



www.bethanna.org

April 2008

# Bethanna Heartbeat

#  
Included in this Issue:

Matching Corner p. 4

Strut your Stuff p. 5

Resources p. 7

Bethanna Heartbeat is published every other month for foster parents, adoptive parents and Bethanna staff.

Bethanna Main Office  
1030 Second Street Pike  
Southampton, PA 18966  
215-355-6500


**EDITORIAL TEAM**  
 Sherri Gannon - Editor  
 Jim DenBleyker  
 Kelly Myers  
 Mark Unger  
 Anita Zuerlein

If foster parents or social workers have any information for the newsletter, please contact us at either (215) 355-6500 or 717-299-1926. Thank you for your help.

**SUMMER CAMPS**

Summer is coming and with it comes Summer Camp and lots of smiles on the faces of our children! Each year Bethanna provides up to \$165 per foster child to attend an approved Summer Camp. Your child's caseworker will help you decide on the best camp for your child and will help you make the necessary financial arrangements.

You can either supply the accounting department with the camp application and Bethanna will pay the camp directly or you can pay the camp directly and submit the receipt to the accounting department for reimbursement. **Happy Camping!**



**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY**


Thank you to all of you who made Martin Luther King Jr. Day a huge success. Thank you for all the donations you brought. We wanted to share with you the letter Bethanna received from Northwest Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network:

Dear Bethanna Services staff and families:

The Northwest Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network (NPIHN) thanks you for selecting us as your Martin Luther King service day project. The 'welcome' bags of toiletries are very attractively decorated and show how much love went into this project. All of the bath and toiletry products that you collected will be very helpful to the families staying in our shelter program.

Thank you again for your support and encouragement.

With every good wish,  
Rachel Falkove



## FROM THE HEART

### An Unexpected Blessing From “Just One”

Frank and Sandy Stout

It was twenty five years ago this month that my husband, two young sons and I welcomed our first foster child into our home. A small church bulletin insert made us aware of the need for foster parents to care for children who needed the love and stability of a family...we decided we could add “just one” to our home.

God had other plans in mind for our family and our “just one” turned out to be a short term placement of three little girls followed by many more daughters over the years. Yes, all our foster children were girls by choice. We had two little boys so close in age that we made the decision to only take girls in hopes of having less competition.

In the 80’s, we were told that foster care was to be a temporary solution and not a back door to adoption and so we expected foster care to be short term. In reality, many of our foster daughters lived with us for a long time, some for 10 to 15 years. The Safe Families Act did not exist and children lingered in the system never going home and never being freed for adoption.

We viewed our role as foster parents not only as caregivers for the children, but also as mentors to their parents when feasible. Today, we are in contact with many of our daughters - those who eventually went home and those that did not - as well as with their parents. Many of our girls are now grown with families of their own. We have been blessed with the joy of seeing them raise their children in a different way than what they experienced when they were young prior to foster care. They are not abusive. They are not neglectful. They have not repeated what happened to them. They love and value their children. We have seen firsthand a gentle calmness as they relate to their children. We have witnessed a warm sense of humor become part of their parenting “toolkit”. We have watched them demonstrate a commitment to make sure their children are safe, happy, loved and *not* part of the system. And best of all, we have seen them teach their children about God and depend on Him for strength and guidance. Some of them even join us in church on Sunday mornings.

Our decision to take “just one” has impacted our sons as well. Over this past summer, our eldest son, wife and their biological 7 year old daughter added their “just one” this summer and adopted a little 4 year old boy....our newest grandchild, Avery.

While our household no longer has children living here on a daily basis, it continues to be busy with all the sounds of childhood and lots of activities. From a phone that never stops ringing with calls from our girls, to many visits, lots of babysitting, and huge holiday gatherings, our lives are filled with the love of many young ladies and their children.

What an unexpected blessing it has been to be part of all these children’s lives over the years and now to be grandparents to their children as well. Once again, we find our parental role continuing as we have the chance to touch the life of a child, to see the wonder of the world through their eyes, and to know that these children will not have to endure the bad experiences of their parents.

