

RCMA HOY

We Can Make
A World of
Difference

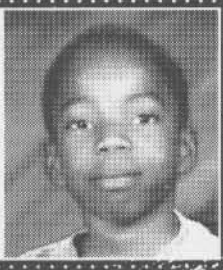
Helping Our Youth



July 1996 Issue 40

OUR MISSION: Helping Parents Restart, Giving Kids a Head Start, Helping Staff Develop

FROM THE DESK OF ERNEST



J recently had the opportunity to have an honest conversation with a ten year old boy named Ernest Jean. Ernest is one of forty-five school age kids who are part of the RCMA Summer Program in Immokalee.

Our conversation started because I had a 10:30 appointment with Ernest. He was going to interview me for a story in the "Pete's - A - Press", a weekly newsletter produced by a small group of kids. Ernest is the lead reporter and co-editor.

Ernest began the interview like a pro, reading off questions and writing down notes. I told Ernest, that I too was searching for a story for the "HOY", and asked if I could ask him a few questions. Ernest's response was an enthusiastic, "Sure!" Here are some of Ernest's thoughts about his past, present, and future.

What is the most interesting thing you have learned while doing the newsletter?

Choosing what I would like to be when I grow up.

And what is that?

I want to be a writer of books. I would like to write about my life and sports, especially basketball.

What college would you like to go to?

I would like to go to Florida State, they have a good football team, but basketball is so-so.

Ernest tell me about your family?

My family are great people!

Why do you feel this way?

Because they give me the respect I wanted.

What's school like in Immokalee?

I've been going to Highlands since the first grade. It's great! I like morning basketball, everyone wants to be on my team. Sometimes I get mad at people, especially when they lie on me. Yesterday I was involved in an incident where kids were throwing clothes. A girl said I threw something at her, but I didn't.

I got angry and tore up my interview notes. I didn't want to go to the pool because I was angry and I needed to calm down. I know when I'm angry I sometimes get out of control.

You mean it's hard for you to control your anger?

I can control it, but sometimes I can't stop it when it's happening.

What do your parents think about your wanting to be a writer?

They think it's great, but they think I'll change my mind again. You see first I wanted to be a doctor, then a lawyer, now a writer. I think I will keep this idea in mind.

Ernest who are your heros?

Penny Hardaway, he plays for the Orlando Magic.

Why is he your hero?

Because during an interview, he said "if you have a dream just go for it." My dad is also my hero because he works hard for all four of us. Sometimes he's tired when he gets home, but he's still my hero.

Margaret Mead said it best, "Of course we need children! Adults need children in their lives to listen to and care for, to keep their imagination fresh and their hearts young and to make the future a reality for which they are willing to work."

That's how my conversation with Ernest made me feel.

Former RCMA Preschooler Chosen High School Valedictorian

By LESLIE MOGUIL
Staff Writer

Susan Vega, education coordinator, at Zellwood CDC was reading the newspaper recently, and a photo caught her eye.

The picture was of John Velazquez, who, 14 years ago was a four year old in Susan's class at the RCMA Mascotte Migrant Head Start.



Pictured here are John Velazquez and his former Head Start teacher, Susan Vega

Well the article mentioned nothing about this, but it did go on to recognize John Velazquez as the valedictorian of the graduating class of South Lake High School.

PLEASE SEE VALEDICTORIAN,
PAGE THREE

DEL ESCRITORIO DE ERNEST

Recientemente tuve la oportunidad de tener una conversación honesta con un niño de 10 años que se llama Ernest Jean. Ernest es uno de cuarenta y cinco niños de edad escolar que participan del Programa de Verano de RCMA en Immokalee.

Nuestra conversación comenzó porque yo tenía una cita con Ernest a las 10:30. El iba a entrevistarme para un reportaje en "Pete's - A - Press", que es un periódico producido por un grupo de niños. Ernest es el reportero principal y co-editor.

Ernest comenzó su entrevista como un profesional, leyendo preguntas y tomando notas. Yo le dije a Ernest que también estaba buscando para escribir un reportaje para "HOY" y le pregunté si podía hacerle unas preguntas. La respuesta de Ernest fue muy entusiasta "¡Seguro!". Estos son algunos de los pensamientos de Ernest en cuanto a su pasado, presente y futuro.

¿Qué es lo más interesante que aprendido haciendo este periódico?

Escoger qué es lo que quiero hacer cuando sea grande.

