



RCMA HOY

Redlands Christian Migrant Association

We Can Make
A World of
Difference

Helping Our Youth



DECEMBER 1997

Issue 56

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

Twas a different night before Christmas . . .

I was reflecting on Christmas and was inspired to write this poem. I wanted to share it with you.

May you bring hope to others this holiday season.

**FROM
THE
DESK
OF
OLGA**



Twas the night before Christmas, they lived all alone,
in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone,
I climbed in through the window with presents to give
and to see just who in this house did live.

I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,
no tinsel, no presents, just a poor little tree.
No stocking by mantle, just shoes filled with sand
on the wall hung pictures of their dear beloved land.

With buckets and boxes, and hats of all kinds,
I looked toward the table, and what did I find.
A bowl of tomatoes and beans to be fried,
tortillas to eat them, oh what a delight.

I walked through the house and saw all the kids
asleep on the mattress with smiles on their lips.
Mami y papi asleep by their side
were thinking of Christmas with sorrowful sighs.

For there was no money and work was so scarce,
I couldn't help but wonder, how do they live off the land.
I couldn't control it, I started to weep,
Why is there so much hunger in a country so rich.

Please remember the poor and the homeless.

Blessed Holidays

Professional development reaches new heights; Child Development Associates rewarded with pay increase

By LESLIE MOGUIL

Recipients of the National CDA credential and CDA equivalencies had reason to rejoice this month.

RCMA took a bold step in recognizing the CDA credential's importance to the quality of RCMA programming across the state.

New national CDAs now receive a 50 cent per hour increase and CDA equivalents a 25 cent per hour raise.

The buck doesn't stop here. CDAs are also being encouraged to keep their credential current according to the date on their certificate. Only current CDA

credentials are eligible for the increase. The good news is that upon renewal you will receive the increase.

Professional development is a continuous process. In order to keep the new rate of pay CDAs will have to renew their credential prior to three years after initially receiving the CDA (or prior to five years after the first renewal).

The consequences of not keeping a CDA credential current will mean a decrease of 25 cents per hour.



Please see *CDA AUTOBIOGRAPHY REQUEST*, page 4.

Teacher Luz Marina Gonzalez, lovingly remembered for the light she brought to all

Luz Marina Gonzalez, a teacher for six years at Everglades II Child Development Center in Florida City, and her husband, Emilio Mateo, died November 9 in a tragic accident.

Marina's specialness can best be described through the loving, heart-felt and caring words of friends and co-workers.

**

Marina, fueron muchos años de compartir juntas. Estoy extrañando sus sonrisas y su saludo por las mañanas. Esa alegría de usted que era única. No la voy a escuchar decir mas "Trajeron taquitas con pique."

Marina no la miro pero nunca la olvidaré. Siempre estará en mi corazón. Fue una excelente maestra y compañera. Adios

— Martha Montes

**

Todos pasamos por esta vida, pero no todos dejamos los mismos recuerdos. Tu has dejado muy buenos recuerdos. Doy gracias a Dios por haber tenido la dicha de haber compartido contigo muchos días y haber aprendido



**Te recordare' siempre
Luz Marina Gonzalez,
1954-1997**

— Blanca Elias

La extrañamos y la extrañaremos siempre. Especialmente su sonrisa tan bonita que tenía.

Mirar y oír el mar se siente una dicha y tranquilidad.

Así se siente al dejar nuestros hijos en manos de una mujer, madre, y maestra profesional.

Radiante de amor y felicidad

Ibamos a nuestros trabajos tranquilos y en paz porque . . .

Nosotros por la mañana dejábamos a nuestros hijos en manos de una madre profesional

Aquí en Everglades II no se encuentra mas nuestra querida mujer, madre y maestra profesional Luz Marina Gonzalez porque descansando con Dios se encuentra ya . . .

— Adela Garcia

muchas cosas contigo de mi trabajo. Nunca te olvidaré y siempre estarás en mi pensamientos y en mi corazón.

