
THE MAINE CHILDREN'S HOME

for little wanderers

*Our mission is to build and strengthen families and their children,
instilling hope for the future and a better quality of life.*

Fall 2008

Volume 15 Issue 3



Barnes & Noble employees put out a giant box at Christmas time and urge their shoppers to donate books to the Christmas Program. Last year, shoppers donated more than \$3,000 in new books.

volunteers who give their time, money and energy, at a very hectic time of year, in order to ensure the children in our community experience the joy and warmth of Christmas.

The Christmas Program is The Maine Children's Home's biggest effort. But if it were not for the generosity of individuals, businesses and organizations throughout the state and beyond, this program would not be possible. *Continued on page 3.*



Shirley McQuillan has organized the Giving Tree at St. John's Catholic Church for many years. The parishioners donate a large quantity of toys and clothes.

Santa's Helpers

On the first Monday of November, phones at The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers will begin to ring as disadvantaged families call to apply for Holiday assistance.

Each of the 1,400 or more children, aged 0-12, who meet the income guidelines for our program, will receive a hat, 2 pairs of mittens, an outfit of clothing or warm top (this could also be a coat or a snowsuit), a large and small toy, crayons and markers and a coloring book, a reading book and a family game. It's thanks to the efforts of donors and



T-Mobile employees organize a gigantic toy and clothing drive during the holiday season. They collect well over 1,000 new items. Getting ready for this season is Carrie Murphy-Jean, Gloria Jordan and Marty Williams.

In This Issue:

Message from the Executive Director	2
Adoption	5
Teen Parent School	6
Christmas Program	7

A Message from the Executive Director



Sharon H. Abrams

Every year at this time, I have to admit to having a sense of excitement. I just love the nip in the air, the clarity in the blue skies and most of all the changing and beautiful color that is all around. I still have that spirit about me, but truthfully there is also this gnawing sense of dread that keeps pulling on my sleeve. It has been generations since we have the degree of economic difficulty that is facing all of us today. There is a constant banter in the media and in our workplaces and neighborhoods about the state of Wall Street, the cost of fuel oil and even the rising cost of food. To say these are tough times would be a gross understatement. We are all pinching pennies wherever we can and in many cases still worrying when the other shoe will drop.

As the director of a non-profit organization, it is hard not to worry. What will happen to the children and families who turn to us for help? Many of our working parents are struggling to pay the cost of child care; the single parents we assist need us in many different capacities; education and counseling needs continue to increase and I can only imagine the numbers of families who will turn to us for clothes and toys for their children this Christmas. Will we be able to meet the increased needs and requests that we receive?

Honestly, without the help of each and every one of you, we will not. Now, more than ever, we need your assistance. I know I am asking a lot, we are all struggling, but please stretch to make a special donation this year, knowing that people here in Maine need you to help make their world a better place. This is certainly not the time to think someone else will do it; we all need to pitch in to make the lives of children and their families better.

With your help we will get through this difficult time!

Thank you.

Adoption

This past summer has been a memorable and exciting time for several of our families who have traveled abroad to bring their new son or daughter home to their forever families. Two of our families traveled to China and were actually able to meet with each other in country during the adoption process. Two more families traveled to Ethiopia where they each reported a positive and emotionally moving experience with the Ethiopian people. Additionally, another family is presently in the process of finalizing their in-state domestic adoption. We are all so happy for these families and we wish them many years of rewarding parenting memories. We look forward to supporting them in their parenting role and will continue to serve as a valuable resource.

Presently, we are accepting home study applications for our international adoption program and our in-state and inter-state domestic adoption programs. We will be happy to answer any questions at our **free informational meetings scheduled on the last Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm on our campus at 93 Silver St. in Waterville.** Please call 873-6350 for more information.

A Message from the President of the Board



Linette E. Gamache

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is difficult to listen to all the doom and gloom news surrounding our economic health. Many of our past donors may find themselves thinking twice before adding a gift to their stressed budget this year. I will ask you to think twice. There will be more children and families in need of our services this year than in years past. We are counting on you to continue supporting our many programs. Finding a few extra dollars in our budgets will be difficult, but not impossible.

“The real measure of your wealth is how much you’d be worth if you lost all your money.”

~Author Unknown

Thank you in advance for your continued support through these difficult times.

Linette E. Gamache

Santa’s Helpers Continued...