¿Y qué es?

Quiero ser escritor de libros. Me gustaría escribir acerca de mi vida y deportes, especialmente baloncesto.

¿A qué colegio o universidad te gustaría asistir?

Me gustaría ir a Florida State. Ellos tienen un buen equipo de futbol, pero el baloncesto es regular.

Ernest, háblame de tu familia.

¡Mi familia son fantásticas personas!

¿Por qué sientes así?

Porque ellos me dan el respeto que yo quiero.

¿Cómo son las escuelas en Immokalee?

Yo he asistido a Highlands desde primer grado. ¡Es fantástico! A mi me gusta jugar baloncesto en las mañanas. Todo el mundo quiere estar en mi equipo. A veces me enoja con la gente, especialmente cuando me mienten.

Ayer estuve envuelto en un incidente donde los niños estaban tirando la ropa. Una niña dijo que yo le tiré algo a ella pero no era cierto. Yo me enojé y rompí las notas de la entrevista. No quise ir a la piscina porque estaba enojado y

necesitaba calmarme. Yo sé que cuando estoy enojado a veces pierdo el control.

¿Quieres decir que es difícil para ti contolar tu enojo?

Yo puedo contolarlo, pero a veces no puedo pararlo en el momento que está sucediendo.

¿Qué opinan tu padres acerca de tu querer ser un escritor?

Ellos piensan que es fantástico, pero que voy a cambiar de opinion otra vez. Es que primero yo quería ser doctor, luego abogado y ahora escritor. Yo creo que voy a mantener esta idea en mente.

Ernest, ¿quienes son tus héroes?

Penny Hardaway, El huega con Orlando Magic.

¿Por qué es tu héroe?

Por que durante una entrevista el dijo "si tu tienes un sueño, ve tras él." Mi papa es también mi héroe porque él trabaja bien duro para nosotros cuatro. A veces él está cansado cuando llega la casa, pero aun así es mi héroe.

Margaret Mead lo expresó muy bien; "¡Por supuesto que necesitamos a los niños! Los adultos necesitan a los niños en sus vidas para escucharlos y cuidarlos, para mantener su imaginación fresca y sus corazones jóvenes y para hacer del futuro una realidad para la cual ellos estén dispuestos a trabajar.

¡Así es exactamente como mi conversación con Ernest me hizo sentir!

APPLAUSE

Lee/Glades/Hendry/Desoto Area

Lynn Gunsby, center coordinator, at LaBelle II, was part of a heroic experience. Her sister, Jeanette Smith was driving her to the hospital because she had gone into labor.

Ty'Eisha Shanae Gunsby wanted to see the world now, so Jeanette and Lynn teamed up. Jeanette had one hand on the wheel, and one assisting the delivery. The baby was born happy and healthy on Joel Boulevard.

When they arrived at the hospital ten minutes later both mom, and baby were given some TLC. As for Jeanette she had the honor of being listed on the birth certificate as the attending physician. Now that's sisterly love!

Safety News

The Golden Rule For Safety

"work as safely with others as you would have them work with you".

Nearly everyone has heard of the Golden Rule. Very few apply it in their daily lives. It is the most practical rule in the world.

Would you agree or disagree with this statement? "To practice the Golden Rule in a small measure, makes us happy and helps us in our work and in our daily life."

What does this have to do with safety? If each of us would follow the golden rule pertaining to safety and actually live with it, the number of accidents would decrease.

One version of the rule might be, "work as safely with others as you would have them work with you". Another might be - "I will follow the safety rules as I would have them followed."

Whichever of these ways we look at safety, we are developing a more positive attitude.

Think about these safety attitudes also:

- An accident can happen to me at any time, when I take a chance.
- Accidents can always be prevented.
- To work safely is a mark of good sense and skill.
- We can always take time to work safely.
- If I practice safety, my co-workers will think well of me.

Safety is everyone's responsibility. People like to deal with those who believe in the Golden Rule and practice it. Try it and see!

High School Success

Valedictorian, from page 1

Susan was filled with pride at her former student's accomplishment. She remembered how he stood out in his ability to use language, as he told her how much he missed his parents.

Velazquez, an appointee to the U.S. Air Force Academy, believes his family background and high academic standards have put him into contact with all sorts of people. Velazquez states, "because of where I have come from I've learned many ways of life."