De seguro que tienes un lugar especial al lado del señor.

Te recordaré siempre.

— Candy Vazquez

**

Siempre dispuesta para aprender mas, siempre dispuesta para ayudar en todo; sincera, alegre, sociable, respetuosa, pero lo mas grande y bello de ella era que aun sin tener hijos propios tuvo muchos bebitos a quienes les entregó con gran abnegacion y dedicacion un gran amor durante todos los años . . .

Esa descripción es nada comparada con todo lo que Marina entregó en RCMA,

Wellness

Proven Stress Relievers for Work and Home

Knowing the early warning signs of too much stress can help you take steps to control it before it controls you: anxiety, inability to concentrate, trouble falling asleep, nightmares, persistent fatigue, depression, lack of appetite or overeating, indigestion, teeth grinding, tension headaches, heart palpitations, muscle spasms, trembling or shaking, chain smoking. Now is the time to act!

Controlling Stress

- 1. Get enough rest.** Lack of sleep can lead to exhaustion, which decreases your ability to handle stress.
- 2. Exercise regularly.** Regular exercise not only relaxes muscles, it also relaxes your mind.
- 3. Eat a balanced diet.** Good nutrition from a variety of foods helps you maintain healthy weight, leads to a positive self-image and helps you cope with stress better.
- 4. Limit caffeine.** Too much caffeine can make you irritable, disrupt sleep and digestion.
- 5. Cut down on alcohol.** People who drink less alcohol may tend to be more stress resistant.
- 6. Relax your body.** Once a day, tense and slowly relax muscle groups throughout your body.
- 7. Relax your mind.** Take 15 - 20 minutes daily to meditate, daydream, listen to music-whatever is best for you.
- 8. Talk it out.** Use your personal support system—family, friends, co-workers or a mental health counselor—to unload.
- 9. Spoil yourself.** The kinder you are to yourself the more stress resistant you'll be.
- 10. Leave 5 minutes earlier.** Plan your schedule so you can arrive on time for meetings and other commitments.
- 11. Get help if you need it.** Dial (800) 328-1952, your free Employee Assistance Resource, and talk confidentially to a professional counselor.

donde su ejemplo nunca se borrará de nuestras mentes y por sus memorias seguiremos día a día luchando para lograr sus metas.

— Gladys Chirinos

**

Hemos sufrido una pérdida muy grande. Una maestra como Marina bien entregada a su trabajo y a los niños que ella quería tanto como si fueron sus propios hijos. Siempre brindando amor, dándole una caricia que por desgracia en sus casas muchos no reciben.

Marian te extrañamos mucho. Tu recuerdo siempre estará con nosotros como una estrella que alumbra el centro guiándonos a dar cariño y amor a nuestros niños.

— Noelia Gasca

Edna Blue strolls down memory lane



Photo by LESLIE MOGUIL

PALATKA AREA COORDINATOR APPRECIATED: Smiles surround Edna Blue as she pages through a memory book presented to her at a December retirement luncheon celebrating her 23-year contribution to rural poor children and their families.

Her daughter, Cheryl Hampton, and Barbara Mainster look on.

When asked what advice Edna would give to other area coordinators who may follow her, she replied, "Honesty is the most important thing. Treat people the way you would want to be treated."

Birth announcement congratulations . . .

Rosie Arevalo, family home day care coordinator in Immokalee, gave birth to a boy, Quinton Andrew, on December 2.

Maria Mata, teacher,



Everglades II in Florida City, gave birth to a girl, Crystal Lee, on December 8.

William Harmon, family support worker in the Palatka area, had a girl, Sarah, on November 27.

Tribute to Edna Blue from Palatka area staff

by Margaret Murray

You have skillfully lead, shaped and molded the entire region for this day.

We know that time brings forth changes.

You have displayed professionalism, enthusiasm and constructive criticism.

