



RCMA HOY

We Can Make
A World of
Difference

Helping Our Youth



JANUARY 1997

Issue 46

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

Little things—smiles, words of encouragement and support — make a big difference

FROM
THE
DESK
OF
OLGA



"I wanted to thank you for having bothered to say hello. When you touched my arm and I felt your warmth, that came to remind me how much I needed human contact."

I remember that a few weeks after my mother died, my father said to me: "The hardest part is the loneliness. I feel lonely."

When I visited an RCMA employee that hasn't worked for several months due to cancer, she said to me: "The most difficult part is the loneliness. I feel so lonely."

I recently called a friend and coworker who said to me: "I was feeling lonely and your call lifted my spirits."

I remember the words of the wife of a minister who called me after I greeted her one day in Winn Dixie. She said, "I wanted to thank you for having bothered to say hello. When you touched my arm and I felt your warmth, that came to remind me how much I needed human contact. I felt lonely and you consoled me."

The most beautiful time for me is Christmas. The atmosphere changes. People are more compassionate, tolerant and open to give more than usual. But, at the same time, Christmas can be a sad time for many and make people feel more lonely.

Maybe as RCMA employees we have opportunities that other people don't have. We have the opportunity to share with others, to spread happiness, not with money, but with our smile, our words of encouragement and support and, above all, with our friendship.

The following saying is very true: "To have a friend you have to be a friend." And it doesn't even cost a cent to "Love your neighbor as yourself for the love of God."

"We don't need more strength or more ability or greater opportunity. What we need is to use what we have."

Basil S. Walsh

Wendell N. Rollason Scholarship Fund helps turn dreams into reality

Many high school students can't afford to continue their education after high school. None of them can afford not to.

The Wendell N. Rollason Scholarship Fund was developed to provide scholarships to high school graduates with limited financial resources to help enable them to continue their education.



Photo by John Witchger

Mr. Wendell Rollason at an Immokalee fundraiser in March of 1996.

The scholarship fund was started in 1992 by the parents and staff of the Ruskin/Wimauma/Palmetto Area. It has grown into other areas since then. The areas currently raising funds are Immokalee, Ruskin, Plant City, Dade City, Zellwood, and Hardee and Highlands counties.

Please see **SCHOLARSHIP FUND**, page 4.

Cosas pequeñas—sonrisas, palabras de aliento y apoyo — hacen una gran diferencia

DEL ESCRITORIO DE OLGA

Recuerdo que, unas semanas después de haber muerto mi madre, mi padre me dijo: “Lo más duro es la soledad, me siento solo.”

Cuando visite a una empleada de RCMA, que lleva varios meses sin trabajar por motivo del cáncer, me dijo: “Lo más difícil es la soledad, me siento tan sola.”

Hace poco llamé por teléfono a una amiga y compañera de trabajo y me dijo: “Me sentía sola y tu llamada me ha levantado el ánimo.”

Recuerdo las palabras de la esposa del Pastor que me llamó después después que la saludé un día en Winn Dixie: “Quería darle las gracias por haberse tomado la molestia de saludarme. Cuando usted me tocó el brazo sentí ese calorcito que vino a recordarme cuánto estaba necesitando

del contacto humano. Me sentía sola y usted me consoló.”

El tiempo más hermoso para mí es el tiempo de Navidad. El ambiente cambia; la gente es más compasiva, tolerante y dispuesta a dar más de lo acostumbrado. Pero, al mismo tiempo, la Navidad puede ser triste y hacer sentir más la soledad.

Nosotros, los empleados de RCMA, quizás tengamos oportunidades que otras personas no tienen.

Tenemos la oportunidad de compartir con los demás, derramando la felicidad, no con dinero, sino con nuestra sonrisa, con nuestras palabras de aliento, de apoyo, y sobre todo, con nuestra amistad.

Es muy cierto el refrán que dice: “Para tener un amigo hay que serlo.” Y no nos cuesta ni un centavo aquello de “Amarás a tu prójimo como a ti mismo y por amor a Dios.”

New Year's Eve. Now that's something to celebrate.