Velazquez's parents were committed to helping their son succeed when they made the decision to settle down in Lake County. This made it possible for their son to start and end school at the same time as other kids.

They even went so far as to only speak English around their son because they felt English would help their son succeed. John and his family are an inspiration for us all to aim high!

HAPPENINGS

Immokalee Area

Hard work and determination paid off for all of the staff at ICDC Pre, Annex, and Infant upon receiving the quality seal of NAEYC Accreditation. Cheers of joy were claimed to have been heard even at the State Office.

Congratulations to Tiffany Koch, teacher, at ICDC Pre on receiving her CDA!

Carolyn Landers, Mennonite volunteer at ICDC Pre will be leaving after a year of committed volunteer service. Carolyn has pitched in wherever she was needed and we wish her the best in the future.

Palm Beach Area

Farmworker CDC aimed high and with knowledge and commitment were recognized as being a quality child development program and awarded their NAEYC accreditation! Way to go!

State Office

State office staff from all departments left their posts from 8:00 - 12:00 for one day this summer to serve as a center



Ms. Garcia Shares Mexican Heritage With Children

Something special is happening at the Dade City Migrant Head Start. Children have been learning how to make authentic Mexican ceramics, piñatas, and special yarn hangings, that are said to bring good luck. In addition, they are being tutored in Mexican dances and new playground games.

Their teacher, Rosalva Alavez Garcia has an extremely long commute to her new school. Her trip from her home classes in Mexico City to Dade City has kept her away from home since the first of July.

But that's O.K. for this teacher of Physical Education, because she is teaching the students of RCMA something she knows first hand - their shared heritage.

Ms. Garcia is participating in a Ministry Foreign Affairs/Mexican

Communities Abroad Program, which has sponsored her to come to the U.S. to teach Hispanic children certain aspects of their cultural heritage.

The program started three years ago in Chicago with three teachers, and has grown to 15 participating Mexican teachers in schools in Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois and Texas.

Angie Herrera, area coordinator, "has seen an increase in the children's desire to learn and participate in these activities. The children recognize and take pride in their culture and will continue to share it with future generations. Our thanks to the Mexican Consulate in Orlando, Consul Martin Torres and Deputy Consul Enrique Romero for making this program available."

volunteer. The volunteer positions included, classroom assistant, outreach worker assistant, center coordinator assistant, and cook's assistant.

All who agreed to participate received good reviews from their center supervisors.

For some state office staff this was their first experience working among children. Thanks for taking a chance to discover!

Highlands/Hardee Area

Sebring CDC and the Sebring Area Office are in motion. The staff are excited about their new home, and the improvements that are underway!

Best of luck with the transition!

Continued from page 2

APPLAUSE

Immokalee Area

Well we hope it wasn't the excitement of receiving her CDA, but less than a week later Tiffany Koch, teacher at ICDC became a proud mom! She gave birth to her first daughter, Bianca.

Dora Zurita, lead teacher, at ICDC, has someone to be proud of. Her husband, Dario Zurita has been studying hard in order to get his U.S. citizenship and he did it! He received recognition in a ceremony in Miami.

State Office

In celebration of Independence Day four staff joined the ranks of committed citizens by becoming registered voters. Congratulations to Lorena Hernandez and Donna Levy Jones, from personnel, Melissa Mancha, accounts payable, and Melina Olivera, receptionist, on showing their commitment to democracy. See you at the polls this fall!

Homestead/Florida City Area

Congratulations to nine new United States Citizens, all from the South Dade Center. Mercedes Tarafa, Bianca Garcia, Bertha Montes, Delia Mendez, Veira Lopez, Maribel Perez, all teachers, along with Claudia Solis, center coordinator, and two parents, Delia Granados and Cristina Luna.

The group had been studying for their oral and written exam. The new citizens are diverse coming from Mexico, Columbia, and Panama. A hardy round of applause for all of their efforts!

Ruskin Area

Congratulations to Maria Gonzalez, teacher, at Wimauma CDC on receiving her High School Diploma. Maria wanted to enroll in classes to prepare, but was unable to find child care. This bump in the road could not stop her, she studied at every spare moment, until she was ready to succeed!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

On behalf of Sandra Matthews and myself, I wish to thank RCMA for sending us to Washington to stand for children.

It was an experience of a life time, one that I am very proud to have been a part of. To tell you how wonderful it was, would be hard to put in words. It made me proud to be there, proud to be working with children of all races, and economic backgrounds, where color doesn't matter, nor who you are or where you come from. I am proud to work for an organization such as RCMA.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to see the White House, stand on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, places I never dreamed I would see. Thanks again.