Many businesses and organizations host Giving Trees or hold Toy and Clothing Drives in order to provide us with almost \$200,000 in merchandise, so that 300 plus volunteers can generously fill boxes in preparation for distribution before Christmas.

Unfortunately, in spite of our best efforts, a backlog of boxes waiting to be packed almost always occurs. This happens because we get low on inventory and have to wait for it to show up from donors who, understandably, tend to wait until just before the holidays to start their Toy Drives and place their Giving Trees. This backlog is one of the biggest challenges facing our program.

All too often, we are struggling in the last days before distribution to get boxes filled as we wait for merchandise to show up, hoping that it arrives in time. It is for that reason that we encourage people to get involved early and help keep our shelves stocked.

Businesses, schools, churches, organizations and individuals can contribute to our program through volunteerism, by donating needed items, or by hosting a Giving Tree or a Toy and Clothing Drive.

If you wish to get involved, please call Cristen Sawyer at 872-0261.



Jay & Jenay, 107.9 The Mix, broadcast every morning for 4 weeks, November into December, urging listeners to donate to the MCH Christmas Program.



Students at Erskine Academy organize a huge toy and clothing drive for the Christmas Program. Hundreds of new items are donated each year. Kelly McQuarrie is the advisor for this program.

New Maine Law

ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES

In Maine, State Law has provided that all probate court records relating to any adoption decreed on or after August 8, 1953, are confidential. However, **starting January 1, 2009**, a new law is taking effect that will give adult adoptees, born in Maine (and their descendants), access to their original birth certificates.

After January 1, 2009, if you are an adult adoptee born in Maine, you will be able to receive a copy of your original birth certificate when you send an appropriately completed application to the State Registrar's Office.

If you are a birthparent, the new law provides that you may file a contact preference form and a medical history form with the State Registrar of Vital Statistics. The forms are not yet available but should be before the new law comes into effect. The contact preference form will provide birthparents with three options: "I would like to be contacted", "I would prefer to be contacted only through an intermediary", or "Do not contact me".

While adoption agencies continue to keep their records confidential, social workers may be able to help navigate the emotional and psychological challenges that this new law may bring. Your original adoption agency may be able to act as an intermediary for you if you seek contact with your birth child(ren). It is recommended that you contact your original adoption agency, if such agency is known, for advice, guidance and perhaps counseling.

Application and Contact Preference form questions should be directed to:
Office of Vital Records, 1-888-664-9491
<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/bohodr/ovrpage.htm>

Teen Pregnancy Conference



The Maine Children's Home will be sponsoring a **Teen Pregnancy Conference November 13, 2008**, from 8:30-4:00, at Colby College at Page Commons located in the Cotter Building. We are very excited to report that we have retained the services of **Dr. Michael Carrera** as keynote speaker. Dr. Carrera has designed and helped implement 50 long-term holistic, adolescent pregnancy prevention programs in twenty states throughout the country. We feel very fortunate to have retained his services for this conference.

The first half of the conference will focus on pregnancy prevention and the second half of the conference will focus on teen parenting. This conference is designed for teachers, school-based health workers, guidance counselors, administrators, social workers, healthcare providers, mental health workers and parents. Conference registration is \$75.00, which is due by November 6, 2008. For more information about registering for this conference, please call 207-873-4253 and a conference brochure and registration form will be mailed to you.

Volunteer Opportunities at The Maine Children's Home

Christmas is coming sooner than you think, and at The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers, we are already preparing to make Christmas brighter for financially disadvantaged children throughout the State of Maine. We anticipate a much greater need this year due to the current economic situation. Because of this, we need the support of volunteers more than ever before. Currently we are seeking volunteers for the following jobs.

- Intake Operators (Requires a commitment of one or more days per week from 9am-1pm, November 3-December 12.)
- Packers (To select and pack Christmas gifts for each of the children we serve. November 3-December 18th)
- Checkers (Experienced packers with an eye for detail and precision. Same dates as above.)
- Inventory Assistants (To log each item as it is donated.)
- Box Movers (To move boxes from our packing location to our storage location in the basement.)
- Inventory Stockers, General Housekeeping and Organization.
- Friends of MCH (A group of dedicated people who support The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers through volunteerism and fundraising.)