Little did we know when we began fostering that our decision to take “just one” child would end up with us becoming part of the lives of 42 girls and a multitude of grandchildren – what an unexpected gift!

**RECRUITMENT CORNER**  
**How One Family Impacts Another**  
By Mark Unger—Recruiter

In the 90's, a couple with three biological children, contacted Bethanna about becoming foster care providers. They communicated that they were willing to support birth parents' efforts to reunify with their children and were also open to adopting the foster children placed with them should they become available for adoption. As the family became involved with Bethanna, this new foster mother informed a neighbor who lived across the street that they would soon be having children placed with them. Unbeknownst to her, the neighbor, with whom she was speaking, had recently found out that she and her husband were not able to have children. After sharing about Bethanna's foster care and adoptive services, the new foster mother gave her neighbor the phone number to Bethanna. The neighbor called and soon after she and her husband began the process of becoming a foster care and adoptive resource family with Bethanna.

Fast forward about 12 years and much has changed for both of these families. The first foster family has cared for a total of 12 foster children, five of whom they have adopted and they are currently in the process of adopting their sixth child. The second family moved but not too far away. They ended up caring for five children, and in time, adopted each of them. From time to time these two mothers run into each other at the grocery store and catch up on their families.

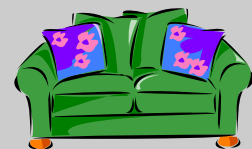
It is amazing how one family's journey into foster care, and what may seem to be a chance encounter, can positively impact the course of so many lives. Perhaps you may know friends or neighbors that work well with children and you can tell would make great foster care providers. If you do, give them a call or get together and tell them that you think they could make a difference in the lives of children and families in need. Currently, there is a desperate need for foster care providers. We need your help. Who knows, that neighbor across the street or close friend of yours could, like the two families described here, be the next people to positively impact the lives of many.

In the Philadelphia area contact Kamau Kanyi @ 610-565-5455 x1304 and in the Lancaster area contact Mark Unger @717-299-1926 x501 for information about foster parenting.

**Keeping Kids Safe**

From Active Parenting Publishers' parent workbook called 1,2,3,4 Parents!

Here are some suggestions for keeping your living room safe if you have young children in your home. Look for future editions regarding other rooms of the house.



**Living Room**

Cover electrical outlets with plastic outlet covers (you can buy these in most stores).

Take away small rugs so your child will not trip, or put rubber pads under them so the rugs do not slip.

Put padding on the sharp edges of the table (use foam pads). If you cannot pad the table or do not want to, remove the table until your child is older.

Some plants are poisonous. Put them on a high shelf that your child cannot reach.

Cords on drapes should be short. Your child should not be able to reach them (if there are loops on cords, cut them).

Check all shelves and things your child can climb on. The shelves should be strong and not fall over.

Put a screen in front of the fireplace and teach your child that this is not a place to play in. Put padding over the sharp edges of the hearth.

# Kid's Page

## Easter Word Scramble



*How many of these words associated with the Easter holiday  
can you unscramble?  
(Answers at the bottom of the page)*

serate

\_\_\_\_\_

ybnnu

\_\_\_\_\_

eussj

\_\_\_\_\_

hcruhc

\_\_\_\_\_

esinr

\_\_\_\_\_

grooncil sgeg

\_\_\_\_\_

dynca

\_\_\_\_\_

gesg

\_\_\_\_\_

idghni gges

\_\_\_\_\_

erbleetca

\_\_\_\_\_

plrupe

\_\_\_\_\_

lewloy

\_\_\_\_\_

ilyafm

\_\_\_\_\_

hma rinedn

\_\_\_\_\_

**Answers:** Easter, bunny, Jesus, church,  
risen, coloring eggs, candy, eggs, hiding  
eggs, celebrate, purple, yellow, family,  
ham dinner

#  
Just a reminder to test the  
batteries on your smoke  
detectors and replace  
them if necessary. It might  
just save a life!