Juanita Gilyard,
eligibility specialist, Palatka

Dear Editor,

Everyone always needs a little push to accomplish something.

All my friends at work insisted that I should just take the test and I could pass it. The thing is that I was scared and nervous. I was scared because I thought I would fail and that I would be letting everyone down. I was nervous because I didn't think I knew enough to pass it. When I was taking the test it didn't seem so hard, and I actually knew a lot of what was on the test. It took quite a few years to realize what I knew.

I am very grateful for that little push I got from all of my co-workers. Now that I have my GED, I am very happy! Now I can continue with my CDA, and even go further!

Maria A. Gonzalez
teacher, Wimauma CDC



The proud graduates! (from left to right) Juana Nieves, Evelyn Soto, Idalia Jimenez, Ninfa Martinez, Gloria Guerra

Photo by Alicia Martinez Coronado

Five RCMA Staff Graduate From CNA Class of '96

Wednesday evening, June 12, 1996, five new Certified Nurses Assistants received their diplomas at a special graduation ceremony. Receiving their diplomas were Juana Nieves, teacher, Ruskin Head Start, Evelyn Soto, outreach worker, Idalia Jimenez, teacher both from Wimauma CDC, and Gloria Guerra, teacher at the Migrant Education Center.

To arrive at this grand accomplishment the students attended classes, four evenings a week, followed by an 80 hour clinical practicum at the Integrated Health Services of Brandon.

Interim Editor: Leslie Moguil
Applause/Happenings Staff Writer: Leslie Moguil
Please send suggestions, comments, and Letters to the Editor to the following address:
RCMA HOY Editor,
Redlands Christian Migrant Association,
402 West Main St., Immokalee, FL 34142-3933
PHONE: 1-800-282-6540 FAX: 1-941-658-3571

Any time, any day, any problem
When you need someone to talk to,
EAR is there.
1-800-328-1952

PARENT NEWS

JULY 1996 Issue 3

A Bi-Monthly Parent Involvement Supplement of RCMA HOY

Parent President reaches term limit

North Region

Irma Ponce has been an RCMA parent since 1991. She has served as Parent President at the Dade City Migrant Head Start Center for the past three years. She won't be able to serve another term as Parent President, but she will still be around as a parent.

Mrs. Ponce has been a powerful example for parent involvement, encouraging other parents to become involved with their children, by helping with fundraising for the scholarship fund and by participating at every par-

She has served as Parent President for the past three years.

ent meeting. In the last season alone Mrs. Ponce has spent 98 hours volunteering at the center.

We will miss her dynamic leadership as Parent President, but we are confident that the center and families alike will continue to benefit through her involvement as a parent.

Dade City Migrant Head Start has been very fortunate to have such a wonderful person representing them at the monthly PPC meeting and at other functions. They will miss her leadership.

Summer Program Targets Family Literacy

South Region

Summer is here and with it are several new programs for families. A new program for family literacy was started at the Glades Early Childhood Center in Moore Haven.

The program serves eight RCMA families who meet every Monday for six weeks from 9 to 11 AM. The purpose of the program is to help parents increase their literacy skills (reading, writing, math), so that they may help their children.

The project is funded through the Glades County Adult Literacy Program. A snack and lunch are provided for the family. Four RCMA staff, Michael Toops, FSW, Jennefa Rich and Debra Pardo, teachers, and Frances Cauty, CC/EC along with three community adult literacy volunteers, give their time to help the families advance.

Transportation is provided through Good Wheels for families who live in

remote areas of the county.

Each family is in the process of creating a "Rainbow Book", a unique story created by the family, which includes pictures and words that illustrate what is special about their family.

At the end of the "Rainbow" each family is to picture their "Pot of Gold", personal goals that the participants envision for themselves and their family.

A variety of materials are available for the creation of this special book, from fabric to glitter, wallpaper samples, buttons and much more.

The lesson plans for each week are centered around the development of the "Rainbow Book".

For example, the first week the families focused on creating the cover and choosing a title. One of the children was having difficulty understanding what a title was. Mom used other books to help teach her child that the title was the main idea of the book. The mother and son were then able to come up with some ideas for their title.

Each week the book will take on a new dimension until finally the family will be able to share their rainbow and their pot of gold with another family.