You have cared for the black, red, brown, white and blue.

Thanks for your dedication over the years.

Leaving this "family" brings on sadness and tears.

You have built a great reputation by giving shape and life to this organization.

Following in your footsteps will be hard to beat.

But it is a challenge we must prepare to meet.

For you have been there for us every step of the way.

We hate to see you leave on this retirement day.

We find it hard to let you go.

Just because we love you so.

Sweet memories will always be in our heart

Because of those memories we will never truly part.

A hundred years from now, it makes no difference

What kind of house we lived in, what model car we drove

Or how much money we had in the bank.

But, if we have treated children and staff

As we would our best friend,

It will make quite a difference in the end.

We love you, Ms. Blue.

May God continue to shower his richest blessings

on you and your lovely family.

God Bless You!

On their way...

Congratulations to Celsa Castillo, teacher trainee at the Immokalee Child Development Center Infant, who received her GED!

Gloria Padilla and Cristina Dragustinovis are moving with lighting speed toward obtaining their Associates degree. Western Carolina credits are being transferred, CLEP tests passed, and academic advice sought! Seize the moment!

Delray Beach garden grows on the playground

By **MIKE CLARK**
Staff Writer

*Mary, Mary, not at all contrary,
How does your garden grow?*

The flower garden at the Farmworker Child Development Center in Delray Beach grows on the playground. The garden has been there for three years. When I saw it, my first thought was that the children would run on the plants.

Mary Espinoza, the center coordinator, says that the first time the garden was planted it didn't last long. The second time was a little longer. With time, the children have grown to respect and appreciate the garden.

The staff at Farmworker CDC don't get upset when plants need to be replaced. They expect that as part of the routine.

The teachers watch the children plant the plants. The children use the buckets from the water-play area to carry water to the plants each day. The plants last about six months and then the children plant new ones.

The children take an active role in caring for the garden. When heavy rain

washes away the mulch, the children pick up mulch from the play area and put it around the plants.

They learn nurturing, planning, cooperation, science, and even math as they work and play in their garden.

The lesson I learned on my visit was that we have to keep renewing the good things that we do. Once is not enough. Things wear out; people forget; new families come into the program. The staff at Farmworker CDC don't get upset when plants need to be replaced. They expect that as part of the routine.

The routine of renewal is present in the whole center. I saw photographs in each classroom area of children from that class playing in the area.

Don't the pictures get dirty and torn?

Yes, but the teachers replace them with new pictures that include new children in the classroom.

The staff see the need to do things over, or to replace things, as an opportunity and not a problem. Renewal is an expected part of the routine. Thanks to all the teachers for sharing that attitude: Kina Garcia, Marcelino Cepeda-Rosa, Noraida Rivera, Monica Rivera, Silvia Chamul, Miguelina Rodriguez, Maria Cantu, Laura Martinez, Sandra Brown, Benatalia Cañas, Brunilda, Guevara, Vincenta Ortiz, Catalina Diaz, Carmen Ortega Zeno.



Photo by PAULA ROUNSAVALL

LEARNING BY BEING:

A small group of children bring the garden indoors at circle time. They become the sun, clouds, water and flowers through colorful props and the use of their bodies and minds.



Share your CDA autobiography with HOY readers

RCMA HOY is interested in receiving your autobiography from your CDA resource file for consideration for publication. If you do not have a CDA but would like to submit your autobiography please do so.

No additional work on your autobiography is necessary for submission.

If you would like to share your autobiography with readers of RCMA HOY please mail it along with your photo, preferably an action shot working with children, to the following address: RCMA HOY Editor, RCMA, 402 West Main Street, Immokalee, FL 34142.

The photo may be any size color or black and white.

Be sure to include your name and center on the back of the photo and with your autobiography.

No guarantee can be made that your autobiography will be published, but your personal submission for serious consideration is appreciated.