**

Congratulations to Crescent City teacher trainee Adela Correa, who gave birth to Cristal, her third child, on December 12.

**

Willie Mae Crawford, a cook at Crescent City for eleven years, has six children. Three sons are ministers and one daughter works at the Department of Health (formerly HRS).

Willie Mae's daughter-in-law Beverly Crawford is a gospel singer. Last year, her song “Jesus Precious King” went to the top of the chart (for gospel songs).

She performed on television in January at the annual Stella awards for gospel music. She is ready to record a new CD for the Warner Alliance label out of Nashville.

(Continued on page 3)

Safety News

Dealing with stress - Do you manage it or does it manage you?

Stress is a part of life. We all experience stress. Yet if we feel too much stress, it can lead to illness or burnout.

How do you cope with or manage stress? Here are some suggestions:

- **Work on your breathing.** Inhaling and exhaling properly is a basic. Try slowing your breath and allowing your stomach to expand and then your chest.
- **Take time out to play.** Schedule a “mental health break” for 30-45 minutes a day. Take a walk around the block, go to the park, or go fishing. Do whatever you find the most fun, preferably an activity that is not competitive. Remember, if you say you don't have time, that's really just an excuse.
- **Eat sensibly.** Forget the caffeine and junk food. Stay away from fried foods. Remember fruits and vegetables. They even make wonderful snacks.
- **Get enough sleep and rest.** Sleep is a great cure for tension, refreshing your entire body. Make time for sleep. You're not going to miss anything. Lack of sleep will make you cranky and can even cause you to have an accident, which could mean missing a lot.
- **Don't bottle up your feelings.** Talk to a friend you can trust; tell someone how you are feeling. If your feelings have been hurt or you are angry, acknowledge it to yourself and also let a friend know what's going on with you. Bad feelings that aren't expressed don't just go away; they fester and become hard to manage. Speaking about them when they occur can really help.
- **Don't try to be perfect.** Perfect is just an idea in your mind. Doing your best should be more than enough. Lighten up on yourself.
- **Do something for others.** Stop arguing with life and begin agreeing with it. Give someone a helping hand, some useful advice, or deserved praise. It's amazing how much better you'll feel.

APPLAUSE

Immokalee Area

Congratulations to Arlinda Rodriguez, a teacher at Farmworker Village A, who gave birth to a boy. Javier was born on October 21.

Rosa Martinez, the outreach worker/family support assistant at Farmworker Village A, became certified as a tax preparer.

Glades/Hendry Area

Lisa Hernandez, a Glades teacher, started the New Year on a positive note, giving birth to her son Nicholas a few minutes into 1997.

Putnam Area

About one year ago RCMA HOY did a story on the tragic loss of Mary Clemmens' home to fire. Well, there is some good news to report. Mary and her family moved into their new home on the same land on

APPLAUSE

(continued from page 2)

Homestead Area

Congratulations to Mirta Incicco, teacher trainee at South Dade, who recently moved her family into their first home.

Florida City

Congratulations to Maria Mata, a teacher at Everglades II, who gave birth to a boy, Alfredo, on January 14.

Ruskin/Wimauma/Palmetto Area

Three elementary school-age children, formerly in RCMA, won awards in a Ruskin Elementary School Essay contest

Hazeveth Gavia, daughter of Migrant Ed teacher Theresa Gavia, won the grand prize in her age group. Nicole Marie Guitron, daughter of Migrant Ed center coordinator Juanita Galan, won first place. Jaime Lara, son of Ruskin Infant Center teacher Dora Guajardo, won third place.

The essay was titled "Why I like Ruskin Elementary School."

**

In the spirit of giving, Irma Chappa and Sandra Santos of Ruskin Migrant Head Start decided to adopt a needy family for Christmas. They provided the family with gifts, food, a monetary donation and in one case even a Christmas tree.

N. Hillsborough/Polk Area

Dorcas Laugier became the proud mother of her first baby, a girl, on December 18. Dorcas is a teacher trainee at Westside Village Child Development Center.

HAPPENINGS

Ruskin/Wimauma/Palmetto Area

Palmetto Migrant Head Start celebrated their move into a brand new facility. Children began on January 8. Lots of light flowed through the large windows welcoming the children and staff.

