part of the Sierra team, and I look forward to the opportunity to work together with you to serve many more children and families in the future," states Wood.

Please join us in welcoming Kerry Wood to the Sierra Family.

ESSENTIAL SUPPORT

THANK YOU...

Sierra Forever Families gratefully acknowledges 11 corporations and foundations supporting programs this fiscal year. Funds received or pledged as of October 16, 2012, total \$67,000 and provide essential support for services to families and to children and youth in foster care.

Grant awards received:

- **Supporting Permanency Services: Pfund Family Foundation**
- **Supporting Placer County Adoptive Parents: Placer Community Foundation Wellness Program**
- **Supporting Family Preservation in Nevada County: United Way of Nevada County**
- **Supporting the Wonder Mentoring Program: Active 20-30 Club #1032, American Building Supply, Bank of America, Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation, Lanie Albrecht Foundation, M&M Whitmire Family Foundation, Ronald McDonald House Charities Northern California, and U.S. Bank**

To learn more about becoming a supporter through our grants and foundation programs, please contact: Juli Kramer at 916.368.5114 or jkramer@sierraff.org.