## Matching Corner

*Woody*

*DOB: 1/3/99*

Woody is an African-American, nine-year-old male. He is shy when first meeting people, but quickly warms up to them. He enjoys being the center of attention. He tends to make friends easily. He also has a great smile. Woody likes to keep his room clean and is helpful around the house with chores.

Woody enjoys watching cartoons, playing video games and being physically active. His favorite sport is football. He especially likes the Eagles. He enjoys being around animals, especially dogs. In the summer, he enjoys swimming, and in the winter he likes sledding and throwing snowballs. His favorite foods include pizza and spaghetti. He likes vegetables, just not on pizza. When Woody grows up, he desires to become a police officer because he wants to help “save the world.”

Woody will thrive best in a structured environment where he receives plenty of affection, attention, reassurance and validation for his accomplishments. He is looking for a forever family where he is the youngest or only child. If possible, Woody would like to maintain some contact with his birth siblings. All families will be considered for Woody. He is legally free for adoption.

For more information regarding Woody, please contact his Child Specific Recruiter, Karen Knodel, MSW, LSW at 215-355-6500 x193 or email [kknodel@bethanna.org](mailto:kknodel@bethanna.org).

### WORKER ANNIVERSARIES

#### February:

Charlesetta Prosser: Driver - Visitation Program, 3 years

Sarah Lester: Social Worker - Kinship, 1 year

#### March:

Stephanie Greene: Family Development Specialist, 21 years

Kwashigah Vossah: Social Worker - Foster Care, 5 years

Taylor Hagan: Social Worker - Kinship, 1 year

Kim Bishop: Social Worker - Kinship, 1 year

Jennifer Burbank: Social Worker - Visitation Program, 5 years

#### April:

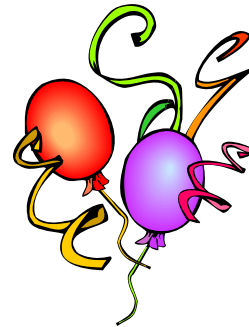
Sandra Richner: Director of Family Services, 20 years

Juli Apple: Staff and Caregiver Trainer, 6 years

Wendy Assal: Social Worker - Kinship, 3 years

Al Lunsford: Social Worker II - Visitation, 3 years

Mia Edwards: Social Worker - Kinship, 1 year



**Thanks for all the work you do!!!**

## OFFICE NEWS

### Southampton:

Juli Apple has joined the Training Department as a Staff and Caregiver Trainer. She previously worked with the PASS program. You will most likely meet her during upcoming foster parent trainings. Kinship Secretary, Sandra Lankford, has moved to Australia for the next 18 months with her husband whose job has temporarily relocated him there. RT Secretary, Beth Small, gave birth to a baby boy, Cameron Matthew, 7 lbs 2 ozs and 20 1/4 inches long on March 10th!

### Wood Street:

Office Receptionist, Latanya Duncan, became a grandmother recently - Destiny Danae weighed 6 lbs 13 ozs and was 19 inches long.

### Lancaster office:

The office has been rearranged and expanded to allow for two visit/meeting rooms. Our main entrance is now the door facing Duke Street.

As March is **Social Worker Appreciation Month**, we are celebrating by naming two social workers for the award of Social Worker of the Month: Julie Collis (Critical Case Manager) and Debbie Hollinger (Foster Care Social Worker). Congratulations to you both!

