



CHEROKEECOUNTY FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION

From The President

**Cherokee County Foster
Adoptive & Parent
Association**

March 2010

Inside this issue:

Letter from President	1
Featured Event for Mar	1
Monthly Feature	2
Message from D'Anna	3
Julie's Corner	4
Calendar	5
Association Information	6

We had a good turn out this past February for our Training day. We have another opportunity for training on April 24th at the same location. We were able to provide a continental breakfast and lunch for everyone and hope to continue these efforts in April. I would like to thank BJ's Wholesale for donating \$100 gift card to purchase any needed items for our conference.

The children were able to hang out at the youth center while the small children were supervised in the daycare. The feedback received from the conference was very encouraging and we plan to make the next one even better.

I am very excited about a special guest speaker for our April training. She holds a title for the Miss Georgia Teen World (2007) and currently holds the title of Miss Georgia Girl and America's National Girl. Although she is only 21 she has accomplished a lot and would like the opportunity to speak with us. During her early teen years she was in foster care. In her words "I have prayed for quite some time and have been seeking an opportunity to share my accomplishments with children in foster care to show them that no matter where they came from, it only matters where they're going. I believe I could be living proof that anything is possible and very much available even without a conventional birth home. I am proud of my accomplishments and ready to share my story and experiences with children who are in the position I was in." Bring the kids to meet Heather. She will give autographs and take pictures with her crown.

Time is getting closer to our 5K walk and Festival in May. In order to make this event a success we need volunteers, walkers & donations. Registrations have started again so be sure you get your name on the list by registering on the www.walkmehome.org website.

Our Congratulations go out to Jennifer Leikam & her family on the birth of Cooper Allen.



Don't forget to set your clocks up one hour this weekend!

Financial Report for February 2010

Expenses for February:	Ending Bal: \$383.57	Ending Bal: \$2,500.00
	Exp: \$ 58.22	Conference Exp: <u>\$ 399.02</u>
	Deposits: <u>\$180.00</u>	
Operating Account \$505.35	Respite Grant Bal: \$2,100.98	Total: \$2,606.33

Featured Event for March

Pajama Party on Friday March 19th from 5:30pm – 10:00pm

Bring the kids over and have an evening out. We will be doing fun activities and will provide dinner for the kids. We would like to get a head count so that we can have enough food for everyone so **PLEASE RSVP**. I need to know the ages of the children and their first names.

For children Ages: 1 and up

Where: City of Covenant Church

Location: 330 Adam Jenkins Memorial Dr, Canton, GA 30115

March Is National Women's History Month



THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 2, 2010

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH, 2010

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA A PROCLAMATION

Countless women have steered the course of our history, and their stories are ones of steadfast determination. From reaching for the ballot box to breaking barriers on athletic fields and battlefields, American women have stood resolute in the face of adversity and overcome obstacles to realize their full measure of success. Women's History Month is an opportunity for us to recognize the contributions women have made to our Nation, and to honor those who blazed trails for women's empowerment and equality.

Women from all walks of life have improved their communities and our Nation. Sylvia Mendez and her family stood up for her right to an education and catalyzed the desegregation of our schools. Starting as a caseworker in city government, Dr. Dorothy Height has dedicated her life to building a more just society. One of our young heroes, Caroline Moore, contributed to advances in astronomy by discovering a supernova at age 14.

When women like these reach their potential, our country as a whole prospers. That is the duty of our Government -- not to guarantee success, but to ensure all Americans can achieve it. My Administration is working to fulfill this promise with initiatives like the White House Council on Women and Girls, which promotes the importance of taking women and girls into account in Federal policies and programs. This council is committed to ensuring our Government does all it can to give our daughters the chance to achieve their dreams.

As we move forward, we must correct persisting inequalities. Women comprise over 50 percent of our population but hold fewer than 17 percent of our congressional seats. More than half our college students are female, yet when they graduate, their male classmates still receive higher pay on average for the same work. Women also hold disproportionately fewer science and engineering jobs. That is why my Administration launched our Educate to Innovate campaign, which will inspire young people from all backgrounds to drive America to the forefront of science, technology, engineering, and math. By increasing women's participation in these fields, we will foster a new generation of innovators to follow in the footsteps of the three American women selected as 2009 Nobel Laureates.

Our Nation's commitment to women's rights must not end at our own borders, and my Administration is making global women's empowerment a core pillar of our foreign policy. My Administration created the first Office for Global Women's Issues and appointed an Ambassador at Large to head it. We are working with the United Nations and other international institutions to support women's equality and to curtail violence against women and girls, especially in situations of war and conflict. We are partnering internationally to improve women's welfare through targeted investments in agriculture, nutrition, and health, as well as programs that empower women to contribute to economic and social progress in their communities. And we are following through on the commitments I made in Cairo to promote access to education, improve literacy, and expand employment opportunities for women and girls.

