



# Foster Family Service Newsletter

## FFS Foster Parent Honored as California's Adoption Angel

There is an old song that says, "When nothing else could help, love lifted me," and so it is that I share with you this remarkable story of love, where love alone lifted a group of young folks out of their negative conditions, and into a life filled with hope. It has been my honor to have worked with the Lacey Major foster home over the last 16 years. Ms. Major and I have worked with just about every age group and worked through just about every problem imaginable.

So it surprised me to some degree, when she said she wanted to adopt because her two sons were almost grown. My words to her were "Are you sure?" There was no hesitation, nor any reservation about her answer, she was very sure.

Up until this year, 2008, Ms. Major had adopted six special needs children. These beautiful young people were dealing with all degrees of challenges, and Ms. Major and I were there to see them through.

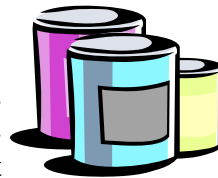
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## Food For Fosters

One of our foster homes, **Dan and Stephanie Harvey**, have started a new program in our Cameron Park headquarters office called "**Food For Fosters.**" Recognizing how hard it can be to take care of all the many needs of foster children while also putting a decent meal on the table, the Harvey's envisioned their new program to provide free, non-perishable food for the foster family. They've modeled their program design on a similar program from Calaveras County, where interested foster families pay \$20 up front in exchange for \$60 worth of canned food that was donated to Food For Fosters. The funds collected will be reinvested towards outreach efforts designed to garner additional food donations.

Our Board of Directors initially approved the concept of Food For Fosters at their July '08 meeting, and have given the Harvey's until October '08 to test the waters. Food For Fosters is both seeking donations and distributing food under the non-profit umbrella of Foster Family Service. All foster families residing on the Western Slope of El Dorado County are eligible, regardless of which agency they are with. At the time of this writing we have three FFS families already signed up.

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about this new program please phone the Harvey's at: **530-672-1949** or see the website.



[www.FoodForFosters.com](http://www.FoodForFosters.com)

**September 2008**

*Wendy Knutson, Editor*

*The Delora Corporation  
dba  
**Foster Family Service**  
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&  
**Adoptions by  
Foster Family Service**  
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*Executive Director  
**John Johnson M.S.W.,  
Psy.D***

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**Nicole Musil***

*Foster/Adoptive Child  
Representative:  
**Amy Riffey***

*Advisory Participant:  
**Arthur Magaña, Ph.D.***



## Cont... **Our Adoption Angel**

I recall the days when I would get the frantic calls that the baby had stopped breathing, and Ms. Major had to bring him back to life through CPR. The days of taking another one to the Neurologist, trying to hold him still, so that they could place monitors on his head, to try to determine why it was filling with fluid. The calls of how they were treating her children different at school and that she wasn't going to have it, and I told her to fight on. Her actions, her dedicated spirit, lifted these children out of a world of hopelessness, and into the arms of love.

And just when I thought that love couldn't give anymore, Ms. Major felt that pull again to give a teen-aged girl that she had provided respite for, a permanent home. And, as life would have it, there came a time that this girl's sister needed a home as well. Ms. Major strongly believes in keeping siblings together, so she opened her home and her heart, yet again. The adoption for these two teens was finalized August 19, 2008.

Ms. Major's story so inspired the teen's county worker, that she nominated her to be an Adoption Angel. After reading Ms. Major's biography, Congresswoman Doris Matsui submitted her name to the Adoption Angel selection committee. She was picked by the committee for the State of California, and will be honored in a formal ceremony on September 16, 2008 in Washington D.C.

Phyllis M. Smith M.S.  
Foster Family Service Social Worker

*Directors Note: Phyllis Smith was Ms. Major's social worker for several years prior to them both coming to Foster Family Service. As we've gotten to know her better we've found Phyllis to be an absolutely wonderful social worker and agency representative. Phyllis has worked in the foster care field for almost three decades, and at one point worked with Foster Family Service founder, Lee Henderson, prior to his starting FFS. As a means of honoring Phyllis' work supporting Ms. Major's adoption success we offered to pay her way to Washington D.C. However, due to her genuine disinterest with all things involving flight, she graciously passed the opportunity to her supervisor, Bonnie Hoffman.*

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Our Adoption Program is not only up and running, it has become very successful! We have had several adoptions over the past few months and several in process.

# CONGRATULATIONS TO:

**Steve and Anita Abers** of Santa Rosa  
who adopted **Angelina** on July 25, 2008.

**Pat Lfteroff** of South Lake Tahoe  
who adopted **Vincent** on July 30, 2008.

**Lacey Major** of Sacramento (*California's Adoption Angel*)  
who adopted sisters, **Sonja and Christina** on August 8, 2008.

