

THE CONNECTION

www.familyconnectionsinc.org

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CLINIC—Call for information for outpatient, in-home and evaluation services:

Weirton Medical Center
Medical Office Building
651 Colliers Way, Suite 412
Weirton, WV 26062
Phone: (304) 723-3423
Fax: (304) 723-3426

E-mail: admin@familyconnectionsinc.org

BROOKE PLACE—Call for a referral for residential group treatment for girls:

P.O. Box 348
Tent Church Road
Colliers, WV 26035
Phone: (304) 527-3303
Fax: (304) 527-3306

This facility is funded in part under an agreement with the Bureau of Children and Families, WV Department of Health and Human Resources

E-mail:
brookeplace@familyconnectionsinc.org



COUNTING OUR BLESSINGS



We all have our favorite holiday stories, no matter our beliefs and culture. A great one that comes to mind is “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens, which is a tale of a curmudgeon and his secular conversion and redemption after four ghosts permit him to see his life as it could be. Tiny Tim plays a pivotal role as the disabled son of a poor family who helps all to see the truly important things in life. We merely need to recognize our blessings.

Here at Family Connections-Brooke Place, we see the effects of poverty, of homelessness, of job loss, stresses in the family, abuse, and hurting children. But if we don't recognize the blessings, we can't do our work of helping those who are in need find some success and recovery. We recognize you, and your loyal support as we help children and families face their difficulties. You are *our* blessing.

At a time when we feel we just can't help, even a little goes a long way. Do you know that if we have food in the refrigerator, clothes on our back, a roof overhead, and a place to sleep, we are richer than the vast majority of people in this world? If you have money in the bank, in your wallet and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the world's wealthy. That's a hard one for us to believe but it's true.

When you support any of our ventures at Family Connections-Brooke Place, you are investing in the life of a young troubled girl, or a family who is struggling through despair due to life's stressors. The blessings for these folks get harder for them to recognize during the hubbub and materialism of the coming weeks.

And, remember, that we participate in the Neighborhood Investment Program where your donation of \$500.00 and up can result in a WV tax credit equal to 50% of the donation. Please call us if you would like more information.

Brooke Place Wish List

Nail polish remover
Stick deodorant
Make Up
Shampoo & Conditioner
Bar Soap
Scrubbies

White towels & washcloths
White, twin-size sheet sets
Underwear, all sizes
Mesh bags for large laundry baskets
Laundry baskets with lids

Slippers
Winter coats, hats.
Scarves, mittens

Please contact Barb Jones at 304-527-3303 if you care to help the girls with any of the items. Thanks so much!



Teen sex and pregnancy; underage drinking and illegal drug use; reaching teens who live in an on-line world...these are some of the most important issues professionals face who care for today's at-risk teens. These issues also inspired the theme for 2009's West Virginia Child Care Association Fall Conference, "Sex, Drugs & Rock 'n Roll," which took place in Charleston on October 27th and 28th.

Joanne Dobrzanski, Family Connections' executive director and one of the presenters at the conference said, "It was great to have the opportunity to take an in-depth look at these issues. Thanks to the valuable information presented, we now have a better understanding of why troubled teens turn to risky behaviors and how agencies like Family Connections-Brooke Place can successfully prevent and treat their devastating outcomes."

In addition to hard-hitting themes, the event featured a number of prominent leaders. West Virginia's First Lady Gayle Manchin and Department of Health and Human Resources Secretary Patsy Hardy got the conference underway. The First Lady's remarks recognized the WVCCA's landmark 30th anniversary of helping WV's children and families by presenting a proclamation by Governor Joe Manchin. On the evening of the 27th, the WVCCA's 30th Anniversary Awards Dinner featured a presentation of the Champion of Children, Child Care Worker, Non-Agency Community, and Foster Care Treatment Family Awards.

Brooke Place Gets a Face Lift



Jim Heagy of Jim's Custom Painting exemplifies his motto of "Painting the Town Because I Love My Job." Jim and his crew have been busy placing fresh coats of paint on both the exterior and interior of Brooke Place. Each girl's room now sports colors of lavender, blue, yellow and peach. The exterior walls and trim are painted two shades of green which blend beautifully against our backdrop of oaks and pines. Now we move on to a quest for new flooring and bathroom vanities for the girls' rooms.

Local Volunteer Is Given State Award



"Wind. Water. Earth. Fire. Yeah, she's kinda like that. A force of nature. She's the person in the community that knows everyone." These words are the opening remarks that were composed for Jean Bartholow's nomination for the West Virginia Child Care Association's community award. Nominated by Family Connections-Brooke Place, Jean received the award at the Association's 30th Anniversary Awards Dinner in Charleston, WV.

