



WORD

Family Resource Centers

A Program of WORD-Women's Opportunity and Resource Development

Newsletter

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 7

APR 14, 2005

- WORD promotes and supports parent/family involvement in the schools
- WORD looks to increase literacy by sponsoring and coordinating the Western Montana Literacy Support Corps

Locations of Family Resource Centers

Missoula Area:

Bonner
Franklin
Hawthorne
Lewis and Clark
Lowell
Rattlesnake
Russell
Teen Family Resource Center

Bitterroot Area:

Daly/Grantsdale
Darby
Florence
Hamilton
Kids First
Lone Rock
Ravalli Head Start
Stevensville
Washington

Flathead Area:

Cherry Valley
Ronan

For more information go to:
www.wordinc.org/frc

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The Bear Fair

Peaceful cohabitation was the theme at the Rattlesnake School's "Living with Bears Fair," Friday, April 1st. It was a jubilee of multi-generational festivities, including: living with bears specialists and exhibits, bear paw castings, appearances by Monte the Griz mascot and Smokey the Bear, crafts and face painting; and Karelian Bear Dogs. Donated chili, soup, bread, and cookies fed 300 parents and children from the Rattlesnake community. A book fair raised money for bear-proof containers in Parkview Park, topping off a year of fundraising. Jane Olson, Family Resource Center Coordinator, was thrilled with the community response. "We will now be able to purchase user-friendly, bear-proof garbage containers for our neighborhood park."

Jamie Jonkel from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) is a wildlife educator, and reported that the increasing population in the Rattlesnake,

Bonner, and Grant Creek areas has caused more bear-human conflicts. The area around Rattlesnake



School has an urban black bear problem, and the issue prompted the Family Resource Center at the school to focus on a community bear-wise educational event.

In 2004, Brown Bear Resources Inc., the Great Bear Foundation, and FWP formed a task force with Rattlesnake residents to address over 1,000 yearly bear conflicts in the area. The Middle Rattlesnake Bear Task Force recommends the following: Keep garbage indoors until pickup; use bear-proof containers in parks; feed birds only in

winter when bears are sleeping; promptly pick fruit from trees (for help, call Great Bear Foundation at 829-9378); clean barbecues after each use; promptly pick garden produce; store compost indoors; store grain and livestock feed inside a secure building; protect beehives with electric fencing; butcher wild game immediately, and store in a secure building.

In addition, Brown Bear Resources Inc. offers a "Teacher Trunk" that can be checked out by educators. It contains curriculum, puppets, videos, and other cross-curricular support materials.



To reserve, call 549-4896. Bear Fair participants learned about bear-proof campsites from the UM student chapter of the

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Family Resource Centers, a program of WORD, are a collaborative program between WORD and school districts and are funded by:

- Montana Office of Community Service
- The Engelhard Foundation
- Title I
- Early Learning Opportunities

Meet Your Family Resource Center Family

(Part seven in a nine-part series on Family Resource Center staff)



An adventurous spirit pulled Mandy Hansen to the western Montana mountains. As the

Family Resource Coordinator at Hawthorne School, Mandy realizes how much she enjoys the people, the relaxed pace, and the close school community. “We have the same goals here,” Mandy remarks. “Everybody meshes—the staff, parents, and students.” Mandy especially appreciates the involvement of the teachers at the Literacy Lunches. With a response of 80% to 90%, “they see it as an opportunity to work with parents and students together.” Family Fun Nights have been successful, as well. One held on St. Patrick’s Day found parents and children working on crafts together. “It was a perfect pace—relaxed, flexible, and fun.” Mandy feels that joy in life

comes from the intent and result, and not everything has to go as planned.

Hawthorne is not the first time Mandy has worked in a school community. Between her junior and senior year at Ursinus College in Pennsylvania, Mandy taught English to the young and old in Madagascar. She loved the empty beaches, trees, and animals in and around Australia and vowed to visit every continent. With a major in Communications, and minors in Business and German, Mandy has already visited Germany and France. While visiting the Greek island of Delphi, she saw the Olympic torch on the way to Mount Olympus.

This is Mandy’s first year with Americorps, but not her first experience with volunteerism and community service. As a member of the Leadership Program in college, Mandy created a service project that

coordinated students with nursing home residents. “We would have parties for the residents,” Mandy recalls, “and we even created a nail and hair salon with the community.” In Missoula, Mandy volunteers as a dog walker for the Humane Society, walking dogs up her favorite trails in the Bitterroot and at Blue Mountain. “It is a way for me to be with nature and animals.”