This month, let us carry forth the legacy of our mothers and grandmothers. As we honor the women who have shaped our Nation, we must remember that we are tasked with writing the next chapter of women's history. Only if we teach our daughters that no obstacle is too great for them, that no ceiling can block their ascent, will we inspire them to reach for their highest aspirations and achieve true equality.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 2010 as Women's History Month. I call upon all our citizens to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities that honor the history, accomplishments, and contributions of American women.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

Message from D'Anna



"Spring has come when you can put your foot on three daisies." ~Proverb

Spring is just around the corner, in fact, Saturday, March 20, is the first day of spring in 2010 in the Northern Hemisphere. This is known as the Vernal Equinox. I hope you and your families have had a good start to the year thus far!

Our winter Impact class graduated on February 25 with 9 families. We have another Impact class starting Thursday, March 11. As we are in the midst of our Each One Recruit One, Each One Retain One, (EORO), campaign, we are focused on our recruitment efforts as well as retention.

In February, we gained custody of only 4 children; 3 males and 1 female. 2 of these children were from 0-5 and 2 were 13 and over. 2 of these children were white; 1 was Hispanic; and 1 was bi-racial. 3 of these children were placed in a Cherokee DFCS foster home and 1 was placed in a group home. There was 1 sibling group of 2 children. There was 1 re-entry. 2 of these children came from CPS Investigations; 1 came from Family Preservation; and 1 came from the Juvenile Court as a Shelter Care order. None of these children were returned at the 72-hour or 10-day hearing.

We had 4 children exit foster care in February (different children, than above) for reasons of family reunification, emancipation, guardianship to relative, and adoption. As February came to a close, we maintained the same number of 156 children in foster care. At the beginning of February, we had 78 homes. No homes were closed and 5 new homes were approved and one closed home was re-opened. The total number of homes at the end of February was 84 homes.

We had 1 finalized adoption in February to Cherokee foster parents. Congratulations to Dawn & Justin Boye for becoming a forever family to 1 of our children!

In regard to our other work within the agency, our volume in OFI, (food stamps, Medicaid, TANF), has continued to increase month to month. We have peaked with volume increase as much as 74% in food stamp benefits since last year. We are issuing over one million dollars in food stamp benefits monthly to families in Cherokee County. In January, we issued \$1,605,346 million dollars in food stamp benefits to Cherokee families. This is unprecedented for Cherokee County, last January 2009 we \$911,793 in benefits. Each month the amount of benefit has increased as more and more families need assistance. Our timeliness and accuracy have remained above state benchmarks. Current ongoing food stamp caseloads are now averaging 1200 families per worker. In Child Protective Services (CPS), children, parents, and foster parents are being seen and visited each month to ensure child safety. Response times in CPS were 100% in January and February and we had no pending cases beyond 45 days. As a result of the economic situation, you may see more traffic in our parking lot and lobby as a result of these increases, so please be patient with us as we manage to meet this need within our community.

Jennifer Leikam and I presented at the February 27 training day Antioch Christian Church in Hickory Flat. We provided an agency update as part of this conference day, which we hope was helpful. We are also planning another "Roundtable" event so look for information regarding this event from Amy Blanton, Foster Parent Liaison, or contact her at amy.blanton@embracega.org with your suggestions on topics for discussion.

I value each of you as well as value the opportunity I have to serve as your County Director. I appreciate your feedback and concerns and continue to have an open door policy. You can also email me with any suggestions you may have for our county services. Thank you for all of your love, support and time to our children.

If you've never been thrilled to the very edges of your soul by a flower in spring bloom, maybe your soul has never been in bloom." ~Audra Fuveo

Happy St. Patrick's Day!



D'Anna Liber
Director
770-720-3629

dkliber@dhr.state.ga.us

Julie's Corner

Jennifer Leikam's son, Cooper Allen Leikam, was born March 3 at 7:53 p.m. He weighed 6 lbs. 15 oz. and was 20 inches long. Jennifer is the supervisor of the Adoptions and Resource Development unit.

In Jennifer's absence, I have been assigned as the lead worker for the unit. I will maintain my caseload, but will also be performing administrative duties, staffing with workers, and responding to any issues or concerns you may have about a situation in the RD/Adoptions unit. I look forward to working with more of you in the coming months, even though I already know so many of you! This is an opportunity I feel honored to accept and hope to make the transition seamless for you. Jennifer is expected to return June, but her exact date of return has not been determined at this time.