Homestead Area

Marcelina Perez was promoted to lead teacher for the Pre-K program at South Dade. Congratulations to Marcelina for her accomplishment.

**

"A book is a very special gift" was the theme of a recent RIF distribution celebration at the Redlands Center.

The theme was discussed in English and Spanish with the children. Songs were sung

and a Christmas story shared by Sister Jackie Jost.

Bells rang to announce the entrance of a most special guest—Santa Claus. He came carrying sacks and a book called "The Night Before Christmas" which he proceeded to read.

Santa presented wrapped books, handmade cars—from a local boyscout troop—and small dolls. Children took turns guessing what was inside before opening the gifts.

Pasco/Lake/Orange Area

Congratulations to Cristina Rincon, the new education coordinator, who received her second CDA.

N. Hillsborough/Polk Area

Jacoba Montaña, a teacher trainee at Westside Village, believes strongly in the importance of furthering her education.

She received her CDA last summer. Encouraged and excited by this achievement, she is now working on her GED. Jacoba only completed third grade in Mexico.

Highlands/Hardee Area

Welcome to new family support workers Donna Farr, at South Highlands, and Darci Herrin, at Fred Dennis as part of the new Early Head Start program.

**

Sheralee Turley took a bold step toward a new future in Michigan. Sheralee has helped to motivate and inspire many RCMA staff who have crossed her path as the education coordinator at Lake Placid Child Development Center. We wish her the best on her new journey.

Hendry/Glades Area

Welcome to Jim Martinson, the new family support worker for the early head start program in LaBelle.

Jim is a former Peace Corps volunteer in Costa Rica.

Immokalee Area

Congratulations to Juana Ramirez for being promoted to teacher at Immokalee Child Development Center (ICDC) Annex.

Desimene Pierre received her nursing assistant certificate from James Lorenzo Walker Vocational Tech Center. Desimene works at ICDC Infant.



CAREER DEVELOPMENT:

Congratulations to Esther Garcia (left), a bus driver, and Maria Cruz, a senior teacher, of Mascotte Migrant Head Start, who received their GED.

Are you thinking about retirement?

Have you ever wondered how much Social Security benefits you will get when you retire? Wonder no more, find out for sure. As a matter of fact, the Social Security Administration recommends that you send in a request for an "earnings and benefit estimate statement" every couple of years, just to make sure all your earnings are posted to your account.

The procedure is very simple: call 1-800-772-1213. The automated answering device will ask you a few questions and several days later you will receive form SSA-7004-SM in the mail. You can also receive this form from our Personnel Department.

The form is easy to complete, asking for basic information including your earnings (this information is on your W-2 form which you just received).

Thoughts and prayers . . .

It is with sadness that we remember Nydia Sanchez, Ruskin outreach worker, who died in November.

Nydia touched many lives. She will be remembered for her warm smile, compassionate heart and dedication.

She was laid to rest in Lares, Puerto Rico on November 17.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

(continued from page 4)

A total of \$81,200 has been raised since 1992.

Fundraising events have included festivals, dances, holiday card sales, running races, bake sales, and little Mr. and Miss RCMA contests.

If you are interested in getting something started in your center or area to help local high school graduates, ask your center coordinator, area coordinator or program coordinator about the possibility of having a fundraiser for the Wendell N. Rollason Scholarship Fund.

Or if you would like more information, please call Teresa Tremelling at The Rollason Center in Immokalee at 1-800-282-6540.

What Is Music?

What is music? asked the wind,
as the man strolled along the sea.
Oh! music is in everything!
It's the dancing of the magic waves,
it's the buzzing of the morning bees.

What is music?
Can't you see?
It could be anything
you want it to be!
It's the birds chirping
in the blue sky,
The waterfall splashing,
like saying goodbye.
It's the children's laughter
when they're having fun,
or the excitement of a crowd,
when a game is won.

That is music?
Well, now do you see?
Yes! It is the world as you perceive it to be!

