

## Tree of Wishes Brings Joy to Many Families in Need

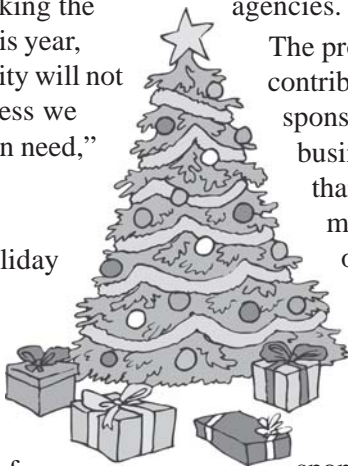
For more than a quarter century Family Service Center has been making the holiday season brighter. "This year, many people in our community will not have a merry Christmas unless we help provide gifts for those in need," says Josie Rocco, executive director.

You can help make the holiday brighter for people who are less fortunate by participating in the Tree of Wishes. Just choose a name from the Tree of Wishes, then purchase a gift for the person you selected and return it to the Tree of Wishes booth for delivery to the recipient.

The tree is located at the gingerbread house booth in White Oaks Mall's lower level near Sears from Nov. 21 through Dec. 20.

Tree of Wishes provides gifts during the holiday season to more than 1,000 clients

from FSC and other local service agencies.



The program is made possible by contributions from corporate sponsors, government agencies, businesses and individuals. We thank all our donors including the major sponsors: CEFCU; Bank of Springfield; Neuhoff Media; Kerber, Eck, and Braeckel, LLP; R W Troxell & Co.; Sears; Springfield Electric and White Oaks Mall.

"Volunteers and corporate sponsors are welcome to participate. Approximately 250 volunteers are needed each year to help make the Tree of Wishes a heartwarming experience for many people in need," explained Brooke Thomas, event coordinator.

"Volunteer opportunities include working a shift at the tree site in the mall." For more information, call 528-8406, e-mail [bthomas@service2families.org](mailto:bthomas@service2families.org).



**Volunteers are invited to help with the Tree of Wishes, call 528-8406 or e-mail**

[bthomas@service2families.com](mailto:bthomas@service2families.com).

## Celebrating Halloween at FSC

Goblins, ghosts, witches and other scary characters joined the fun at the FSC's second annual Halloween party.

Thirty five children and thirty two adults attended the festivities. The party goers made Werewolf and Dracula masks and enjoyed activities including pin the face on the mummy and a pumpkin toss game.



Four prizes were awarded in the costume contest. First place went to a ninja turtle, scariest to a witch, funniest to a baby dressed as a bunny, and most original was awarded to a fairy princess.

Everyone was treated to pizza, apples with caramel dip and dessert. Pumpkins were donated by Joseph Weishaar.

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## Family Service Center Programs and Services

Our programs are designed to help families and individuals of all ages deal positively with the continuing challenges that occur throughout the family life cycle.

- ◆ Adoption
- ◆ Adoption Preservation
- ◆ Foster Care
- ◆ Respite
- ◆ Tree of Wishes
- ◆ YPSS (Young Parent Support Services)

**FSC Connection** is published for Family Service Center members, clients and supporters in the greater Springfield community. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Call 528-8406.  
 Editor ..... Ruth Slottag, APR  
 Contributors ..... Maria Lotz  
 ..... Josie Rocco

## From Our President



Maria Lotz  
President

As we are nearing the end of the autumn season, the holidays are fast approaching and it is time for all of us to open our hearts to help people less fortunate than ourselves. By

participating in the Tree of Wishes, you can help make the holiday happy for someone in need. Just select a name from the Tree of Wishes at White Oaks Mall and purchase a gift for that person.

My first quarter as president of the Family Service Center has brought many

challenges. Fortunately this year's state budget was passed and most of the funds for our programs have been restored.

The Board of Directors and staff hold high expectations for this year and we are working diligently to implement policies and procedures that will provide FSC with a solid foothold into the future. Already the agency is making progress toward those goals by increasing the number of adoptions over the previous several years.

I am very humbled by the confidence that has been placed in me and I look forward to serving as board president and all of the great things that the future holds for Family Service Center.

*Maria Lotz*

## FSC Provides First-Time Camp Experience

This summer two adopted children were able to experience the fun and excitement of attending camp.

The FSC Adoption Preservation Program helped provide financial assistance so that



Alex Moore

Caitlin Moore, age 10, and her brother, Alex, age 9, could attend Jensen Woods Camp near Timewell.