Cooper Allen Leikam

March 3 - 7:53 p.m.

6 lbs. 15 oz.

20 inches

I know I talk about training hours every month, but I wanted to let you know that we are now being required to report the number of foster and adoptive families that completed their training hours on a monthly basis. I want Cherokee's families to be #1 in this area, so I am asking you all to start, or continue working on your training hours. PLEASE notify your RD worker if you have completed training so we can count your hours on our report. We want to show everyone in the State that Cherokee has the BEST families!!

An IMPACT of 9 families graduated on 2/25 and a new IMPACT class of 7 families will begin on 3/11/10.

We are working on the foster parent appreciation banquet and once we have a date, we'll be sending out a "save the date" request to all of you! Each year, we try to offer you a different experience in order to show our appreciation for the difficult job you all so dutifully and gladly accept. We hope you feel our "THANKS" for everything you do!!

Julie M. Evans, SSCM
Cherokee County Department
of Family and Children Services
770-720-3650 Office
678-717-6596 Fax

Up Coming Events



AFPAG training - Saturday March 13, 2010 in Dawsonville, GA.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Vala Peyton, AFPAG Secretary at vala@bellsouth.net or 404-428-2104. Travel expenses and overnight accommodations are on your own and will not be reimbursed by DFCS or AFPAG.



The 7th Annual Prom-A-Palooza is set for March 14th. If you have a foster child that is in High School and would like to participate in this event contact Rachel Ewald for reservations. Call Rachel for registration at 770-641-9591 www.fostercare.org or email: rachel@fostercare.org.

Last February nearly 200 girls transformed into radiant princesses as they tried on dresses and accessories. As they pranced in front of the mirrors they felt affirmed and confident knowing they would fit in with their friends at their high school proms.

HillBilly Willie's SUMMER CAMP



Special rates for kids in foster care! Call Becki Jo for details at 770.843.8001 Kids will enjoy horseback riding, swimming, arts and crafts, scavenger hunts, farm animals, games, hayrides and more! We only accept 12 kids per week.

Brochure attached.

www.hillbillywillie.com

Dr Gore's Recommended Books on Parenting

The Everything Parents Guide to Positive Discipline - Carl E. Pinkhardt, Ph.D.

Parenting from the Inside Out - Daniel J. Siegel MD & Mary Hartzell, M.Ed

Parenting with Love and Logic - Foster Cline MD & Jim Fay

The Challenging Child - Stanley I Greenspan MD

Parenting Your Out of Control Child - George M Kapalka PhD

Ages and Stages - Dr Charles E Schaefer & Theresa Fay Di Geronimo



ClipArt.com

CPR & FIRST AID CLASSES AVAILABLE

Please contact Jeff Blackwell at jblackwell@firstactioncpr.com or 770-652-9051 to register for an individual class. Foster parents should look for the Heart Saver CPR Course, using AHA curriculum. For those who need specialized training there are a variety of classes, check out the web site at www.firstactioncpr.com. CPR & First Aid Classes are reimbursable with an ORIGINAL receipt. Certification is good for 2 years. You will receive training hours for the class.



Cherokee County Foster Adoptive & Parent Association



Building The Future with our Foster and Adoptive Parents as they open their hearts & their homes to children.

Check website calendar for upcoming events & training.

www.fosteroradopt.org



If you would like to receive the newsletter via email go to our web site and signup.

If your email changes let us know so that we can update our records.

Check us out on **Facebook**, many of our foster parents are connecting via the net. Click link below or put "Cherokee County Foster" to find us.

<http://www.facebook.com/event.php?sid=9337e82e1d11a302dc6636ebf8cd44e4&eid=75644102307&ref=search>

2010 Board Members

PRESIDENT

Marie Blackwell

770-378-0759

mblackwell@fosteroraadopt.org

SECRETARY

Shannon Griffis

TREASURER

Becky Borgia

Other Associations or Support Foundations

Foster Care Support Foundation

located at 115 Mansell Place, Roswell, Ga. 30076, 770-641-9591,

<http://www.fostercares.org>

Email: Rachel Ewald rachel@fostercares.org

Embrace Cherokee

Foster Parent Liaison Amy Blanton, amy.blanton@embracega.org

or visit them on the web <http://www.embracega.org>

AFPAG (State Foster Parent Association)

Feel free to contact them at: contactafpag@bellsouth.net

Executive Director

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404-918-1956

sharonlc@juno.com

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478-335-9454

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