



NEP-TUNES



A Monthly Newsletter from Nepenthean Homes

A Caring, Full Service Foster Family Agency

Volume 21 - Number 1

www.nepenthean-homes.org

January 2010



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

by Richard Farlinger

A very Happy New Year to all our children, foster parents, and staff! The new year will certainly bring with it challenges for all who live in this state, whether or not they are involved in providing care. However, continuing to focus on our mission—"To provide quality care that makes a difference in the lives of needy children"—will, I believe, enable us to move ahead in providing our important services and work through some of the challenges that arise.

I feel that we have the luck of the world with us in focused and committed levels of our agency. An Executive Board that is planning fundraising for 2010, a growing and very hardworking cadre of foster parents who are steadfast in their intent to provide care to those children in need, and a diligent, highly qualified staff who are always there for our children and families.

I am also thankful that even though the ages and needs of foster children are increasing, our fos-

ter parents are continuing to work by opening their homes and seeking additional training to provide needed care to those older children who we feel are appropriate for our level of care.

We thank all who have worked with our agency during the past year. Blessings to you all!

**NEPENTHEAN HOMES FFA
STAFF WISH YOU ALL A**



BROCCOLI FOREST

by Yemisrach Kifle, from the Christian Science Monitor, 6/18/08

"Mama! Mama!" my 2-year-old yells in his most excited, I-just-discovered-something-huge voice.

My husband and I are engaged in a discussion about the presidential primaries. I am trying to make an emphatic point about sexism in American politics.

We are eating delicious hot curry with steamed rice at our dinner table. My son is sitting in a high-chair nibbling on his food and trying to constantly interject his worldview into our conversation.

"Mama! Mama!" He tries again.

"Look, a tree!" He yells. I turn to find him holding up a piece of broccoli for us to see.

I laugh. "Oh honey," I begin to protest,

"That is bro..." I stop myself. My voice trails off.

As my son becomes a full-fledged, creative, speaking, thinking, learning toddler, I find myself struggling not to turn into the worst kind of teacher—the kind who overcorrects.

I have had to learn to resist my overwhelming adult need to jump in and say, "No, that is not right," in the guise of promoting knowledge.

I have had to reevaluate my knee-jerk reactions to his wonderfully fresh and sometimes stunningly original take on things around him. And unless I think his topsy-turvy assumption puts him in the way of harm, I have no desire to fix it.

Instead, I want to encourage my son's colorful sense of the world, in which stuffed animals attend story times, made-up words have real meanings, flies are fascinating creatures, and red balloons share secrets. I don't care if he thinks M is W. He is just 2.

Back at our dinner table, I study the face of my child who is eagerly waiting for confirmation. He is smiling. His cheeks are a little flushed. He is clearly excited.

Instead of taking the opportunity to teach him a new vegetable name, I exclaim, "Wow, look!" I point at his plate. "You have many trees in your rice!"

He laughs, pleased.

"So, how many trees can you eat?" I ask him, caving in to another overwhelming parenting desire I have; establishing healthy eating habits.

He playfully puts one after another into his mouth. He is delighted by the possibility of plucking the little trees that grow in his rice and eating them right off his plate.

CAPITOL CITY NEWS



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

Date: **Wednesday, January 20, 2010**
Time: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Topic: “Child Abuse Reporting / Client Files”
Where: Fair Oaks office
Speaker: Michael F. Quinn, MA.

FOSTER PARENT ORIENTATION:
The next foster parent orientation meeting will be on **Saturday, January 9, 2010**, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Fair Oaks office. **Please call Rich Farlinger at (916) 535-7780 to RSVP.** 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.

BAY AREA NEWS



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

NO FOSTER PARENT TRAINING IN THE EL SOBRANTE OFFICE IN JANUARY. WATCH THIS SPACE FOR UPCOMING NEWS ON OUR FEBRUARY FOSTER PARENT TRAINING!

