



JANUARY 2011 NEWSLETTER

Issue 87 January 20, 2011



ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT

CESAR LAGLEVA, LINDA GREGORY, CAROL IHLENBURG,  
JONATHAN TOSTE, ANNETTE VENABLES

Upcoming Events

January 26th



**MFPA Fundraiser**  
at California Pizza Kitchen,  
Corte Madera, all day

January 28th

**Marin Kinship Connection Luncheon**

San Rafael 12N-1:30PM

February 2nd

**MFPA Board Meeting,**

San Rafael, 9:30-11:30AM

February 10th

**MFPA Meet and Eat**

San Rafael, 6-8:30PM

February 11th

**Residential "R House" Presentation**

San Rafael, 10-11:30AM

February 12th

**After the Holidays Clearance Sale**

San Rafael, 10AM-12N

March 6th

**Champagne & Chocolate Classical Concert Fundraiser**

San Rafael, 5-7PM

April 29th

**Ross W. Greene Presentation**

San Rafael, 9:30AM-5PM

For information on any of these events, contact Carol Ihlenburg or visit our website at [www.mfpa.net](http://www.mfpa.net).

**HAPPY 2011!!**

The Marin Foster Parent Association Board held their annual planning retreat on January 16th. We discussed many events and opportunities for foster families and approved our budget for the year. We are excited about the new officers who have jumped right in to their positions and are looking for additional members who may be interested in joining our board. If you have a little extra time and would like to help out in any capacity, please contact a board member.

We reviewed our three upcoming fundraisers: California Pizza Kitchen in Corte Madera will donate a percentage of sales to anyone who presents one of the attached "Philanthropizza" flyers, any time of day, on January 26th. Then, on March 6th, we will be hosting a private Champagne, Chocolate and Classical Music Concert. In May, we will be participating in The Marin Human Race. Come out and join us for any or all of these great events.

We discussed upcoming training sessions. Possible topics include a dependency legal panel, vicarious trauma self care, bullying, and positive discipline. If you have any suggestions, ideas or desires for training sessions, please contact a board member.



Thanks to a grant from the Marin Charitable Association, the Marin Foster Parent Association has funding available to assist foster families with tutoring and afterschool enrichment costs for foster children or children in the dependency system. If you have a child who needs additional academic assistance, PLEASE APPLY FOR THIS FUNDING!! There is a cap of \$500 per family, per year. If, at the end of the year, there is still funding remaining, families may reapply. The goal of this grant is to provide foster children with the extra educational assistance they need to be successful in school and in life. Funding will be distributed to foster families through an application process on a first come/first served basis with a combined monthly maximum amount of \$400, to

be distributed amongst all approved applicants. Requests must be made for a foster child or child in the dependency system, and the funding must benefit him or her educationally. Once approval is obtained, receipts or an invoice for the cost of services must be submitted within one month of application approval. If you are interested in applying for this funding, contact Carol Ihlenburg at 507-1822 or via email at [cihlenburg@comcast.net](mailto:cihlenburg@comcast.net). We are excited to offer this assistance to our foster families!

New Tutoring and Afterschool Enrichment Funding was received from Marin Charitable. We will be distributing an additional \$3,500 for children 11-18.

## Trips for Kids

When attending the grant distribution ceremony, hosted by Marin Charitable, we had the pleasure of hearing from all the non-profits who were granted funding. One of the groups was "Trips For Kids." Below is a description of the services they offer. If you have a child who may be interested in participating in their program, please contact them at (415) 458-2986. Let them know you heard about their program from the MFPA.

### Earn-A-Bike Program (free of charge for all participants)

Located at 125 Larkspur Street in San Rafael, CA. The TFK Earn-A-Bike program is available to youth between the ages of 10-18 years. Each participant receives one-on-one attention and learns bicycle maintenance /repair and basic mechanic skills. Through this learning process the youth earn "credit points" towards bicycle parts and a bike of their own. This program is open to boys and girls. Best contact is Joseph McCarthy 415-455-8876 / Email: [jmccarthy@tripsforkids.org](mailto:jmccarthy@tripsforkids.org)

### AND

### Day Trips - Come Mountain Biking with Trips for Kids!

Trips for Kids is a non-profit organization that brings youth (ages 10 to 18) and Young Adult populations on

day-long mountain bike trips. We incorporate bike skills, trail etiquette, environmental education/stewardship information and FUN into all of our trips. On every trip, safety is of utmost importance! Our ride leaders are trained in first aid and CPR and are accomplished mountain bikers. In addition, our leaders have years of specialized experience in teaching and motivating children.

Every day of the week we take groups on a mountain bike ride. We provide the excellent and attentive ride leaders, and the helmets, gloves, and water bottles to all participants (students, parents and teachers). Although most of the youth/young adults that we work with have never been mountain biking, they do need to know how to ride a bike with hand brakes (versus pedal brakes).

The total cost for a day of riding is \$25.00 per group of up to 8 kids/young adults plus staff/teachers/mentors (with a \$75.00 refundable deposit to secure the reservation) OR a total fee of \$50.00 for a group of up to 16 kids/young adults plus 3-4 staff/teachers/mentors (with a \$150.00 refundable deposit).

Trips for Kids provides enhanced fitness and nutrition awareness information during our popular trail rides:

• Simple, fun ways to understand the values of health and fitness for

everyone, and easy-to-understand personal motivation techniques.

• Suggestions of easy ways young people can choose healthier food and incorporate exercise into their daily lives.

## Shopping & Sipping...

### After the Holidays Shopping Clearance for Foster Kids



Do you have a foster child who missed out on that special gift over the holidays? Maybe someone has a birthday coming up? Bring your foster child to our After the Holidays Shopping Clearance for Foster Kids. Saturday, February 12th, 10AM-12N. We will give each child MFPA "bucks" to shop for their toys (donated by Sleep Train). Address: 272 Devon Drive, San Rafael, 94903.



Questions: call Carol at 507-1822

**Save the date: Sunday, March 6th**, On Sunday, March 6th we invite you to our Champagne and Chocolate

Classic Concert. The event is a fundraiser for MFPA, so invite a friend or two. More information will be included in the next newsletter and individual invitations will be mailed to you under separate cover. Hope to see you there.

# Quarterly Policy Meeting Summary

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Members of the MFPA Board and representatives from Children and Family Services had a 2nd Policy meeting on December 8th. Below is a summary of what was discussed:

**Foster Parent Rights:** We discussed foster parent's rights related to social workers entering a licensed foster home. On page 7 of the newly issued Marin County Children and Family Services Foster Parent Complaint Investigation Handbook, it states —The Department does not have the right to enter Foster Family Homes without advance notice, except in response to a complaint. Per Health and Safety code Section 1533 (quoted in Foster Family Home regulations section 89244): —...any [LPA] may, upon presentation of proper identification, enter and inspect any place providing personal care, supervision, and services at any time, with or without advance notice, to secure compliance with, or to prevent a violation of, [foster family home regulations.]|| The Department also has the right to enter Foster Family Homes without prior notice under the following circumstances: (1) A licensee is on probation, (2) When an accusation against a licensee is pending, and (3) In order to verify that a person who has been ordered out of a home by the Department is no longer living at that home.

We talked about whether the Department has the right to enter the foster home if the foster parent is not home including if a non adult allows entry. It was determined that, if a child is old enough to be left home unsupervised, it is assumed they are old enough to determine if entry by a social worker is permitted. If a child is left home alone without supervision that is too young to make such a decision, then it is most likely a violation and entry is assumed to be permissible (i.e. to investigate the safety of a child being left unsupervised). Department representatives expressed they try to avoid this happening and it rarely does occur. They said this would only occur if there was concern for the safety of a child in the home.

**Protocols for Interviewing Children:** We discussed the rights of children being interviewed in a complaint process. Foster parents were concerned if children were given the right not to be interviewed and/or if they were advised they could have a trusted adult present when the interview is being conducted. It was explained, if the interview is related to a complaint made against the foster home/foster parent, there is no advance notice or information provided to the foster parent, so the information received in the interview is not biased in any way. The Department indicated they would attempt to be more aware of the child's feelings and allow them to have an adult they know and trust present at the time of the interview - however, the adult can't be the foster parent for obvious reasons. The Department is aware the complaint process causes stress and confusion in the foster home and they are committed to being as sensitive and quick as possible in completing the interviews. They also explained they must follow procedures laid out and must attempt to obtain the information in such a way as to insure they have accurate and correct information. There was some discussion as to the difference between a complaint and child abuse. Because foster homes are licensed, CFS is mandated to respond to licensing violations, which may, for example, include personal rights violations or having an unauthorized adult in the home. While these may be serious licensing violations, they do not constitute child abuse as defined by law. However, CFS does occasionally receive allegations of abuse or neglect against foster parents. Any such allegation is investigated jointly by licensing and by CFS emergency response social workers immediately.

**Licensing Updates - Are they shared between CFS departments?** Foster parent representatives asked if new licensing

regulations, such as sharing information with foster parents, are communicated to all departments of CFS - i.e. does ER know about new regulations that occur in licensing. This was specifically related to the new Pre-Placement Questionnaire now available as a resource for foster parents, it is assumed more information will be shared with foster parents. The Department has requested we let them know when such situations occur, so they can use the opportunity for training purposes as many social workers are not aware of some of the changes and/or need to be reminded.

**Trainings For Foster Parents:** We discussed training opportunities for foster parents. The Department, in collaboration with Patty Cala/COM, will be offering a training on communicable diseases hopefully in January. We talked about the need for support for new foster parents. The MFPA does offer mentoring and will continue to be available to suggest foster parents who would be willing to assist new foster parents should the need arise. We talked about possibly hosting support groups for new foster parents and how that might look.

The next Quarterly meeting is scheduled for April 13th at 10 am in room 107 at 3250 Kerner Blvd San Rafael. If you have any questions or concerns you'd like presented at this meeting, please email them to: [marinfosterparentassociation@yahoo.com](mailto:marinfosterparentassociation@yahoo.com) or call 507-0557.

# Chronicles of Adoption

by Jonathan Toste

Interviewee: Reggie Rayport

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**I**n a stunning historical example of the lax custody law in the 1940's, a young boy's 14 years of illegal adoption go almost as intended, except for one long summer in limbo...



## **What history do you know about your biological family?**

My biological mother gave birth to me, out of wedlock, in the Great Lakes Region in 1941. Before I was born, she arranged for me to be adopted privately through friends. Later in life she married and had two more children with her husband. She moved from Michigan to California and obtained status as a CPA. In my teens I had contact with her, but she would never reveal much to me about my bio-dad. All I know is that he was a mechanic in the Great Lakes Region. By the time I was 14, it really didn't matter to me. I was totally bonded to my adoptive mom and was more interested in getting away from my bio family, than getting more entangled in it.

Years later I was told that the laws of those times deeply punished women who had children out of wedlock. The law stated that a woman had little or no rights to have any input, raise or make any decisions regarding their child's welfare if that child was conceived out of wedlock.

## **At what age, and for how long were you in adoptive or foster care?**

My adoptive mom began raising me when I was four days old. I moved to Palo Alto with my new family. It wasn't until a high school seminary program that we discovered that my adoption was never finalized. As it

turned out, my bio-mom was living only 30 miles away, in Oakland. Due to the fact that my original adoption was never legally finalized I now had the choice of which family I wanted to live with. I went and lived with my bio-mom for one summer so I could decide which family I wanted to be a part of and get all of the paperwork formally filed. Even though I was a teenager at the time, I knew where I belonged, and returned to live with my adoptive mom. It was a very pleasant summer at my bio-mom's and I am thankful for the experience, but my heart belonged to the family that raised me.

## **What was the most comforting thing your guardians or other adults in your life did for you regarding the issue of adoption?**

Life was hard for me growing up. My adoptive dad was a naval officer in WWII...a real hero. He was working as an Ichthyologist (fish biologist) when they adopted me. Unfortunately, he died of cancer when I was only 7 years old. Luckily, I did get to spend enough time with him to absorb his deep joy of learning, and his pride in being my dad. After Dad's passing, Mom and I moved back to the Chicago area for a while. Mom used our time there to work and go back to school. Eventually, we returned to Palo Alto.

Throughout, I was a latch key kid and fairly independent. I'd say the best thing my mom did for me was to send me to good schools and insist that I go to college. She also taught me about deep emotional strength as evidenced by her strength in watching me interact with my bio-mom and her deep admiration for my dad. It took having 4 kids of my own to fully realize what a hero SHE is.

## **What kind of "fantasy option" (not totally unrealistic) did you wish was available to you to solve the big issues you faced growing up?**

I was so busy and dedicated to helping my mom after my dad's death that I really didn't think too much about "fantasy" options. Dad had been a scientist and mom was all about education and working hard. I pretty much just stuck to the plan. Catholicism interested me strongly enough for me to spend two years in a strict seminary boarding school. But, in the end, I realized that my calling was photography. I traded the strict life of the seminary for a lifetime dedicated to television production, at the university level.

## **What ability of yours best helped you to achieve the success you have found in your adulthood?**

I would say that resilience and independence are my two best abilities. Both were a direct result of the trust that my mom placed in me. We went through some hard times together, but made our own decisions. We knew when it was time to move to a different venue and how to accept the bitter with the sweet. I truly believe that it is not biology that forms a bond, but the gifts of trust, respect and dedication.

*The above story is true; some names have been changed to protect identities. We are looking for other, over 30 year-old, fostered or adopted adults to participate in telephone interviews. Please write: [jjtoste@gmail.com](mailto:jjtoste@gmail.com)*



## MISSION STATEMENT/BYLAWS

The Marin Foster Parent Association (MFPA) is an organization comprised of licensed foster and adoptive parents in Marin County and members of the community interested in helping to achieve the goals and purposes of our association as stated below.

The primary objectives and purposes of the MFPA, as stated in the California State Foster Parent Association, Inc. bylaws are:

- To establish a local chapter of the California State Foster Parent Association bringing together all foster parents, agency personnel and interested community citizens who wish to work together for the same purposes set forth below.
- To promote the general welfare of children that need protective care everywhere: at home, in the communities, in institutions and in public, private and religious schools.
- To develop a better understanding of the problem of foster home care by the persons and agencies involved in caring for children and the general public by encouraging and maintaining communications, and the interchange of ideas and cooperation between foster parents, county agencies, and the local communities.
- To encourage the training and education of personnel for work in the field of foster care, and to encourage the recruitment and retention of foster homes.
- To inform ourselves of the current information pertaining to the welfare of children.
- Notwithstanding the above statements, the chapter shall not, except for insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the primary purpose.



Join fellow foster parents, friends and their children for fun at the California Pizza Kitchen in Corte Madera on Wednesday, January 26th. If you'd like to enjoy the socializing aspect, come down between 5:00 and 6:00PM and we'll enjoy dinner together. This is a fundraising event for the association so bring the attached flyer with you (give the other one to someone you think would be willing to support the cause). The flyer is good all day long for eat-in or take out.



Issue 87 January 20, 2011

## 2011 MPFA Board Members

### Executive Board

**Linda Gregory, President**  
479-8702, Grey\_gregory@att.net

**Jonathan Toste, Vice President/  
Phone Tree Chair**  
258-9459, jjtoste@gmail.com

**Annette Venables, Secretary**  
272-6187, aagativen@sbcglobal.net

**Carol Ihlenburg, Treasurer**  
507-1822, cihlenburg@comcast.net



### Members At Large

**Mimi Katz**  
492-0207

**Kathryn Jordan-Whittle**  
898-5677,  
kathryn@fishpondrecruiting.com

**Cesar Lagleva, President**  
846-3789, giaclay@yahoo.com



### Newsletter Crew

**Carol Ihlenburg**  
**Barbara Sabido**  
**Paula Starrett**  
**Pam Salvadore**

Special thanks to College of Marin's Foster and Kinship Education Program and the Department of Health and Human Services Children and Family Services for making the printing and distribution of this newsletter possible.



The Marin Foster Parent Association in collaboration with College of Marin's Foster and Kinship Care Education Program offers:



## **Marin Advocates for Children**

And Its Two Programs:

**Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)**

Presented by: Cyndy Doherty, Executive Director

Cyndy will present updates on both the CASA and CAPC programs including:

- What is a CASA and what is his/her role in the lives of foster children
- Communications between foster parents and the CASA program
- How and why the CASA program was created
- How the CASA program can assist foster parents in navigating the multiple systems often involved in a foster child's life (educational, social services, etc.)
- Upcoming trainings being hosted by CAPC

Cyndy would also like to get your input on what future trainings/classes might interest you.

### WHEN

Thursday, February 10, 2011

6:30 – 8:30 pm\*

\*A social/dinner time will be hosted from 6:00 – 6:30 pm. To insure there is enough food and drinks available, please RSVP to 479-8702 by February 7, 2011 if you are interested in attending this portion of the meeting.

### WHERE

The Connection Center on the Health and Wellness Campus  
3240 Kerner Boulevard, San Rafael  
(at the corner of Kerner and Bellam Blvds)

### QUESTIONS

contact [Linda Gregory](mailto:Linda.Gregory@marinadvocates.org) at 479-8702

Childcare will be available during the meeting (6:30-8:30 PM). Those using the childcare provider will be responsible for compensating the provider and getting reimbursed by DHHS. (There will be reimbursement forms available!) The cost of childcare is \$5.00/hour per child with a cap of \$10.00/hour – i.e. the most you will need to pay is \$10.00/hour regardless of number of children. **Please RSVP to 415 479-8702 if you will need childcare with the number and ages of the children you will be bringing.** If the childcare is full, and you did not RSVP, your child/ren may be turned away. You **MUST** RSVP by Monday, February 7th; if there are no RSVPs by this time, the childcare provider **WILL BE CANCELLED.**



# Philanthropizza.

Please join us at California Pizza Kitchen for a flavorsome fundraising event. All you need to do is bring in this flyer on our scheduled date and present it to your server when ordering. 20% of your check will benefit our organization. So come out and enjoy something delicious from the CPK menu.

Your taste buds will thank you, and so will we.

**Marin Foster Parent Association**

**California Pizza Kitchen**

**Corte Madera Town Center  
347 Corte Madera Town Center  
Corte Madera CA, 94925  
415-945-0401**

**Wednesday, January 26, 2011**

Thanks for the support.  
We can't wait to see you.

Donation amount excludes proceeds from tax, gratuity and retail purchases. Valid for dine-in and take-out only.

Manager, please attach this flyer to the guest check.

Event proceeds void if flyers are distributed in or near the restaurant.



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**Corte Madera Town Center  
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MARIN FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 6726, San Rafael, CA 94903

(415) 507-0557

www.mfpa.net



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**M F P A M E M B E R S H I P A P P L I C A T I O N**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Fees:     \$ 35.00 for individual membership; \$ 50.00 for family membership

\*Please mail completed form with membership fee to:

Marin Foster Parent Association, Attn. Treasurer, P.O. Box 6726, San Rafael, CA 94903