**Paul and Judy Collins** of Oroville  
who adopted siblings, **James, Jessica and Cody** on August 25, 2008.



## We Are Proud To Say... We Have Great Kids & Great Parents Too!

**Congratulations to Chris W.** in the *Perez CFH*. Chris has been accepted to Cal State University Sacramento for the fall. Recognition goes to Chris for all his hard work in high school and also to his foster parents who saw him through four years of high school. **Chris is also the recipient of a Mary Graham Foundation Scholarship!**

**Alexander D.** from the *Corson CFH*, just started the 5<sup>th</sup> grade in a special day class and was promptly recognized by his teacher as being ready to mainstream in to regular math and English. **Congratula-**

### **tions Alexander!**

We are pleased to announce that 2 girls from the *Riffey CFH* have started Kindergarten! **Good Job Katie G and Madison S!**

We hear that **Ethan M.** of the *Hiatt CFH* is doing very well in football this season with the Jr. Cougars. **Way to go Ethan!**

Our Editor, Wendy K is proud to announce her husband, **Jim Knutson** was just awarded **“Volunteer of the Year”** by **CWA** for his extensive involvement with their Youth Programs and as a Hunter Education In-

structor for California Dept. of Fish and Game. California Waterfowl Association is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation, protection, and enhancement of California's waterfowl resources, wetlands, and associated hunting heritage. Please contact Wendy if you would like more information on the next Hunter Education Classes being offered at no charge by Jim for our families (& their friends) or for information on special hunting opportunities available at CWA for all California youth.

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## Medi-Cal Tips (prescriptions and services)

If you have a child in your home that may be in need of either medical, dental, prescriptions or other services and they are on Medi-Cal it may be helpful to do the following prior to either making an appointment or dropping off a prescription to be filled.

Let the provider know that the child is on Medi-Cal and make sure the service/prescription that is being requested is covered by Medi-Cal.

If the service/prescription is not covered-the foster parent should tell the provider they would like to request a TAR (Treatment Authorization Request)-the provider can request the service though the TAR. There are some medications that may not be covered under a TAR-in that case the foster parent may need to go back to the child's primary care physician and request a different medication.

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## The Welcome Mat Is Out For...

**The Callahan Family Home**

**The Scarr Family Home**

**The Calderon Family Home**

**The Larson Family Home**

We are always interested in certifying new homes. If you know of anyone who may be interested have them call their local office.

Potential Foster Parents can call one of our offices or find a Pre-Application at our website:

[www.fosterfamilyservice.org](http://www.fosterfamilyservice.org)

### **Foster Family Service Office Numbers:**

Sacramento (916) 487-2111

Cameron Park (530) 676-6226

Lake Tahoe (530) 544-2111

Stockton (209) 474-1549

Santa Rosa (707) 576-0522

Oroville (530) 533-1576

Jackson (209) 223-3691

## Notes From Our Director

Back to school time again, ugh! Don't get me wrong, I think school is great on so many different levels: kids are able to have a consistent routine, learning new stuff is cool, and caregivers are able to pass some of their day-to-day responsibility to the school. But it's not all good stuff. The change in routine, the move to a new set of classes or a new school, the rigors of early to bed and early to rise, as well as homework time all bring stress to families. I have two boys starting their sophomore year in high school, each with very different learning needs, and I find this to be a very challenging time for the entire family. I encourage our foster parents to be patient during this time of change, and to openly communicate with your kids and their schools so that the year's learning gets off to a good start. And please let your FFS social workers know if you need something from us in order to make this transition the most positive it can be.

On a different note, we have identified an important aspect of our adoptions program that will be expanding significantly in the coming weeks and months. Many of our fos-adopt families have not had much training from FFS or elsewhere as to the many unique issues that arise in the adoption process. In response, we are initiating an entire training curriculum called "PRIDE" as well as adoption support groups for our families. In September families able to get to Sacramento office will be offered PRIDE training, and families in S. Lake Tahoe will be offered a new support group. The other offices will gradually be added to these new service options through the fall of '08, with all having these options by January '09.

*John*

## Trainings ..RSVP for Saturday Trainings!

**SATURDAY September 13th, CPR—1st Aid—Sacramento Office**

**SATURDAY September 27th, Howe Park, All Day!** Lots of hours. & Childcare

**SATURDAY October 18th, Cameron Park Office, The Terrible Teens** and a teen panel.

<p><b>Cameron Park</b> 2514 Cameo Dr. RSVP for these</p>	<p><b>SATURDAY September 6<sup>th</sup></b>, 9:30am-2:30pm, Orientation , The Roll Of CCL, "Foster Childs Journey through the Court System"  <b>Wed. September 10<sup>th</sup></b>, 6pm-8pm, "The Effects of Dysfunction on Early Childhood Development"  <b>Wed. September 24<sup>th</sup></b>, 6pm-8pm, "Foster Child Grief and Loss"  <b>Wed. October 1st</b> 6pm-8pm, Orientation , The Roll Of CCL</p>
<p><b>Sacramento</b></p>	<p><b>SATURDAY September 13th, CPR—1st Aid</b>  <b>SATURDAY, September 27<sup>th</sup></b>, Howe Park, <b>9 am to 1 pm</b> training, followed by a <b>free lunch</b>. Participating families will be given six hours of training. <b>Childcare will be provided.</b></p>
<p><b>So. Lake Tahoe</b></p>	<p>To be announced</p>
<p><b>Stockton</b></p>	<p><b>Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> : Child Development.</b> This is for current foster parents and a pre-cert class.  <b>Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>: CPR— 1st Aid</b></p>
<p><b>Santa Rosa</b></p>	<p>To be announced</p>
<p><b>Oroville</b></p>	<p><b>September: Annual Picnic!</b></p>