Seizing opportunities has become commonplace for Mandy. This summer, she is looking forward to working on a dude ranch in Cody, Wyoming. She expects that will include lots of horse back riding and fly fishing! In the fall, it is back to the East and the Appalachian area. Mandy hopes to use her degree and experience working for an outdoor magazine. She admits that leaving Montana will be difficult. The mountains and the cozy Hawthorne community may just draw her back.

A Note from the Director

The first time I saw my name in print in the weekly newspaper of Seeley Lake it said, “Jeanne Moon, community volunteer,…” Little did I know, my path in the community I lived in for twenty years was set with that introduction. For the next twenty years I baked for bake sales, volunteered with the PTA, served on community boards, was a school board trustee, helped with parades, art fairs, carnivals, classroom projects, grants, facilitated community meetings, helped with childcare, and more. I’ve laughingly shared this “how it all began” story with friends when we threatened to form a “volunteers anonymous” group. You see, I was not alone. There were lots of people just like me.

I was and continue to be part of a community of volunteers. This community has taught me giving and receiving are circular and intricately connected. Volunteering has enriched my life in ways I never imagined possible. There certainly were times I have felt well in over my head, and I wouldn’t trade any of those experiences in hindsight. Through volunteering I continue to learn my strengths, my limitations, make dear friends, learn skills, get new ideas, and feel meaningful connections to other people.

April 17-23 we celebrate National Volunteer Week. A 2001 report by the national coalition, Independent Sector, tells us that on average, American volunteers donate just over 24 hours per month. No differences are found in the number of hours spent volunteering based on age, gender, race, ethnicity or religious attendance. Slightly more women volunteer than men (46% compared to 42%). Of those asked to volunteer, 71% do so. About 84 million adults volunteer in the United States. This community of volunteers is BIG!

Family Resource Centers are blessed with a large community of volunteers, 1,900 at last count (Sep – Mar 2005). They are the heart of the Centers. It is through working together and listening to each other that we are discovering how to strengthen true home and school partnerships. I’ve heard volunteering referred to as a “habit of the heart”. I like that. It certainly rings true with my experience and what I see in the community of volunteers I’m so glad to be a part of today.

—Jeanne Moon, Program Director

The Leader of the Team

“People need opportunities to show their goodness,” says Brook Clark, Team Leader for the Missoula Family Resource Centers. Brook understands the qualities of effective leadership. She came to Americorps two years ago as the Family Resource Center Coordinator at Hawthorne School. Now, the overall facilitator for all the coordinators, Brook reflects on her greatest teacher-mentor, “he never expected perfection from us, only that we tried to learn. I strive to model his grace, fairness, and integrity.”

Brook is responsible for mentoring and training eight Family Resource Center Coordinators in the Missoula area. One of the successful leadership programs Brook created this year is “Leadership Competency.” Each month the team works on competencies such as: civic engagement, leadership, communication, project management, and problem solving. At the second monthly meeting, Brook gives the team an article that focuses on the upcoming month’s competency. A discussion follows, along with guiding questions, and a professional development growth plan. This plan includes action steps, assessments, and reflections. At the next meeting, the team dialogues and shares their development, celebrations, and concerns relating to the use of the competency.

A typical day for Brook often extends into the evening. Mornings is communication time. She offers advice and assistance to coordinators, and her schedule is organized. During the mid-day, Brook supports the Coordinators at Family Resource Center programs. In the afternoons, she returns to the WORD office for admin-

istrative duties. Assisting in research and grant writing, and planning for team meetings blend into the evening hours. About three times each month, Brook attends Family Fun Nights, helping out and supporting the Coordinators. Throughout the year, she works to create literacy presentations for various government agencies and committees.

Brook understands the delicate balance between leadership and control. “It is important to always listen and make sure people have opportunities to voice concerns. I try to use my experience and collaborative skills toward a solution.” Team-building activities are a way to work through issues and problems. The “Random Factor Game” really goes to the heart of balancing skills needed each day. “Some people thought we were just tossing around three balls and a stuffed mon-

key, but we were working on juggling the myriad of daily issues and decisions that pull on us.

