



# CONNECTIONS

VOLUME 7: ISSUE 2



## MCF NEWS

BY DEB SCHAEGLER

Spring is upon us. I hope everyone is staying dry.

We had the annual Maine Caring Families Appreciation Training day on March 10. We had over 100 people in attendance including foster parents and staff. There were door prizes, there was great food, and there was a dynamic speaker. There was very positive feedback about the speaker, Denise Goodman; she was informative and entertaining at the same time. I want to thank CWTI for all their help in making this year's training a success. If anyone has suggestions for training topics or speakers for next year, please let your Regional Coordinator know.

Licensing rules are being submitted for public hearing in May. Check with your Regional Coordinator for a list of the hearings in your area.

I am very saddened by the news of Pat Fortune's passing. She was an incredible woman who gave to her children and community. She was an interactive member of the MCF Advisory Committee. She was always thinking of ways to improve the system to better serve children and families. We will miss her very much.

Reminder: all foster parents should have a foster parent ID card by now. If you do not have a card, please call your Regional Coordinator or your licensing worker.

Maine Caring Families has brought on more than 20 new families in 2006. We have had a few foster

families leave MCF due to retirement, adoption, or dropping their license. Foster families report that they love being involved with MCF. They enjoy their weekly home visits by their Support Workers. Thank you, Spurwink and Community Care, for all that you do for our foster families, children, and our program.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 287-2169.

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## TRIBUTE TO PAT FORTUNE

It is with great sadness that I inform you that Patricia Louise Rausch Fortune, one of our most giving and caring foster parents, passed away unexpectedly on March 29, 2007. Pat and her husband Bill provided care for many foster and adopted children since they first became licensed on August 4, 1994. They have been part of the Maine Caring Families program since the program began as a pilot project, over 10 years ago. Pat was an amazing woman who inspired many children to rise above difficult situations and enjoy life. Pat's easy going way, her ability to take life's challenges and turn them around and her show of empathy towards all people was a shining example to all that knew her. Pat was always on the go. She was the foster parent that we all looked towards to help out if a need arose, whether it was to take in a hurt child, mentor a new foster parent or be the voice of the foster parent community – we could count on her to get it right. Pat was a strong voice for children, foster parents, and was an active participant in the Maine Caring Families

## TRIBUTE AND THANKS TO PAT BY SUZETTE GILBERT, LCSW, MCF

Therapeutic foster parent, Pat Fortune, died suddenly on March 29, 2007, leaving her family and community saddened and stunned at the scope of the loss. Pat's heart and her presence were available to teach and nurture others, especially young people who needed a helping hand along the way. Pat and her husband, Bill, adopted four sons and fostered over 50 children. They also proudly raised a foster daughter as their own. Any young person who lived at the Fortune's was fortunate indeed.

Bill and Pat worked beautifully together as a team, nurturing, teaching and loving young people back to health and well being. Her advocacy on her children's behalf was informed, effective and practical. Her advocacy for fellow foster parents was ongoing at the home, the community and the state level. As a teacher, she was gifted and determined. For years she tutored many special needs children at the Lithgow Public Library. She touched so many people's lives in a positive and giving way, that the resonance of those acts will carry on through generations to come.

I was privileged to be Pat's MCF support worker for nine and a half years. I met with her every Tuesday in a variety of settings, including the parking lot of the bowling alley! Every week I left those meetings informed, affirmed and impressed. Pat was a natural teacher, but mostly she was a nurturing presence that shined her generosity of spirit on all who knew and worked with her.

Pat will be missed deeply by many, but her vision of compassion and justice will live on in those of us lucky enough to have known her and benefited from her kindness and her caring and wisdom.

## BY ROGER BRODEUR

Advisory Committee and the statewide foster parent advisory committee. She was involved in training new caseworkers and foster parents as a regular member on panel presentations. She was an informal foster parent mentor for many years, and has been an official foster parent mentor since that program started over a year ago.

Her passion in life was a total dedication to making sure children had a structured home environment and the promise of a fully independent life and higher education. Pat was a pillar of strength, intelligence and perseverance, a beautiful person inside and out.

She will surely be missed by many. However, no one can doubt that she always strived to make this world a better place, and that many people's lives were enhanced due to her purpose and passion. She certainly did leave this world a better place.



These tear stained faces that ask  
Will you give me a home?  
Oh where can I put you  
how can I manage one more  
Then I look down into your face  
And open my door  
To comfort, to care  
For they all cry out for love  
But need so much more  
I have a need to nurture these seeds  
To watch them grow  
To protect them from the storms  
They will come and go  
These tear stained faces  
So sad and alone  
They don't know it yet  
They have arrived home  
Faces of all colors, ages, and backgrounds  
It doesn't matter it never will  
They join my family are a part of my tree  
Forever fruitful  
Forever it will be.