## STRUT YOUR STUFF

**Jamire** got his first hair cut.

**Edward** is a leader in JROTC.

**Khalil** is pulling himself up now.

**Kionna** loves playing with dolls.

**Colin** learned to write his name.

**Rashawn** loves playing basketball.

**Jevon** is almost walking.

**Edgar** is walking up the stairs.

**Hailey** is singing in her church choir.

**Marianna** and **Amos** went shopping for Easter outfits and will be looking very cute on Easter Sunday.

**Jayden** is able to identify all of the pets by their names at his foster home.

**Sarafina** had a very exciting visit with the Easter Bunny but she was sad to say goodbye.

**Ashayah** got a new puppy dog for Christmas.

**Stepffon's** grades and behavior have greatly improved. He completed all the necessary school work to be moved to his correct grade. He is in the 8th grade and is looking forward to going to the 9th grade next school year.

**Leo** was struggling in math when he first came into placement. He is now making A's.

**Angel** is currently attending college. She recently went to New York for an interview at an art school.

She is interested in transferring to study photography.

**Rashay** is currently attending a Pre-K program and is doing very well.

**Kanerah** and **Kenniyah** made friends on their very first day in their new school.

Because of her good school performance, **Melissa** got a computer from her school with all sorts of great programs.

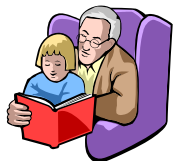
**Malik** and **Hope** love to draw.

**Simon** had a great report card.

**Edward** is doing very well in his physical therapy and making great improvements.



## RESOURCES



**Temple Family Friends Program, 215-204-3193, Contact: Nancy Hail:** Temple Family and Friends program provides respite for 2-3 hours for grandparents taking care of their grandchildren. This service will also send people to go to court with grandparents and generally be a support to them.

### Summer Camp

Start looking at the websites to find a camp or two for your son or daughter. Most of the time you can limit your search by zip code to find camps in your neighborhood. Some websites to go to are:

[www.philasafesound.org](http://www.philasafesound.org)

[www.phillysos.org](http://www.phillysos.org)

[www.phila.gov/recreation.camps](http://www.phila.gov/recreation.camps)

If your son or daughter receives therapy, they may be eligible to receive funding to send them to summer camp. Contact your on-going social worker for more information.

**Victory Valley Camp, [www.victoryvalleycamp.org](http://www.victoryvalleycamp.org), or call 610-966-5880:** A Christian week long overnight camp run by previous Bethanna foster parents for ages 8-18. May include horse back riding and swimming.

**The Germantown Friends School Summer Basketball Reading and Computer Clinic, Contact person Chris Cox 215-951-6999:** The location is 31 W. Coulter Street in Philadelphia.



**Kids Come First, Wilhelmina Cockroft, 215-386-4076:** Camp in West Philadelphia, 3512 Haverford Ave 19140. Ages 6-12 and employing youth counselors-in-training ages 13-17.

**Teen Haven, 215-226-2050:** Offers an inexpensive, Christian summer camp held in Southern York County, about 90 miles from Philadelphia. Boys and girls attend separate weekend sessions. Campers leave from the North Philadelphia office of Teen Haven on Friday at 6pm and return on Sunday at 3pm. Activities include sports, crafts, hiking, games, basketball, nature, chapel and hayrides. 867 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130. Ages 9-17

**Sharing and Caring of Bucks County:** Autism Support Group (for parents of children diagnosed with Autism, PDD, or Asperger's) Second Thursday of each month 7-9PM. Where: St. Vincent DePaul Church, Education Bldg., Hatboro Rd., Richboro, PA. The Education Bldg. is located at the rear of the church's parking lot. Directions can be found at: <http://www.svdprichboro.org/directions.htm>

**SibShop:** A meeting for siblings age 7 years or older. Conducted by Bucks County IU social worker. These groups will be running in conjunction with our meetings from October through April. To register your child for the SibShop, contact Cathy Dippolito at [cathy@sharingcaringbuckscounty.org](mailto:cathy@sharingcaringbuckscounty.org) For more info, contact support group coordinators: Cathy Dippolito at [cathy@sharingcaringbuckscounty.org](mailto:cathy@sharingcaringbuckscounty.org) or Bryan and Julia Pfister at [pfister@sharingcaringbuckscounty.org](mailto:pfister@sharingcaringbuckscounty.org)

