



# NEP-TUNES



**A Monthly Newsletter from Nepenthean Homes**

*A Caring, Full Service Foster Family Agency*

Volume 20 - Number 7

[www.nepenthean-homes.org](http://www.nepenthean-homes.org)

July 2009



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*by Richard Farlinger*

We've received news from The California Alliance of Child and Family Services and the California Coalition Of Foster Family Agencies (CCOFFA), two bodies representing many of the care providers in the state, that all legislative committees involved in budget negotiations have made recommendations to the legislature of a 10% cut in the present care rate to aid in balancing the state's budget. This will affect all levels of care, from County Licensed Foster Homes to Foster Family Agency certified homes, Group Homes, and Institutional facilities. Of course, at this writing no vote has yet been made. However, we are making the necessary adjustments to our operation to continue to function and uphold our mission of "Providing quality care that makes a difference in the lives of needy children," should there be a drop in the care rate.

Please be aware that no cuts will be made to foster parents' monthly care reimbursements. Our current plan is to cut administrative costs further and become more aggressive in fundraising, grant seeking, and recruitment of volunteers and foster parents to increase our services. Following the legislative vote, we will be sending out a detailed letter outlining our plan.

Good news! No cuts will be made regarding Medi-Cal services provided to our clients. This includes dental services. The area of possible cuts might encompass further limitations on medications that are presently covered. We will keep you posted on this.

We thank you for the care, concern, and commitment that you as foster parents continue to provide!

## DOGS, CATS LINKED TO DANGEROUS SUPERBUG

*From AOL News, submitted by Michael Quinn, Supervising Social Worker, Fair Oaks office*

(June 22) – Transmission of an infectious superbug from dogs and cats to humans, and back again, is an increasing problem, a new study finds.

The superbug, a strain of bacteria known as MRSA, has evolved a resistance to antibiotics. It has long plagued hospitals but in recent years has become more common in homes. MRSA has even invaded beaches.

Only about two years ago, scientists began to seriously suspect pets were transmitting the bacteria.

In the July edition of *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, Richard Ochler of the University of South Florida College of Medicine and colleagues lay out the latest thinking on MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) and pets.

The infections can be transmitted by animal bites and most threaten young

children, the researchers note.

"As community-acquired strains of MRSA increase in prevalence, a growing body of clinical evidence has documented MRSA colonization in domestic animals, often implying direct acquisition of *S aureus* infection from their human owners," they write. "MRSA colonization has been documented in companion animals such as horses, dogs, and cats, and these animals have been viewed as potential reservoirs of infection."

Dog and cat bites make up about 1 percent of emergency room visits in the United States.

Some facts presented in the journal:

- Women and the elderly are most at risk of being bitten by a cat.
- Men in general and those aged under 20 of both sexes are most likely to be injured.
- Most bite exposures occur in young children, involve unrestrained dogs on the owner's property, and about 20 percent involve a non-neutered dog.
- Risk is highest in young boys aged 5 to 9 years, due to their small size and lack of understanding of provocative behavior.

Severe infections can occur in about 20 percent of all cases, the researchers state, and are caused by *Pasteurella*, *Streptococcus*, *Fusobacterium*, and *Capnocytophaga* bacteria from the animal's mouth, plus possibly other pathogens from the human's skin.

*(Continued on page 3)*

**CAPITOL CITY NEWS**



**ON-CALL CELL PHONE: (916) 704-7780  
Foster Parent Training—Mandatory!**

Date: **Wednesday, July 22, 2009**  
Time: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.  
Topic: "Sexual Acting Out/Record-keeping"  
Where: Fair Oaks Office  
Speaker: Michael F. Quinn, MA

**FOSTER PARENT ORIENTATION:**  
The next foster parent orientation meeting will be on **Saturday, July 11, 2009**, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Fair Oaks office. Please call Rich Farlinger at (916) 535-7780 for directions. This meeting will answer your questions about foster children, foster parenting, and becoming a certified foster parent with Nepenthean Homes FFA.