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, January 13, 2010**
Time: 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Topic: “The Legal Rights of Foster Youth”
Speaker: Roger Chan, Exec. Director of EB Children’s Law Office
and

Date: **Wednesday, January 27, 2010**
Time: 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Topic: “Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Effect (FAS/FAE)”
Speaker: Anne Lawrence, Genetic Counselor, CSU Stanislaus Genetic Counseling Program
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. **Sorry, no childcare is available.**

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!)

A warm Nepenthean Homes welcome is extended to returning foster parents, Barbara and Larry Dick, of Auburn. We’re glad to have you back on board with us!

CENTRAL VALLEY NEWS



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

Date: TO BE ANNOUNCED
Time: TO BE ANNOUNCED
Topic: TO BE ANNOUNCED
Where: TO BE ANNOUNCED

Watch your mailbox; we will be sending out an informational flyer!

SUPPORT GROUP for kinship caregivers and grandparents, **Wednesdays 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.** Held at Family Resource Network, 5232 Claremont Ave., Oakland, CA. For more information and RSVP call Sonia Waters at (510) 547-7322 x15.

FOSTER PARENT ORIENTATION:

If you are interested in learning more about foster care, please call us! 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.
Bay Area: Call Kevin Smith at (510) 222-2666.
Foothills Area: Call Mike Quinn at (916) 535-7780.

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: **Thursday, January 28, 2010**

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

Date: **Saturday, January 30, 2010**

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 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, ext. 201 for more information.

IN MEMORIAM

Yvonne MacMurphey, a former Nepenthean Homes foster parent, has passed away. Yvonne and Patrick MacMurphey provided quality foster care for a number of needy children of all ages from 1992 to 2004.

Yvonne was a caring foster parent who possessed a keen sense of humor; this helped her and Pat work with troubled teens, some of whom are working parents with their own children now. She will be missed.

IMPORTANT LESSONS ABOUT THE WAY WE TREAT PEOPLE

The Obstacle in our Path

In ancient times, a King had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the King for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the stone out of the way.

Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded. After the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the King indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many of us never understand!

Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve our condition.

NOTICE TO FOSTER PARENTS:

PLACER COUNTY:

The Sierra College Foster & Kinship Care Education foster parent training workshop flyer did not make it to the editor prior to press time, and could not be included in this month's hard-copy Newsletter. However, the information will be posted on our website (on the "News" page) as soon as it is received. Check it out!

NEVADA COUNTY:

Information from Nevada County Foster & Kinship Care Education (foster parent training) also did not arrive prior to press time, and could not be included in this month's hard-copy Newsletter. This information will be posted on our website as soon as it is received. Look on the Internet at www.nepenthean-homes.org.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to the Ukrainian Women's Outreach Group from the Grace Trinity Church for their generous donation to our foster children in the Christmas season. This group of dedicated young women held a bake sale to raise funds to purchase Christmas stockings for the children, and items to fill the stockings. These thoughtful, individualized gifts were extremely well-received. We are so grateful to groups such as this, who give of their time and energy to help us provide a memorable holiday for our foster children.

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.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

After every flight, airline pilots fill out a form, called a “gripe sheet,” which conveys to the mechanics problems encountered with the aircraft during the flight that need repair or correction. The mechanics read and correct the problem, and then respond in writing on the lower half of the form as to what remedial action was taken. Some of them have a sense of humor!

P = problem logged by pilot

S = solution/action taken by mechanic

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.

S: Unable to reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That’s what they’re there for.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you’re right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: After brief search, engine found on right wing.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.



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:

- New or gently used office copy machine

NEPPY’S NOTABLES

January birthdays for staff:

Jessica Couch (Board) on January 26



Birthdays this month!

FAIR OAKS:

Samantha L. (Donahue home)...2 on 1/13
 Jasmine V. (Lopez home).....12 on 1/24



All Nepenthean Homes of-fices will be closed on Friday, January 1, 2010 for New Year's Day, and Monday, January 18, 2010 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.



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

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