Celeste Turner, 8th grader, daughter of Maria Teresa Turner, education coordinator, Bonita Migrant Head Start

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear HOY,

El motivo de esta carta va con el fin de darle un buen reconocimiento a nuestra directora del centro de Westside Village, Santos Noriega ("Chacha").

El centro se ha levantado por el esfuerzo que ha habido y hay entre la directora, las maestras y padres de familia.

Gracias a la buena comunicacion, respeto, seguridad, consejos y union entre todo el personal y padres de familia.

Lo mejor que hemos podido encontrar en la directora del centro despues de una companera de trabajo, una amistad y una gran ayuda.

Esa ayuda que nos brinda cuando mas la necesitamos no importa el dia, ni la hora; tampoco importa si es relacionado con el trabajo o problema personal siempre nos escucha y nos ayuda cuando mas la necesitamos.

Signed,

Diana Acosta, presidente de padres del centro Westside Village, and Olga Quijada Rodriguez, maestra

Dear HOY,

This (December 1996 RCMA HOY) was one of the best issues ever. I really enjoyed reading it.

Signed,

Rodney Surrat
computer specialist

Dear HOY,

The reason for this letter is to give a big recognition to our center coordinator of Westside Village, Santos Noriega ("Chacha").

The center is strong because of the effort of the director, the teachers, and the parents.

Thanks to the good communication, respect, safety, advice and unity between the staff and parents.

We've found the best in the center coordinator, Chacha, as a coworker, a friend and a great help.

She gives us that help when we most need it, regardless of the day or the hour. Nor does it matter if it is work-related or a personal problem. She always listens to us and helps us when we most need it.



Santos Noriega

Signed,

Diana Acosta, Parent President Westside Village Child Development Center and Olga Quijada Rodriguez, teacher trainee

Dear HOY,

I have completed four courses at Edison Community College. The staff at Immokalee Child Development Center Annex and Farmworker Village A, where I was the Family Support Assistant, encouraged me all the way

If I made it anyone can work full time and go to school at night. It is very hard at first and sometimes you think you can't make it. But don't quit and keep going.

Signed,

Belinda Medina
Immokalee Area Secretary

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

PARENT NEWS

JANUARY 1997 Issue 6 A Bi-Monthly Parent Involvement Supplement of RCMA HOY

COMING FULL CIRCLE: Former RCMA infants now college bound!

South Region

As told by Evan Portee, Area Coordinator, Lake Placid

The other day I ran into former child care employee Patricia Valentine who had worked at RCMA under the able directorships of Mrs. Carrie Rose and Ms. Sally Callahan back in the late seventies and early eighties.

We reminisced about the good old days and mused what a close-knit relationship we had with all the co-workers, the children and families.

Patricia is now employed at

She remembered when these college bound young men and women were just tiny infants newly enrolled at an RCMA day care center

the South Florida Community College in Avon Park and during the fall registration in August she had the awesome experience of registering some of her former day care students into the community college.

She related how proud she was, how she remembered when these young people were just infants and enrolled into the RCMA program. Some of these registrants are still in High School and able to register for college credit classes under a special program for gifted students! Patricia was thrilled to see her former daycare students as young adults now going on to college. She is very proud of them and affec-

tionately still calls them "her kids". She wants them to know how very special they are and how she appreciates their efforts at continuing their education which took its start at an RCMA child care facility.

Patricia is originally from Morgan City, Louisiana. RCMA was her first employer upon moving to Florida.

La Belle II:

Parents have set an impressive volunteer record at the center in November. Of 24 families 32 volunteers have participated in the center for the month. Now that's impressive parent involvement!

5-Step Formula for Success in Education:

If you can get parents to do these five things, you have achieved success in education:

- Take their child to school
- Introduce themselves and their child to the teacher
- Get the phone number of another parent
- Turn off the TV three hours a night
- Pick up their child's report card every nine weeks

Jesse Jackson

From his speech at the democratic convention, 1996

Parents take the "GED plunge"

North Region

Dade City Migrant H.S

Felipe Frias, Francisca Frias and Araceli Garcia courageously decided to take the pre-GED test. They all passed and went on to take the full GED Exam. Mr. Frias already received the good news that his GED certificate was granted. The others, who prepared themselves by first attending a few evening classes offered at the center, are anxiously awaiting the final results.