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

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PARENT NEWS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1997 Issue 11 A Bi-Monthly Parent Involvement Supplement of RCMA

Family Partnership Agreements: How One Family Benefitted

By Mike Clark
"Beyond Barriers" Project Director

RCMA is starting something new with parents this season. Each family is being asked to write a Family Partnership Agreement. Parents and staff have asked "What's a Family Partnership Agreement?"

Epifania Martinez from Zolfo Springs did not ask -- she jumped right in and wrote a Family Partnership Agreement. It happened during a home visit, made by Vern Allen (Family Support Specialist) and Hilaria Cuevas (Outreach Worker).

Epifania had two goals that she wrote down: She wanted to get a job and she wanted to fix up her house. The day I talked to her, "Epi" was going to an appointment to see about a program in her town that pays homerepairs for low income families. Hilaria had given her the information on the program.

Now she had a new problem -- two job offers! Vern had given her a letter of recommendation which she took to a job interview. The company was impressed by the fact that she was prepared with her reference letters. They offered her a job right then.

Then another job came up with a better schedule that would allow her to be home when the children are out of school.

Epifania told me, "I was wanting a job for a long time and now I have two choices. It's a miracle."

Really? I believe it happened because she decided what was important to her and worked hard to reach that goal.

That is what a Family Partnership Agreement is about: Sharing your dreams and making a plan to reach those dreams. First I share my ideas about what I want in my life, then I write down those ideas. Once written, the dream seems more real. Then I think of the little steps that I need to take to reach that dream. I think about when I might finish each step. I think about the help or support I might need.

Most of us need some support to stay motivated and to keep reaching for our dreams and goals.

The Family Partnership Agreement should include the things



Photo by Mike Clark
Epifania Martinez (l) and Hilaria Cuevas (r)
confidently looking into the future.

5 STEPS TO SUCCESS:

- 1 Talk to Family Support Specialist.**
- 2 Pick two dreams for your family.**
- 3 Write down steps to make dream become real.**
- 4 Write expected completion date for each step.**
- 5 Periodically meet with Family Support Specialist to share progress achieved.**

that RCMA can do to help support parents reach for their dreams.

The Family Partnership Agreement is a plan that each family makes. It helps us to help families grow stronger and for children do well in school. No two families will have the same plan nor do they have the same dreams or strengths. And every family does have strengths.

Some of Epifania's strengths are love of family, positive attitude, and being prepared for her job search. Other dreams will be even easier to reach now because of her belief in herself. When others see her warm smile and feel her confidence, they believe in Epifania too.

ELECTION NEWS FLASH!!!

Avon Park Head Start:

On October 7, 1997, with only a couple of days to plan, Parents started to campaign for their very first Council Elections.

The candidates, serious about their commitment, designed and printed informative flyers which they confidently handed out to potential parent voters.

In a heated race the two top vote getters were Connie Shelton, who is the new President, and Mattie Desilus, Vice President. Edna Knust is the new Secretary and Zealphi Serieux the Treasurer.

Vote tallying by Reagis Ishmeal and announcement of the winners was followed by a victory party at the center.

Editor: Irene G. Brammertz

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: 813-671-5270

Spanish Translation: Josie Gracia

Fax: 813-671-5272

NOTICIAS DE PADRES

NOVIEMBRE/DICIEMBRE 1997 Núm.11 Suplemento Bimensual de RCMA HOY en Envolvimiento de Padres

Contratos de Acuerdos de Familia: Como se beneficio una familia

Por Mike Clark
Director del Proyecto
"Mas allá de las Barreras"

RCMA está comenzando algo nuevo esta temporada. Se le está pidiendo a cada familia que escriba un Contrato de Acuerdo de la Familia. Los padres y el personal han preguntado: Qué es un Contrato de Acuerdo de la Familia?

Epifania Martinez de Zolfo Springs no preguntó ella se apresuró y escribió un Contrato de Acuerdo de la Familia. Esto pasó durante una visita a la casa hecha por Vern Allen (Especialista de Apoyo a la Familia) y por Hilaria Cuevas (Trabajadora de Apoyo a la Familia).