**ATTENTION FOSTER PARENTS!**  
As you know, 12 hours per year of foster parent training are required to maintain your certification.  
To help with this, Nepenthean Homes is now offering our 21-DVD Foster Parent College training set. These videos are available for viewing in-house at our Fair Oaks and El Sobrante offices **ONLY**—we cannot offer home check-out.  
You may call the offices to schedule a time to view the videos. Each DVD is 30 to 45 minutes in length. Viewing only gives you one hour training credit; viewing plus taking the test gives you two hours training credit.  
For more information and to schedule your viewing time, please call the Fair Oaks or El Sobrante office.  
This is a great way to get your training hours easily. Even if you have already completed your training requirement, you may get extra hours or supplement your training knowledge. Foster families who are in the orientation process will also find this a valuable way to get information about foster parenting.

**BAY AREA NEWS**



**ON-CALL CELL PHONE: (510) 750-4769  
Foster Parent Training—Mandatory!**

Date: **TO BE ANNOUNCED (flyer will be sent out)**  
Time: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon  
Topic: "Positive Parenting I"  
Where: El Sobrante Office  
Speaker: Kevin Smith, MA

**ADDITIONAL FOSTER PARENT TRAINING:**  
The Center for the Vulnerable Child (CVC) at Children's Hospital Oakland, in cooperation with Alameda County Social Services and Nepenthean Homes Foster Family Agency, presents **NO-FEE** foster parent trainings. The classes serve as continuing education hours by foster care agencies. Verification of attendance is given.

Date: **Wednesday, July 8, 2009**  
Time: 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.  
Topic: "Fostering Youth While Raising Your Biological Children and/or Grandchildren"  
Speaker: CVC Staff

*and*  
Date: **Wednesday, July 22, 2009**  
Time: 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.  
Topic: "Seven Steps to Safety—Preventing Childhood Sexual Abuse"  
Speaker: Elizabeth Jensen, MSW

Where: Children's Hospital Oakland, Center for the Vulnerable Child, 5275 Claremont Ave. and 5400 Telegraph, Oakland  
(This building has two entrances—enter on either side.)  
**RSVP:** Call Peggy Pearson at (510) 428-3783, ext. 5326. **IMPORTANT:** We cannot offer childcare at this time.

**FOSTER PARENT ORIENTATION:**  
If you are interested in learning more about foster care, please call Kevin Smith at (510) 222-2666. An individual orientation meeting will be set up to answer your questions about foster children, foster parenting, and becoming a certified foster parent with Nepenthean Homes FFA.

**FOOTHILLS NEWS**



**ON-CALL CELL PHONE: (530) 392-1597  
Foster Parent Training—Mandatory!**

**UPCOMING AUBURN AREA FOSTER PARENT TRAININGS WILL BE HELD ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS, PER CFH. PLEASE CALL THE FAIR OAKS OFFICE TO SCHEDULE YOUR FOSTER PARENT TRAINING, AT (916) 535-7780. (REMEMBER, YOU MUST HAVE AT LEAST 12 HOURS OF FOSTER PARENT TRAINING PER YEAR TO MAINTAIN YOUR CERTIFICATION!)**

**FOSTER PARENT ORIENTATION:**  
If you are interested in learning more about foster care, please call Mike Quinn at (916) 535-7780. An individual orientation meeting will be set up to answer your questions about foster children, foster parenting, and becoming a certified foster parent with Nepenthean Homes FFA.

**CENTRAL VALLEY NEWS**



**ON-CALL CELL PHONE: (209) 495-9492  
Foster Parent Training—Mandatory!**

**NO FOSTER PARENT TRAINING IN THE MODESTO AREA IN JULY! WATCH THIS SPACE FOR UPCOMING FOSTER PARENT TRAINING NEWS .**

Be sure to take advantage of the opportunity to view the Foster Parent College training DVDs, which are available in the Fair Oaks and El Sobrante offices (see article on this page, column 1).

**PLEASE NOTE:** You may do a maximum of six (6) hours of online foster parent training with Foster Parent College. Please call Mike Quinn or Rich Farlinger at the Fair Oaks office (916) 535-7780 with your email address, to get set up for this **no-cost** training.

## CPR AND FIRST AID TRAINING

### NEVADA COUNTY:

Nevada County offers ongoing training twice a month, which includes Medic First Aid, BasicPlus CPR, AED (Automated External Defibrillator), and First Aid. Committing to additional time, the Medic First Aid Infant and Child Supplement can be included following Adult CPR/First Aid.

Date: **Saturday, July 18, 2009**

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Date: **Thursday, July 23 or July 30, 2009**

Time: 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Where: Nevada County Superintendent of Schools' conference room  
112 Nevada City Highway, Nevada City, CA.