The program will have been a success if this small taste of literacy motivates the participating parents to continue with the adult literacy program this fall.



photo by Fanny Duran

Irma Ponce with a group of children at Dade City Migrant Head Start

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

— Margaret Mead

Editor: Irene G. Brammertz

Spanish Translator: Josie Gracia

Please send parent involvement news from your center, ideas and suggestions to:

HOY Parent News Editor, Redlands Christian Migrant Association, P.O. Box 207, Ruskin, FL 33570

Phone: 813-641-2107

Fax: 813-645-8951

NOTICIAS DE PADRES

JULIO 1996 - Núm. 3 Suplemento Bimensual de RCMA HOY en Envolvimiento de Padres

Padre Presidente alcanza término límite

Región Norte

Irma Ponce ha sido un padre en RCMA desde 1991. Ella ha servido como Presidente del Comité de Padres del Centro Dade City Migrant Head Start por los últimos tres años. Ella no podrá servir otro término como presidente pero la tendremos como padre.

La Sra. Ponce ha sido un ejemplo poderoso en involucramiento de padres animando a otros padres a involucrarse con sus niños, ayudando a levantar fondos para las becas y

Ella ha sido Presidente de los padres por los últimos tres años.

participando en cada reunión de padres.

Solamente en la última temporada la Sra. Ponce puso 98 horas de trabajo voluntario en el centro.

Nosotros echaremos de menos su dinámico liderazgo como presidente, pero estamos seguros que tanto el centro como las familias continuarán beneficiándose a través de su involucramiento como padre.

El centro de Dade City Migrant Head Start ha sido afortunado en tener una persona tan maravillosa representándoles en las juntas mensuales de PPC y en otras funciones.

Programa de Verano Enfoca Alfabetización

Ellos echarán de menos su liderazgo.

Región Sur

Llegó el verano y con él hay varios programas nuevos para las familias. Un programa nuevo en alfabetización para las familias comenzó en el centro de Glades Early Childhood en Moore Haven.

EL programa sirve ocho familias de RCMA que se reúnen cada lunes por 6 semanas de 9 a 11 am. El propósito de este programa es ayudar a los padres a aumentar sus destrezas de alfabetización (lectura, escritura, matemáticas) para que ellos puedan ayudar a sus niños.

El proyecto existe por fondos del Programa de Alfabetización del Condado de Glades. A las familias se les provee una merienda y almuerzo. Cuatro empleados de RCMA (Michael Toops, Jennefa Rich, Debra Pardo y Frances Canty) junto a tres voluntarios de alfabetización de adultos de la comu-

nidad dan su tiempo para ayudar a las familias a mejorar.

El programa de Good Wheels provee transportación a las familias que viven en áreas remotas del condado.

Cada familia está en el proceso de crear un "Libro de Arcoiris"; una historia única creada por la familia con dibujos y palabras que enseñan lo especial de cada familia.

Al final del "Arcoiris" cada familia muestra su "Caldero de Oro" que son las metas personales que los participantes tienen para ellos mismos y su familia.

Una variedad de materiales están disponibles para la creación de este libro especial desde tela, brillo, papel de pared, botones y mucho más.

Por ejemplo, la primera semana las familias se enfocaron en crear la portada y escoger el título. Uno de los niños tenía dificultad comprendiendo qué es un título. Su madre usó otros libros para ayudar a su niño a entender que el título es la idea principal del libro. Entonces pudieron juntos pensar en varias ideas para su título.

Cada semana el libro tomará una nueva dimensión hasta que finalmente la familia pueda compartir su arcoiris y caldero de oro con otra familia.

Este programa sería un éxito si esta muestra de alfabetización motiva a los participantes a continuar el programa de alfabetización de adultos este otoño.



foto por Fanny Duran

Irma Ponce con un grupo de niños en Dade City Migrant Head Start

Nunca dude que un grupo pequeño de ciudadanos comprometidos puedan cambiar el mundo; de hecho es lo único que lo ha logrado.

— Margaret Mead

Editor: Irene G. Brammertz

Favor enviar noticias de involucramiento de padres en su centro, ideas y sugerencias a:

Editor HOY Noticias de Padres, Redlands Christian Migrant Association, P.O. Box 207, Ruskin, FL 33570

Teléfono: 813-641-2107

Traducción Español: Josie Gracia

Fax: 813-645-8951