By Wanda Wyman, Pat's Sister-in-law

## DHHS CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM WORKS TO MEET NATIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

BY CHRIS BEERITS

DHHS Child Welfare Services has committed to a rigorous effort to meet national accreditation standards for public agency child welfare programs. Developed by the Council on Accreditation (COA), these standards have been continuously revised and improved over a 30-year period. Numerous private organizations in Maine are already accredited by the COA.

Because COA standards provide an excellent blueprint for a strong child welfare program, accreditation will enable DHHS Child Welfare Services to strengthen and improve recent reforms in several ways:

- Through COA Accreditation, staff and leadership become more true to their Practice Model. “How we do our work is as important as the work we do.”
- Accreditation affords leadership the opportunity to engage all staff and for everyone to have a voice in improving performance and quality of services to children and their families.
- Accreditation will further guide Maine’s Child Welfare Program toward excellence:
  - o A system that is safe and gets good outcomes for children and their families.
  - o An organization committed to quality from bottom to top and top to bottom.
  - o Staff who connect with children and their families, their conditions and their needs.
- Accreditation helps ensure that employees have the skills and training they need to provide services and ensure clearly defined criteria to evaluate personnel performance.
- Accreditation helps ensure ongoing procedures to identify problem areas and make necessary changes and improvements to the organization.
- Accreditation helps ensure processes to plan for adverse situations and effectively manage risk.
- Accreditation will enable Maine Child Welfare Services to meet broader DHHS outcomes expected from all parts of the organization.

Some staff speak of COA accreditation as “taking Maine’s Child Welfare reform effort to the next level.”

Jim Beougher, Director of the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), and Dan Despard, Acting Director of Child Welfare Services at OCFS, have created two Accreditation Self Study Committees to rate how well the organization is presently implementing COA standards and to recommend changes where needed. Two foster parents, Barbara Ford of Winterport and Shirley Melancon of Starks, serve on the committee which rates child welfare services.

By December 2006 the work groups of the self study committees had rated Maine’s implementation of COA standards. In January and February 2007, child welfare management made many decisions to strengthen the child welfare program, based on these recommendations. The work to implement these decisions has now been assigned and is expected to take a year to complete.

DHHS Child Welfare Services hopes to make enough improvements to be able to submit their self study to COA by early 2008. COA reviewers would then visit the DHHS central offices and all eight DHHS districts in the spring and summer of 2008 to validate implementation of COA standards. As part of this review, they will want to talk to foster parents.

Chris Beerits, who recently retired as Deputy Director of Child Welfare Services at OCFS, is now working at the Child Welfare Training Institute to support this massive accreditation effort by OCFS Child Welfare Services by providing coordination. If you are interested in more information about accreditation, you can contact Chris Beerits at [cbeerits@usm.maine.edu](mailto:cbeerits@usm.maine.edu). You can also check out the web sites of the Council on Accreditation at [www.coanet.org](http://www.coanet.org) and [www.coastandards.org](http://www.coastandards.org).

## FOSTER CLUB'S PERMANENCY PACT

Foster Club recently published its Permanency Pact, a new tool to support permanency for youth in foster care. A Permanency Pact is a pledge by a caring adult to provide specific supports to a young person in foster care who is preparing to transition to adulthood without a permanent family. The goal of the pact is to formally establish a lifelong, kinlike relationship. The pact is created between the youth and adult with the help of a facilitator, who can be a caseworker, independent living provider, or other adult.



pact and a list of supports the adult might provide as the youth prepares to transition out of foster care. Members of the pact work together to choose appropriate supports from the list. Once the final list is agreed upon, copies of the pact are given to the youth and adult and are maintained in the case record as part of the youth's transition plan. A certificate to affirm the Permanency Pact made between the youth and supportive adult can also be used to symbolize the importance of the agreement.

The tool is available for downloading from the Foster Club's website: [www.fosterclub.com/pdfs/PermPact.pdf](http://www.fosterclub.com/pdfs/PermPact.pdf)

Included with the tool is a description of how to create the

## WHAT AM I FEELING?

Adapted from John Gottman's *Raising an Emotionally Intelligent Child*, this book helps adults identify their parenting and caregiving style. It explains the five important steps in "emotion coaching" children, to ensure that children are guided to healthy emotional growth.

Kids who can accept and share their emotions do better in many ways, Gottman's research shows:

- They form stronger friendships;
- They achieve more in school;
- They bounce back from emotional crises more quickly; and



- They are physically healthier.

Beautifully illustrated with photographs of parents and children.

Psychologist John Gottman has studied marriage, couples, and family relationships for more than 30 years. He is the author or coauthor of more than three dozen books.

For more information on *What I am Feeling?* visit [www.parentingpress.com](http://www.parentingpress.com).