Fee: **\$30.00 (must be prepaid to confirm your reservation).**

Wear comfortable clothes and bring a snack and beverage. Please call Nikki Johnson at (530) 478-6400, x201 for more information.

*(Continued from "Superbug and Pets" page 1)*

"Proper treatment of dog and cat bites should involve treatment of the immediate injury (whether superficial or deep) and then management of the risk of acute infection, including washing with high pressure saline if possible, and antibiotics in selected cases," the researchers suggest.

"Bites to the hands, forearms, neck, and head have the potential for the highest morbidity," the scientists warn. They conclude: "Much more remains to be learned about MRSA and pet-associated human infections."



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATE!

### FAIR OAKS:

- Joelisa F. of the Tiong home, from high school

## NOTE TO FOSTER PARENTS:

Sierra College Foster & Kinship Education training workshops (Placer County) will not be held in the month of July. Have a great summer!

## 9 WAYS TO BE A GREAT PARENT:

1. Be a good role model. Your child learns from the example you set.
2. Show respect for your child's feelings, thoughts, and suggestions.
3. Make your child feel loved with your words of praise and your hugs and kisses.
4. Keep your word. If you must break it, apologize and make it up to your child.
5. Encourage your child's creativity. Ask questions to stimulate curiosity and imagination.
6. Build your child's self-esteem by showing appreciation for all genuine efforts.
7. Stay involved. Know what's going on in your child's life both at school and with friends.
8. Discipline your child fairly, firmly, and with love. Focus on the behavior, not the child.
9. Establish family traditions and make time to do fun things together.

## The Child Abuse Prevention Council of Sacramento, Inc., presents:

Topic: "Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect"

Dates: **Wednesdays:**

- **July 15**
- **September 16**
- **November 18**

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Where: Child Abuse Prevention Center  
4700 Roseville Road  
North Highlands, CA

RSVP: **To register, please call Isela Murrieta at (916) 244-1959** or email to [imurrieta@thecapcenter.org](mailto:imurrieta@thecapcenter.org) for more information. Sorry, no childcare is provided.

## IMPORTANT LESSONS ABOUT THE WAY WE TREAT PEOPLE:

### Pickup in the Rain

One night, at 11:30 p.m., an older African-American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rain storm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride.

Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab.

She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him. Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached.

It read:

"Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away... God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others."

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Nat King Cole



Birthdays this month!

**BAY AREA:**

Luis T. (Velasco home).....16 on 7/13

**FAIR OAKS:**

Cartrell C. (B. Davis home).....11 on 7/29

**HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!**



**Celebrate on Saturday,  
July 4, 2009!**

*(NOTE: Nepenthean Homes  
offices will NOT be closed for this  
holiday.)*

**NEPPY'S NOTABLES**

*July birthdays for staff:*

Niasha Dupree, El Sobrante, on July 13  
Connie Van Sickle, Fair Oaks, on July 19



**FAIR OAKS:**

- Play Station I games (new or gently used)
- Digital scale (to weigh children)
- Kids' movies on DVD
- Computer CPU
- Computer software

**MODESTO AREA:**

- New or gently used laptop computer for Modesto teen

**BAY AREA:**

- Changing table
- Hand-held electronic games
- VCR

**AUBURN AREA:**

- Laptop computer
- Wireless mouse



**GOOD  
NEWS!**



Welcome back to Bruce Williams and Kelly Giacomini, foster parents in our Auburn area, who are back with us after a short absence. We're glad to have you back on board, Kelly and Bruce!

Foster parent, Anita Lopez, reports that she and her two teen foster girls, Kristina V. and Jasmine V., have purchased season passes to "Raging Waters," the waterslide complex at Cal Expo. Sounds like a great way to beat the heat!

**WELCOME NEW KIDS ON  
THE BLOCK:**

**FAIR OAKS:**

\* Daniel J.

**BAY AREA:**

\* Colin C.

**MODESTO AREA:**

\* Dorothy M.

Nepenthean Homes is a private, non-profit Foster Family Agency that helps adults become successful foster parents. If you want to improve a needy child's future by becoming a certified foster parent, please telephone:

\*\* in Sacramento area, 1-800-439-8998

\*\* in Foothills area, 1-800-479-8998

\*\* in Modesto area, 1-800-696-0611

\*\* in Bay Area, 1-800-564-2292

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED