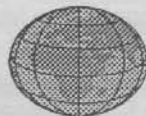


# RCMA HOY

We Can Make A World Of  
Difference

Helping Our Youth



MAY 1993 OUR MISSION: By Leaps and Bounds, Giving Kids a Head Start, Helping Parents Restart

## FROM THE DESK OF BARBARA

Parents, children and staff are our most valuable resource. With this in mind, we are holding the first annual Head Start Parent/Staff Celebration with the theme, "Kindergarten: Changes, Choices and Challenges."

There will be several concurrent workshops offered. This celebration's exciting offerings will include a panel discussion titled, "Kindergarten: The Next Step," which will consist of school representatives from DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Highlands and Hardee counties.

In addition, the 300 pre-kindergarten parents and staff estimated to attend will be able to choose from the other exciting workshops on music, health and make and take.

The keynote speaker, Morris Rose, a Tampa area consultant, will address the topic of Black males and our role in making a difference.

The celebration, which will also include a luncheon, music and entertainment, fun activities, and awards and prizes, will be held at the Kenilworth Lodge in Sebring on May 19th from 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.. There is no cost to attend.

Transportation will be available for anyone that needs it. Mileage reimbursement will also be available to parents that drive themselves.

## COMING EVENTS

May 19 - First Annual Head Start Parent/Staff Celebration, Sebring

May 20 - Migrant Head Start PPC, Ruskin

May 21 - Migrant Head Start Center Directors End of Year Meeting, North Region, Ruskin

May 24 - Board Meeting and CDA Recognition, Ruskin

May 27 - Migrant Head Start Center Directors End of Year Meeting, South Region, Immokalee

June 2 - Regular Head Start End of Year Center Directors Meeting

## APPLAUSE

### South Region Homestead Area

New support groups for staff members have begun in the centers. The groups are providing the staff with stress reduction techniques and an opportunity to support each other with life's challenges and successes. Literacy classes (ESOL, GED, Basic Skills) for parents and staff are now in place at the centers. "You are never too old to learn" has been heard frequently throughout the centers recently.

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### Immokalee Area

The Wendell N. Rollason Scholarship Fund week (April 19-24) was successfully completed in which over \$8,000 was raised for scholarships for students who are going to continue their education beyond high school.

The week's activities included T Shirt day, lunch with a little one, picture day and a luncheon honoring our youth. The week ended with the festival on April 24 which featured a variety of entertainment.

Gloria Padilla and Cuba Giblin,

the area and program coordinators, respectively, thank everyone that helped make this scholarship fund week so successful.

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**Desoto/Glades/Hendry/Lee Area**  
Congratulations to Ana Melendez, a driver and part time teacher trainee for winning the Outstanding Driver award for the South region.

\*\*

A dance will be held in Arcadia on May 14 to raise money for the Wendell N. Rollason Scholarship Fund.

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Children from the centers had a bike-a-thon and raised \$127 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

#### **Palm Beach Area**

Congratulations to Judy Burleson, program coordinator, and the area staff for recently being awarded \$23,000 from United Way. They are doing great work and United Way's contribution will be a great help.

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Farmworker Child Development Center in Delray Beach recently held a fiesta in which it raised \$700 through chalupa (Mexican bingo), a drawing, food and candy sales. This money will be used for beautification at the center.

#### **Highlands/Hardee Area**

The centers celebrated the week of the young child, April 18-24, by setting up booths and providing children's activities at the Walmart store in Wauchula and the Lakeshore mall in Sebring. They were very excited that so many parents and staff volunteered to work at the mini "children's festivals."

## **North Region**

### **Pasco/Lake Area**

Congratulations to Lawson Jolly, a family support worker, who recently received a Masters Degree in Family Counseling from the University of South Florida.

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The Dade City Migrant Head Start Center is holding a dance on May 15 for the Wendell N. Rollason Scholarship Fund.

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Thanks to the Mascotte Center, five staff from Zellwood were able to get their CDAs in spite of the fact that their own center was closed. That's real sisterhood!

### **Ruskin/Wimauma Area**

A Wendell N. Rollason Scholarship Fund Festival, which included a Little Miss RCMA coronation and a dance, was hosted on May 8.

### **N. Hillsborough/Polk Area**

Aurelia Banuelos, center director, and Renee Deeson, resource coordinator, of the Wahneta Migrant Head Start Center exemplified real dedication and sacrifice for the good of the children in their center. They both took on the job as bus drivers for two months while they tried and finally found a qualified replacement to transport the children.

This required Aurelia to leave home at 3:30 a.m. in order to leave with the bus from the center at 5 a.m. to pick up the children. And when the center opened each morning, she still had a full day of work as a center director.

Renee had the afternoon route and took the kids home on top of her work as resource coordinator.

Their unprovoked acts of kindness and caring are really appreciated!

### **Indian River Area**

This area has had Teacher Idea Exchanges with Palm Beach's Delray Beach and Pahokee Centers. In these exchanges, eleven staff from here traveled to Palm Beach County to spend a day in their classrooms sharing ideas.

In addition to getting some new ideas from each other to bring back and use in the centers, this exchange was a great way to improve parent involvement. The Indian River teachers found parent volunteers to replace them for a day in the classroom. So this not only allowed for staff to see other centers and share different ways of doing things, but it also brought parents into the center and gave them a new understanding as well.

\*\*

A warm welcome is extended to Regina Sousa, the new eligibility clerk for the Indian River and Palm Beach areas since March.

### **Gadsden Area**

This has been the first year a Title XX center in Quincy was operated during the school year. Gadsden County Migrant Head Start will be open in June-July and October-November. What a good balancing act for Juana Gayton, director.

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### **Palatka Area**

Congratulations to William Harmon, family support worker,

and Juanita Gilyard, dropout prevention program director, for being co-winners of the Outstanding Driver award for the North region.

## Health, Safety And Wellness News



### Mentally Healthy Role Models

We have an exciting opportunity. RCMA's 1,200 staff serve over 5,000 children and thousands of parents in 19 Florida counties.

Whether you are in a center or an office you are a role model. Here are some attitude-improving tips:

1. Look for the good in yourself, in others, and in RCMA.
2. Practice being cheerful and outgoing even if you're not naturally so.
3. Show patience and understanding of yourself and others . . . relax.
4. People make mistakes, so be forgiving.
5. Seek challenges, don't avoid responsibilities.
6. Try your best and be proud of your efforts.
7. Smile, walk tall and dress

neatly. It gives off "good vibes," and they radiate back to you.

Sometimes the pressures of our active lives make it hard to have the attitude we would like. If you call the **EAR** (*Employee Advisory Resource*) toll free hotline at 1(800) 328-5000 you can talk out your problems confidentially and get some information as to choices you have that you may not have thought of before. Spanish speakers are also available at this number. This is one of the benefits RCMA pays for at no cost to you.

## BIG IDEA SPACE



Once there was a very old man who used to meditate every morning under a large tree on the bank of the Ganges River in India. One morning, having finished his meditation, the old man opened his eyes and saw a scorpion floating helplessly in the strong current of the river. As the scorpion was pulled closer to the tree, it got caught in the long tree roots that branched out far into the river. The scorpion struggled frantically to free itself but got more and more entangled in the complex network of the tree roots.

When the old man saw this, he immediately stretched himself onto the extended roots and reached out to rescue the drowning scorpion. But as soon as he touched it, the animal jerked and stung him wildly. Instinctively, the man withdrew his hand, but then having regained his balance, he once again stretched himself out along the roots to save the agonized scorpion. But every time the old man came within reach, the scorpion stung him so badly with its poisonous tail that his hands became bloody and his face distorted by pain.

At that moment, a passer-by saw the old man stretched out on the roots struggling with the scorpion and shouted, "Hey, stupid old man, what's wrong with you? Only a fool risks his life for the sake of an ugly, useless creature. Don't you know that you may kill yourself to save that ungrateful animal?" Slowly the old man turned his head and, looking calmly in the stranger's eyes, he said, "Friend, because it is the nature of the scorpion to sting, why should I give up my own nature to save?"

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*Please send suggestions, comments, and letters to the editor to the following address:*

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## Center Profile

*"We are the world. We are the children. We are the ones who make a brighter day, so let's start giving."*

This song is being sung by an Indonesian child, Puerto Rican, Mexican and Cuban children, and African-American and Anglo children as well. The newest member of the chorus is a German-Czech child. It's not that this song is coming from their mouths. In fact, they probably don't even know the lyrics. But they do sing it, and it's coming from the heart.

These are the children of the Glades County Child Development Center on the southwestern edge of Lake Okeechobee in Moore Haven. And that's right. You can even find the play areas labeled in German.

*"There's a choice we're making."*

Recently, when a German-Czech child first arrived at the center, the other children made this child feel at home, Frances Canty, the center director explained. "The children do this automatically. They showed this child where everything is located in a very personal way."

The children learn about other cultures. They become more sensitive to the cultural and ethnic diversity of their brothers and sisters and it shows. "It helps them get along together," Canty said.

*"We're saving our own lives."*

It's no wonder they are so successful when one looks at the center's approach. The staff, which is composed of three African-Americans,

two Hispanics, two Anglos and one Hispanic/African-American, has this as its motto: "Together everyone achieves more."

When the center, which opened up in December 1988, gets a child from a different ethnic background, they do research to learn about the culture and to share this understanding through multicultural activities with the children so they can all benefit from this cultural richness.

*"It's true we make a brighter day, just you and me."*

The center staff are like a family, Canty said. And this fact is not only key for the teachers' effectiveness with the children, but the center has undertaken another big task as well.

Beginning last September, the Glades Center began preparation for NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accreditation, which is a way to be nationally recognized for providing quality early childhood education. This is an in-depth process that involves all the staff and parents in creating a child development center of the highest quality.

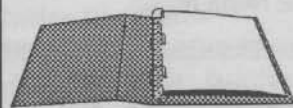
Canty said the center used the OSPRI (Head Start On-Site Program Review Instrument) to help them with the NAEYC accreditation procedure. They are almost finished with the NAEYC process and hope to be assessed in the Fall by the Washington, D. C. office of NAEYC.

Regarding this process in their center, Canty said, "It pulls together your strong points and lets you know what your weak points are. It brings together your whole staff as a team."

*"There comes a time when we need a helping hand and the world must come together as one."*

The Glades Center is a beautiful example of what can happen when we put this idea into action. The staff and children in this center are a wonderful seed of hope in RCMA's seamless garment of life for its children, parents and staff.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT



The Career Development Committee met on April 29 at South Florida Community College in Avon Park. The committee is organized into various sub-committees with specific goals. Some of the committee's accomplishments for the 1992-93 season are:

1. Distribution of the RCMA Career Resource Guide to each center. This guide lists literacy, GED, English as a Second Language (ESOL) and other career opportunities for both parents and staff that are available specifically in each center's community.
2. Results from this year's interest surveys show high parent and staff interest in GED and ESOL classes. We want to continue to promote these classes for both parents and staff.
3. The fundraising committee is developing ways that centers can purchase books for a center lending library and RIF (Reading is Fundamental) book distributions three times a year for every child in RCMA centers.
4. Committee By-Laws have been established.
5. A Career Tree is being developed so that staff will see where they can "branch" out in RCMA and beyond.