[Parenting Press, ISBN 1-884734-52-9, \$12.95]

## PROMOTING HEALTHY FAMILIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY: 2007 RESOURCE PACKET

This information packet was written to support child maltreatment prevention efforts by describing strategies and activities that promote protective factors. It is written for service providers, to encourage and support them as they engage and partner with parents to protect, nurture, and promote the healthy development of children. The packet includes suggestions for enhancing each of the five protective factors in families (nurturing and attachment, knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development, parental resilience, social connections and concrete supports for parents); tip sheets in English and

Spanish for providers to use when working with parents and caregivers on specific parenting challenges; strategies for sharing the message about child abuse prevention in communities; and information about child abuse and neglect.

The packet is available for download on the Child Welfare Information Gateway at [http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res\\_packet\\_2007/index.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/res_packet_2007/index.cfm)

*Used with permission from the Child Welfare Information Gateway*

## RECIPE CORNER

### FRUIT SALSA AND CINNAMON CHIPS

“Easy to make, tasty fruit salsa and cinnamon tortilla chips. Great as an appetizer or a snack. Great for anytime!”

#### Ingredients:

- 2 kiwis or peaches, peeled and diced
- 2 golden delicious apples, peeled, cored, and diced
- 8 oz. raspberries, fresh or frozen
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 3 Tbsp. fruit preserves, any flavor
- 10 10-inch flour tortillas
- Butter flavored cooking spray
- ¼ cup cinnamon sugar, see “*Tips*” for instructions



1. Wash fruit. In a large bowl, mix kiwis, apples, raspberries, strawberries, sugar, and fruit preserves. Cover and chill.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
3. Coat one side of each tortilla with butter-flavored cooking spray. Cut each tortilla into wedges and arrange in a single layer on a large baking sheet. Sprinkle wedges with desired amount of cinnamon sugar. Spray again with cooking spray.
4. Bake in preheated oven 8 to 10 minutes. Repeat with any remaining tortilla wedges. Allow to cool about 15 minutes.
5. Serve with chilled fruit mixture.

#### *Tips*

To make cinnamon sugar, mix ¼ - ½ tsp. cinnamon with ¼ cup sugar.

When you don't have these fruits on-hand, use any combination of fruits you like.

*From the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, [www.extension.unh.edu](http://www.extension.unh.edu).*

## PAPER CLIP BOOKMARK

This project could be done with stickers, chipboard pieces covered with paper, fimo clay, and decorative buttons. Let your imagination run wild!

#### Materials needed:

- Fun Foam shapes
- Strong adhesive
- Jumbo paper clips
- Ribbon, buttons, or other embellishments
- Scissors
- Glue



#### Directions:

1. Glue the Fun Foam shapes together to give the bookmark some dimension.
2. Using the strong adhesive, glue the fun foam shape to the jumbo paper clip.
3. Layer on embellishments or add ribbon to the clip for more color.

## MAY IS FOSTER CARE MONTH!

We invite you to recognize May as National Foster Care Month. Join us in making this a time to recognize and celebrate those who make a difference in the lives of children in the foster care system.

For more information on how to get involved in National Foster Care Month activities, visit [www.fostercaremonth.org](http://www.fostercaremonth.org)

Check the Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine website and/or newsletter for more information about what is happening to celebrate Foster Care Month in Maine at [www.affm.net](http://www.affm.net).

## REGIONAL NEWS

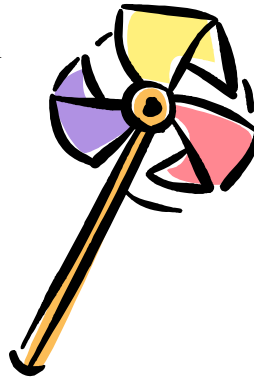
### ANDROSCOGGIN, FRANKLIN AND OXFORD COUNTIES

I just returned from the Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine (AFFM) Conference this past week-end. It was energizing and very informative. The keynote speaker, DeShawn Patrick talked about the need for a child to have someone in his/her life who loves them unconditionally. For DeShawn, that person was his grandmother. He reiterated what we already know, that family is what kids need.

AFFM honored Al and Betty Greenleaf with a beautiful sculpture acknowledging their commitment to Maine's children.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Julie Lothrop, 364-7094, julianne1963@hotmail.com



*Lorraine Belanger*

### AROOSTOOK COUNTY

Congratulations to Dawn Landeen, Maine Caring Families Support Worker, on the birth of her son, Braxton Evan Matthew. Braxton was born at the Aroostook Medical Center in Presque Isle on March 19, 2007 and weighed 9 pounds, 2 ounces.

Goodbye to Beverly and Stillman Miller Jr., Maine Caring Families foster parents from Mars Hill. After 9 years of fostering with MCF, adopting two sons and caring for numerous placements they have decided to leave fostering. We will miss Stillman's keen wit and Bev's attempts to make him behave. They will be greatly missed.