The remaining parents and staff still attending classes hope to be ready for their GED exam by May.

Classes are sponsored by Moore Mickens Adult Education, Dade City and are held every Monday and Thursday from 7 to 8:30 PM

Thank you, Dade City Staff and Parents for making this a success for all involved!

Teaching a child not to step on a caterpillar is as valuable to the child as it is to the caterpillar!

Editor: Irene G. Brammertz

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

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NOTICIAS DE PADRES

ENERO 1997 Núm. 6 Suplemento Bimensual de RCMA HOY en Envolvimiento de Padres

¡CERRANDO EL CIRCULO: Niños que asistieron a RCMA van ahora a colegio!

Region Sur

Reportado por Evan Portee, Coordinadora de Area, Lake Placid.

El otro día me encontré con Patricia Valentine, la cual había trabajado con RCMA bajo la dirección de las Sras. Carrie Rose y Sally Callahan a finales de los años setenta y principio de los ochenta.

Recordamos los viejos tiempos y de la estrecha relación que teníamos con los compañeros de trabajo, los niños y las familias.

Patricia trabaja ahora en el Colegio de la Comunidad del Sur de

Ella recuerda cuando estos jóvenes que van ahora a colegio eran solo unos infantes acabados de registrar en el centro de cuidado de niños de RCMA.

Florida en Avon Park y durante la registración en agosto tuvo la fantástica experiencia de registrar en el colegio a algunos de los jóvenes que habían sido sus estudiantes en RCMA.

Ella nos contó lo orgullosa que estaba y como ella recuerda cuando estos jóvenes eran infantes y los registraron en el programa de RCMA. Algunas de estas personas están todavía en la escuela secundaria y se pueden registrar para tomar clases especiales con créditos bajo un programa especial para estudiantes talentosos. Patricia estaba encantada de ver los jóvenes que habían sido sus estudiantes convertidos ahora en jóvenes que van a colegio. Ella está muy orgullosa y los llama todavía

cariñosamente "sus niños". Ella quiere que ellos sepan cuán especiales ellos son y cuánto aprecia ella sus esfuerzos en continuar su educación la cual comenzó en un programa de cuidado de niños de RCMA.

Patricia es originalmente de Morgan City, Louisiana. RCMA fue su primer patrón después que se mudó a Florida.

La Belle II:

Los padres han logrado hacer un impresionante record de trabajo voluntario en el centro en noviembre. De 24 familias, 32 voluntarios han participado en el centro durante el mes. ¡Eso sí es involucramiento de padres impresionante!

Fórmula de 5 pasos para tener éxito en la Educación:

Si usted logra que los padres hagan estas cinco cosas, usted habrá logrado éxito en la educación:

- *Llevar al niño a la escuela*
- *Presentarse ellos y sus niños a la maestra*
- *Conseguir el número de teléfono de otro padre*
- *Apagar la TV por tres horas cada noche*
- *Levantar la tarjeta de calificaciones del niño cada nueve semanas*

Jesse Jackson

De su discurso en la convención democrática, 1996

Padres "se lanzan" a tomar el GED

Region Norte

Dade City Migrant H.S

Felipe Frias, Francisca Frias y Araceli Garcia se decidieron a tomar el pre-examen del GED. Todos lo pasaron y fueron a tomar el examen completo del GED. El Sr. Frias ya recibió las buenas noticias de que se le otorgó el certificado del GED. Las otras dos personas, las cuales se prepararon asistiendo a unas cuantas clases en la noche ofrecidas en el centro, están esperando ansiosamente los resultados finales.

Los demás padres y personal que están todavía asistiendo a las clases esperan estar listos para tomar el examen del GED para mayo.

Las clases son ofrecidas por Dade City, Educación para Adultos Moore Mickens, los lunes y jueves de 7 a 8:30 pm.

¡Gracias, personal y padres de Dade City por el éxito de todas las personas envueltas!

¡Enseñarle a un niño a no pisar un gusano es tan importante para el niño como lo es para el gusano!

Editor: Irene G. Brammertz

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

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