Jean has a mind-boggling amount of projects spinning around her at any given moment. She planned, painted, staffed and supervised a new family domestic violence shelter for a community in need of the service. She volunteers for two different fire department auxiliaries. She volunteered to cater one of our first open houses, engaging our residents in the event by teaching them about planning and preparation. This work led to her employment with us.

Jean introduced our girls to all of her passions—stained glass window making; scrapbooking; quilting; baking; photography; and looking for the best deal on anything. She brought in speakers to enrich the activities. It is through her that the girls learned to quilt. She teaches by example, using her spirit of volunteerism to engage others. The residents served pancake breakfasts, did yard work for a senior citizen, and cleaned up roadside litter.

Continued on page 3

ANYONE FOR A DAY OF SHOPPING?



Most girls, especially girls in their teens, love to shop. Our girls at Brooke Place are no exception! With the holidays approaching, the girls are thinking about gifts for those who are important to them. It's also important that we teach them the value of money, and the steps taken to earn it. Here's how we provide a positive learning activity...

We operate a "Brooke Place Store" on the premises that is stocked with a variety of items that change according to the desires and interests of the girls. The "shelves" are filled with such items as higher-priced shampoos and conditioners, nail polish, fake nails, and lotions. The store also has activity books, mineral water and healthy, baked snacks. These are just a sampling of the products.

The girls earn "Brooke Place Bucks" by practicing good decision-making and achieving their individual goals while they're living at Brooke Place. The better they do, the more bucks they earn. Girls whose efforts are especially noteworthy can assist with setting up the store and selling the products. The Brooke Place Store is usually open every 6 to 8 weeks which gives enough time for Bucks to be earned.

The girls really look forward to "store" days. Dee, our staff member who facilitates this valuable and life-learning activity with our girls, says that the store is a big hit, especially with the residents who are working hard on turning their negative experiences into positive ones and achieving successes while at Brooke Place. If you are interesting in helping us keep our shelves stocked, please let us know by calling us at 304-527-3303 and asking about the Brooke Place Store.

Jean Bartholow, continued from page 2

Jean also involved the girls in serving at several fundraisers for a local trauma victim, and showed by her example the value of giving back to the community, a value she hopes they'll embrace for a life time. "In my opinion, there's no one like her," one of her fellow volunteers told us. "She'll do anything for anyone no matter how she feels. This is Jean."

Jean is fearless about using her remarkable community connections to get things done. As Family Connections was raising money to construct a pavilion, she called on the firemen's auxiliary, friends and neighbors to donate all the labor. Their efforts produced a beautiful shelter for our residents and kicked off the next project which is her brainchild — an honor garden that recognizes the accomplishments of the teenagers passing through our doors.

While Jean is no longer an employee of Family Connections, she continues her volunteer activities with our girls and also serves as a community volunteer with our fund development committee. Jean's heart is huge and she gives it all away. Appreciating her as a 2009 WVCCA award recipient is how we here at Family Connections can give back. Thanks, Jean.



A lap quilter hard at work

MISSION STATEMENT

Family Connections is committed to helping individuals function to the best of their abilities by engaging the resources that exist naturally within their family and community. Interventions provided by Family Connections are theory-based and are guided by the principle that the individual is best treated within the context of their family. Family Connections is dedicated to the care, welfare, and respect of families and the individuals who comprise them.


family connections, inc.
Post Office Box 348
Colliers, WV 26035

We're on the Web!
Now you can donate online!
www.familyconnectionsinc.org

By giving a contribution in memory of or in honor of a family member or friend, many generous people have found a way to express their caring spirit while investing in the lives of those served by Family Connections.

In Memory Of

TROY PRATT By Eileen Pratt; Bobby & Rose LaRosa;
Rosemarie Bragg; Joanne Dobrzanski

GYPSY By Bobby & Rose LaRosa; Rosemarie Bragg

LILLI K. CRISSINGER By Jessica Napolitano Bott

GEORGE J. KROGER By Thomas G. Wack Sr.

ELSIE JEAN ORR By Thomas G. Wack Sr.

CHARLES HARTMAN By Thomas G. Wack Sr.

VERNA GALBREATH By Alvin & Carolyn Schafer

LARRY STENGER By Alvin & Carolyn Schafer

In Honor Of

THE GIRLS By Beth Morrison

FAMILY CONNECTIONS STAFF & RESIDENTS by Joanne Dobrzanski