#### SUPPORT GROUPS

Maine Caring Families continues to have monthly support groups and training in Aroostook County; times and locations to be announced.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Lisa Brown, 764-8358, LMB\_321@hotmail.com  
Joyce Gagnon, 868-5302, ourplace128@verizon.net

*Michael Allen*

### CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Welcome Spring!

As you may know, May is National Foster Care Month. The Southern Maine Foster Family Recruitment Team will be hosting a gathering at Payson Park in Portland on Saturday, May 12, 2007 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

There is a continued need for finding loving foster families willing and able to care for children in need. Hopefully, we will encourage more people to get involved in the lives of these children. We plan on planting 2,300 pinwheels; one for every child currently in foster care in Maine. We have asked students from surrounding areas to help us with this event by helping to make these pinwheels and, if possible, join in for the planting ceremony. You would be very welcomed if you would like to participate in this event!

#### SUPPORT GROUPS

District 2 offers support groups two times per month at DHHS in Portland on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-7:00 p.m. One night includes a training and the other night will be for support. Notices are sent out on a regular basis detailing the group.

This is the time of year that can become very busy between sporting events, proms, and graduations. Please take time out for yourselves and enjoy!

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Gail Parker, 799-1417, gailunderwoodparker@yahoo.com

*Susan Hughes*

### KENNEBEC AND SAGadahoc COUNTIES

Spring is here and summer is just around the corner. More than 20 people attended and seemed to enjoy a wonderful sliding party on February 22, 2007. The weather was great and it was the best snow that we have had in years! We had sliding, indoor crafts, and soup, chili and sandwiches.

On April 30, 2007, in place of support group, we training on "Cyberstalking" - *Help keep those children safe from computer predators.*

The tentative date for the summer picnic is July 18, 2007. Please save the date.

We are glad to welcome Kim and Mike Warman of Rome to Maine Caring Families. We are sad to report the loss of Pat Fortune. Please see tributes to Pat on page two.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Cookie Luce, 547-3385

*Roger Brodeur*

## KNOX, LINCOLN, SOMERSET, AND WALDO COUNTIES

The Waldo County support group will continue to be held at the Waldo County Hospital in Belfast on the second Monday of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Belfast Group Dates

- May 14
- June 11
- July 9

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact **Paula Rowe, LSW**, Maine Caring Families, at **615-5891**.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Maili Bailey, 474-7370, maili@prexar.com  
Hattie Damon, 634-2711  
Janet Nadeau, 487-5693

## PENOBSCOT, PISCATAQUIS, HANCOCK, AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES

I hope everyone enjoyed Denise Goodman and the Maine Caring Families Appreciation Day as much as I did. It was great to see so many people there.

I would like to Congratulate Janet and Phillip Moody on their new baby girl Annabeth! Janet and Phil have been foster parents with Maine Caring Families since 2000 and have shared their home with many children. They have decided at this time that they will focus on their family and take a break from fostering. I would like to thank them for all of their hard work and dedication over the past 7 years and wish their family well.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

Bangor:

- May 22 from 5:30-7:30
- June 26 from 5:30-7:30

Lincoln:

- May 17 6-8 training to be announced
- June 14 Surprise

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

Nathan Tapley, 973-7240, ntap23@verizon.net

*Jean Leonard*

## YORK COUNTY

There is no Regional News for York County this quarter.

*Jennifer Needham*



# CONNECTIONS

## CWTI TRAININGS

To register for these trainings, visit our website at [www.cwti.org](http://www.cwti.org) or call Jeanine Brown at 626-5285.

### MAY 2007

- May 10 - Documentation Skills for Caregivers (Augusta)
- May 12 - Hair: Nappy & Loving It! (Waterville)
- May 16 - Living with Autism and Aspergers: Strategies for Families (Bangor)
- May 18 - Resiliency (Augusta)
- May 19 - Mini-Miracles Make and Take Sampler (Caribou)

### JUNE 2007

- June 2 - Mini-Miracles Make and Take Sampler (Lewiston)
- June 2 - Supporting the Work of Reunification (Ellsworth)
- June 4 - Simple Strategies for Mini-Miracles (Portland)
- June 11 & 12 - Conscience Development (Waterville)
- June 23 - Living with Autism and Aspergers: Strategies for Families (Presque Isle)

### JULY 2007

- July 10 - Resiliency in Foster Care: Can Our Kids "Bounce Back" (Bangor)
- July 14 - Mini-Miracles Make and Take Sampler (Waterville)
- July 17 - FASD I - Introduction to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (Houlton)
- July 17 - FASD II - Living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (Houlton)
- July 17 - Introduction to Collaborative Problem-Solving (Portland)
- July 28 - Documentation Skills for Caregivers (Lewiston)



## *Maine Caring Families*

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