Epifania tenia dos metas que escribió: Ella queria conseguir un trabajo y queria arreglar su casa. El día que hablé con ella, "Epi" iba para una cita para investigar de un programa en su pueblo que paga por arreglos en el hogar para las familias de bajos ingresos. Hilaria le habia dado la información del Programa.

Ahora ella tenia un nuevo problema: dos ofertas de trabajo! Vern le habia dado una carta de recomendación que ella llevó a una entrevista de empleo. La compañía se impresionó por el hecho de que ella estaba preparada con sus cartas de referencia. Ellos le ofrecieron un trabajo allí mismo.

Luego otro trabajo apareció con un mejor horario que le permitia a ella a estar en la casa cuando los niños no esten en la escuela.

Epifania me dijo: Yo por mucho tiempo queria un trabajo y ahora tengo dos oportunidades. Es un milagro!

¿De verdad? Yo creo que pasó porque ella decidió lo que era importante para ella y trabajó duro para alcanzar esa meta.

De eso se trata el Contrato de Acuerdo de la Familia: Compartir sus sueños y hacer un plan para alcanzar esos sueños. Primero yo comparto lo que quiero en mi vida, luego escribo esas ideas. Una vez escritas, los sueños parecen mas reales. Luego pienso en los pasos pequeños que necesito tomar para alcanzar ese sueño. Pienso en cuando yo termine cada paso. Pienso en el apoyo y la ayuda que puedo necesitar.

La mayoría de nosotros necesitamos algun apoyo para mantenernos motivados y poder alcanzar nuestros sueños y metas. El Contrato de Acuerdo de la Familia debe



Photo by Mike Clark
Epifania Martinez (izq.) y Hilaria Cuevas (der.)
mirando con confianza hacia al futuro.

5 PASOS PARA TENER EXITO:

1. **Hablar con el Especialista de Apoyo a la Familia.**
2. **Escoger dos metas para su familia.**
3. **Escribir los pasos para hacer ese sueño una realidad.**
4. **Escribir una fecha en que espera completar cada paso.**
5. **Reunirse de vez en cuando con el Especialista de Apoyo a la Familia para compartir el progreso obtenido.**

incluir las cosas que RCMA puede hacer para apoyar a los padres para alcanzar sus sueños.

EL Contrato de Acuerdo de la Familia es un plan que cada familia hace ayuda a ayudar a las familias a crecer mas fuertes y a los niños a hacer buen trabajo en la escuela. Dos familias no van a tener el mismo plan o los mismos sueños o fortaleza. Y todas las familias tienen puntos fuertes.

Alguna de los puntos fuertes de Epifania es su amor por la familia, su actitud positiva y el estar preparada para la búsqueda de trabajo. Otros sueños van a ser mas fáciles para alcanzar porque ella cree en si misma. Cuando otros ven su sonrisa y sienten su confianza, creen en ella tambien.

¡NOTICIA DE LAS ELECCIONES!

Avon Park Head Start:

El 7 de octubre de 1997 con solo unos días para planear, los padres comenzaron una campaña para sus primeras elecciones del Concilio.

Los candidatos, serios a su compromiso, diseñaron e imprimieron unas hojas informativas las cuales pasaron con mucha confianza a los padres votantes.

En la competencia los dos candidatos que obtuvieron más votos fueron Connie Shelton, la cual es la nueva Presidenta y Mattie Desilus, Vice Presidenta. Edna Knust es la nueva Secretaria y Zealpha Serieux Tesorera.

El conteo de votos por Reagis Ishmeal y el anuncio de los ganadores fue seguido por una fiesta de celebración en el centro.

Editor: Irene G. Brammertz

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

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

Teléfono: 813-671-5270

Traducción Español: Josie Gracia

Fax: 813-671-5272