"My children needed opportunities that I could not offer them at home as well as a chance to be on

their own and learn to become more self-reliant," said their mother Coleen Moore.

Alex's week long-camp vacation was the first time he had been away from home for more than a couple of nights' stay at his grandparents. At camp Alex developed a

new friendship with the camp pastor, who also became a swimming competitor. Alex



Caitlin Moore

won an award as the camp clown after his scary voice became the highlight of the nightly campfires.

Caitlin loved the horses so much that she even tolerated the bugs. She can't wait to go back next year said her mother.

"When I picked up the kids at the end of camp, they seemed a little older, more confident and excited about all the things they had tried that they had never done before," said Coleen.

"Thank you Family Service Center for all the help and guidance you provide to families like ours."

## Million Penny Drive Fund Raiser

People of all ages can help FSC continue serving children and families by donating your spare change in special cannisters that have been placed at businesses throughout Sangamon County.

Some of the locations where the penny drive jars are placed include Thirdwave Date, Pawnee Food



Center, Bank of Springfield, Horace Mann Insurance, Peases, Pasfield Golf Course, Food Fantasies and RSM McGladrey.

For more information about the million penny drive and how you can participate, contact Josie Rocco at 528-8406.

# Children Thrive in Loving Home

A local couple opens their hearts and their home to children in need. For eight years, Michelle and Noel Boyd have provided a loving home for several foster children placed by the Family Service Center. They have adopted three of these children -- Dontarianna, Marquita and Precious, as well as carrying for two foster children.



*Precious, Marquita and Dontarianna Boyd pose in their home. Their parents, Michelle and Noel Boyd, are not shown.*

Dontarianna, age 7, came to live with the Boyds at the age of three days old. She was the first child to be adopted by the Boyds. With their love and guidance, she has become an excellent student who excels in spelling and reading.

Marquita, age 11, has been living in the Boyd home for five years. She is very creative and has an artistic flair. She shows

great promise as a future artist.

Precious, age 9, became part of the Boyd family five years ago. She had experienced a great deal of uncertainty and rejection, having been moved through six different foster homes before residing with the Boyds. At that time she was

in need of stability and structure in her life.

Today after a few years of loving care provided by the Boyds, Precious is thriving in her new home. She has received the guidance and instruction she needed from her new parents and now her grades and behavior have greatly improved and she smiles much more.

## Adoption Placement

- ◆ Couples or individuals who are interested in becoming foster parents or adoptive parents, and
- ◆ Any mother who might be considering placing her child for adoption may call Ron at 528-8406 or call toll-free **1-800-877-ADOPT30**

## You Can Make a Difference!

Your membership donation is important to supplement the various programs and services of the Family Service Center. This is a good time to help support the much needed community programs that strengthen families such as the Young Parents Support Services and Family and Individual Counseling Program. Please complete this membership form and send it with your contribution to Family Service Center, 730 East Vine Street, Springfield, IL 62703.

### Membership Form

Yes, I would like to become a member of the Family Service Center at the following level:

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend \$25  | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$150  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donor \$50   | <input type="checkbox"/> Founder \$500     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate \$1,000 |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

My check is enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Please charge my  MasterCard  Visa Card

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*



## FSC Children Decorate for Festival of Trees

Children in the FSC foster care program have created special ornaments for a Christmas tree at this year's Festival of Trees. The children had fun painting, gluing and applying glitter to the ornaments. The tree will be displayed at the Orr building at the State Fair grounds from Nov. 21 -29.

## FSC Staff Helps Children and Families



Visit our new Web site  
[www.service2families.org](http://www.service2families.org)



Tiffany Miller is an adoption preservation therapist, who provides counseling and advocacy to families with adopted children.

She earned her master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan and her bachelor's in social work from Mercyhurst College in Erie, Penn.

In her spare time she enjoys traveling, exploring the outdoors, and reading.

A native of Ohio, she and her husband, Justin Miller, reside in Springfield with their dog, Zeke.



Dawn Leverton, secretary for the Foster Care program, joined FSC one year ago as a case aid.

Previously she worked in daycare for eight years. She attended Springfield College in Illinois.

In her spare time she mentors and tutors children of all ages and enjoys reading and cake decorating.

A native of Springfield, she enjoys spending time with her sister, Amanda, and nephew, William.

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