With her degree in Physical Anthropology and Pre-Med, the medical profession calls Brook in the future. In the meantime, Brook dreams about a Family Resource Center that would serve as the community focal point. It would contain a medical center, a childcare center with preschool and after-school care, adult education, a school, and a literacy center. “The world has changed and there is so much resting on the shoulders of women. We need to educate and support our women and their health.” Brook’s model is a dream that supports the whole community, and just might come true.



Bear Fair continued...

Wildlife Society. A popular event for students was the Great Bear Foundation’s bear paw molds, using plaster and sand.

Karelian Bear Dogs from the Wind River Bear Institute were available for petting. This special breed of dog is used to shepherd bears. The Institute seeks to eliminate bear-human conflicts by teaching bears and humans how to coexist. Using a combination of animal-to-animal and animal-to-human communication techniques, bears are trained and conditioned to live near people. For more information on bear shepherding, visit www.beardogs.org.

The “Living with Bears Fair” was a huge success for

the Rattlesnake Community. Rattlesnake student, Iris Olson, reported that the income from books and donations brought a total of \$122.86.

“That’s almost enough to buy one bear-proof container for our park.” And she wisely concluded, “People need to be educated about living with bears.”



Locations of the Family Resource Centers:

Missoula Area:

Bonner School
PO Box 1004
Bonner, MT 59823
Sara Boyett
406-258-6151
family@bonner.k12.mt.us

Franklin Elementary
1901 S. 10th West
Missoula, MT 59802
Vickie Rectenwald
406-327-0483

Hawthorne Elementary
2835 S. 3rd West
Missoula, MT 59804
Mandy Hansen
406-327-6945

Lewis and Clark Elementary
2901 Park St.
Missoula, MT 59801
Karin Schalm
406-327-6946
frclewis@mcps.k12.mt.us

Lowell Elementary
1200 Sherwood
Missoula, MT 59802
Kasey Savage
406-327-0390
lowellfrc@mcps.k12.mt.us

Rattlesnake Elementary
1220 Pineview
Missoula, MT
Jane Olson
406-542-4914
resfrc@mcps.k12.mt.us

Russell Elementary
3216 Russell St.
Missoula, MT 59801
Melissa Parrott
406-728-2400 ext 4846
frcussell@mcps.k12.mt.us

Teen Family Resource Center
1861 S. 12th St
Missoula, MT 59802
Essie Etchingham
406-542-4900

Bitterroot Area:

Daly/Grantsdale Elementary
778 Grantsdale St.
Hamilton, MT 59840
Rachel Martin
406-363-2122 ext 202
martinr@hsd3.org

Darby Elementary
209 School Drive
Darby, MT 59829
Kelly Morris
406-821-3643
kmorris@darby.k12.mt.us

Florence Elementary
5602 Old Hwy 93
Florence, MT 59833
Elaine Copeland
406-273-6747 ext 117
copelande@florence.k12.mt.us

Florence Middle School
5602 Old Hwy 93
Florence, MT 59833
Christa Burns
406-273-0587
burnsc@florence.k12.mt.us

Hamilton High School
327 Fairgrounds Rd
Hamilton, MT 59840
Heidi Tosini
406-375-6060 ext 6222
tosinih@hsd3.org

Hamilton Middle School
209 S. 5th St
Hamilton, MT 59840
Victoria Williams
406-363-2121
williamsv@hsd3.org

Lone Rock Elementary
1112 Three Mile Creek Rd
Stevensville, MT 59870
Nancy Preston
406-777-3314 ext 218
npreston@lonerockschool.edu

Ravalli Head Start
81 Kurtz Lane
Hamilton, MT 59840
Paula Wood
406-363-1217 ext 20

Kids First
Westview Center
103 S. 9th St. #105
Hamilton, MT 59840
Vicki Rivera
406-375-9588
vrivera@bitterrootkids.org

Stevensville Elementary
300 Park Ave
Stevensville, MT 59870
Wanda Stordahl
406-777-5613 ext 351
stordahlw@stevensville.k12.mt.us

Washington Elementary
225 N. 5th St.
Hamilton, MT 59840
Tara Gallagher
406-363-2144
gallagher@hsd3.org

Flathead Area:

Cherry Valley Elementary
111 4th Ave
Polson, MT 59860
Stephanie Noyes
snoyes@polson.k12.mt.us
Edna Lemm
406-883-6333

Ronan Middle School
421 Andrews NW
Drawer R
Ronan, MT 59864
Kathy Benedetti
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