If you have any free time, would you please consider joining us in our efforts to bring the spirit of the holidays to 1400 needy children. Please contact Cristen Sawyer at 872-0261 for more information, or to schedule some time to volunteer.

A New Program At The Maine Children's Home

Bodhi Simpson, Director of the Teen Parent School Program, launched a new program this summer called CAST. Coping and Support Training is a school based suicide prevention program targeting youth 14 to 19 years old. It delivers life-skills training and social support in a small group format. The program consists of twelve 55 minute group sessions administered over 6 weeks by a trained master's level instructor. CAST serves as a follow-up program for youth who have been identified through screening as being at significant risk for suicide.

There are three overall program goals: increased mood management (depression and anger), improved school performance, and decreased drug involvement.

Thanks to a grant from the Frances Hollis Brain Foundation, Bodhi was able to hold a summer session and has started a fall session. The 5 CAST members who participated this summer showed improvement in each of the three goal areas. One student was referred to a psychiatrist because she was very depressed and angry and was thinking of suicide.

By the end of the twelfth session, it was apparent that the mood of each of the participants had significantly increased as each member rated themselves as feeling OK or feeling "great".

The Christmas Program

Currently, we are in desperate need of complete outfits in sizes Newborn-6x, complete outfits in sizes 7-20 and warm tops in sizes 8-adult XL for both boys and girls.

In addition, we are in need of the following items:

- Infant/Toddler sized winter hats and mittens in sets
- Thinsulate Lined gloves or mittens.
- Warm Winter Hats in any size.
- Any Superhero Action Figure. (We anticipate lots of requests for Batman this year.)
- Any Infant or Toddler Toy (Especially Fisher Price and Playskool items.)
- Any toy relating to popular characters such as Dora, Diego, Sponge bob, etc., The Backyardigans, The Wiggles, Bob The Builder, Elmo, etc.
- Any radio controlled vehicle.
- Anything Princess Related
- Anything Horse Related
- Any Family Board Game
- Any superhero action figure or wrestling figure. (We anticipate LOTS of request for Batman this year.)
- Any train related toy. (Fisher Price Geo Trax or other)
- Cars, Trucks, Motorcycles
- Any Barbie or Bratz doll.
- Any Hannah Montana related doll, toy, craft, book or clothing.
- Lego sets for ages 6 and up.
- Craft kits for ages 6 and up. (Beading, jewelry making, paint by number, scrap booking, model car kits, BOYS crafts)
- Sporting Goods (Balls, Bats, Fishing Gear, Etc.)
- Books (Including Infant Board Books)
- Family Board Games
- Coloring Books

Memorials & Honorariums

A memorial or honor gift is a lasting tribute to someone you love and is a personal way to tell the family of the deceased that you care. It honors a life well lived and enhances the quality of life for future generations. A gift given in memory of someone is a wonderful way to establish a link with the past and promote a vision of the future. The Maine Childrens Home gratefully acknowledges the following memorial and honor gifts from July 1st to October 1st, 2008

Memorials and Honorariums have been received for those in bold.

Masie Pickett

Ms. Dorathy Ames

Ms. Rebecca Dill

Mr. & Mrs. Clinton Feyler

Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Flagg, Jr.

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Guerrini

Ms. Kelly Heath

Mr. John LaPlant

Ms. Phyllis Lilly

Ms. Lorraine Stinson

United Baptist Church

Mr. & Mrs. Merton Waterman

The Maine Children's Home
for Little Wanderers

Administration

93 Silver Street
Waterville, ME 04901
Tel: 207-873-4253
Fax: 207-872-7548

Development

Tel: 207-872-0261
Fax: 207-872-0278

Adoption

Family Care

Tel: 207-873-6350
Fax: 207-872-7548

The Children's Place

Tel: 207-877-2258
Fax: 207-872-7548

Teen Parent School Program

Tel: 207-873-4253
Fax: 207-872-7548

The Harland A. Turner

Family Counseling Center

Tel: 207-873-2330
Fax: 207-873-3795

Website Address

www.mainechildrenshome.org

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 37
WATERVILLE, ME 04901

Bottle Drive

at **Bay Street Redemption**

All you have to do is bring your
bottles to:

Bay Street Redemption

52 Bay Street, Winslow

and tell the bottle clerck that you
wish the deposit monies be ap-
plied to The Maine Children's
Home account. That's it. Simple,
easy and foolproof.