

12 Days of Giving • Anzar High School • California Giant • First Presbyterian Church • The Gift • Happy Birds Performing Parrot Show • Hollister Downtown Association • Hollister Fire Department Local 3395 • Hollister Police Department/Hollister Gives Back • Holly McWhinnie/Kingdom Dominion Worship Center • Immaculate Conception Catholic Church • Intero Foundation • Kohl's Department Store • Nancy Carlson • Nick Rivera • Pacific Scientific • Sacred Heart Parish School • Small Steps • Sonja Romero • Turning Wheels For Kids

2014 Christmas Santa Acknowledgments



Chamberlain's Children Center
1850 San Benito Street
Hollister, CA 95023
www.chamberlaincc.org

Chamberlain's Children Center empowers at-risk children in a home-like environment to heal from past trauma, discover their strengths, and develop the skills they need to achieve life-long success.

Mission Statement:

Chamberlain's

Nonprofit
US Postage
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Hollister, CA
Permit No. 49

Winter 2015
Volume 15



Winter Newsletter

Our Happy Holidays at Chamberlain's!

Many of the children who end up at Chamberlain's have experienced disappointment through the holiday season. This is usually due to having come from families with low socioeconomic situations limiting their Christmas experiences, having limited contact with their families while they are here, or having negative associations with the holiday based on the traumatic experiences that have led them here to us. Keeping this in mind, we always take great care to provide as many warm and happy holiday memories as we possibly can give our children while we have them with us. Our Program Coordinator, Gracie Lucatero, plays Mrs. Claus every year for our children. She is the main point of contact for everything Christmas related here at Chamberlain's and works really hard to make each holiday fabulous for our kids. Many supporters of Chamberlain's aid us in these



efforts every year. This year, the community was especially generous and it made for an uniquely spectacular Christmas for our children. Many of the same groups that support us annually during Christmas again participated, and several new groups played a part this year as well. It is always special to work with these different supporters because their passion for helping is inspiring and really makes the holiday experience at Chamberlain's a magical one. Gracie notes that "What really touched me this year was that all donors were very flexible about last minute changes, kids leaving and new kids coming in. All kids got gifts including kids who got here on the 23rd." She was also impressed with our volunteer turn out for gift wrapping. We were able to get all the work done in one day! We would not have been able to provide such a magical season if it has not been for the generosity of others!

A Look Inside

- Christmas Generosity
- Holiday Field Trips
- Staff Recognition

Save The Date: Mari's FUNd Day BBQ Fundraiser!

Date: May 16th, 2015 | **Time:** 12:00pm—3:00pm | Chamberlain's Children Center
1850 San Benito Street, Hollister, CA

Tickets: *Adults \$25, Children \$10

BBQ fare: Tri Tip, chuck wagon beans, tossed salad, bread & drink.

(Food served from 12:30pm-1:30pm only)

BBQ provided by Hollister Rotary Club

Raffle: General raffle—\$2 each or 15 for \$20

There will also be great items up for silent auction, children's activities and entertainment!!

Event Sponsor:



Food Sponsor:



For More Information: 831.636.2121, ext. 123

Our children were gifted an amazing opportunity over their holiday break to see a special show put on by Happy Birds Performing Parrot Show. Ed and Julie Cardoza learned about our children through their daughter Olivia who volunteered with us as a service learning student for her Fall 2014 semester. Olivia left just as much of an impression on our kids as they did with her. When the kids realized that Olivia was there with the show, they were very excited to see her. The show featured six beautiful parrots who all had different tricks to perform and personalities to showcase. In addition to teaching the audience all about bird care and training, Julie made the messages she shared about the birds relevant to our children's unique experience. She said several times that parrots were a lot like people that



needed to be given confidence to be themselves, encouraged to learn & grow, and given the opportunity to practice things that they enjoy. It was a message that related to how our staff members try to interact with our children during their time with us. It was an amazing connection made that was completely unexpected and very appreciated. After the formal performance, children and staff members each got an opportunity to hold a parrot which was an experience unlike any of our children have ever had before. They walked away from the show having had fun, learned a great deal, and connected with messages that were similar to their experience. We are deeply grateful to Julie, Ed, and Olivia for giving our children this amazing opportunity!

Christmas in our Classroom!

The Holidays represent a time for giving and sharing. It is an opportunity for us to share our love and care, and speak with an open heart to those around us. This year, Christmas was made extra special for the students of Keith Thompson School because of the love and care shown by two members of our community. Frank and Wendy Halayay of Cozy Cup Café opened their hearts to our children in the classroom and purchased each student a gift. As per tradition, each student in class wrote a letter to Santa Claus, asking for a Christmas gift he or she desired. When the letters were written, signed, and sealed, Santa Frank and Mrs. Wendy Claus took the letters and purchased a gift for each student. The gifts purchased were not random items found in one store, but rather items that carried significant meaning and purpose for each child. Each gift given to students closely matched, if not directly, what they had



asked for in their letters. In addition to giving each student a gift, they assisted in writing a return letter to each student from Santa. Frank and Wendy brought Christmas spirit and joy into the classroom, unbeknownst to the students. Through these acts of kindness, they taught us what the Holidays are meant to be. It is not what we receive, but what we give to others that count the most. It is not the monetary value in the things we give, but rather the value in our actions. Frank and Wendy gave with their hearts, but they did something deeper. They helped students keep hold of their belief in the magic of Christmas. They brought them happiness and joy by the positive things they did for the students. It is with a grateful heart that we thank Frank and Wendy for their contributions to the classroom.

Employee Recognition 2014

The work we do here at Chamberlain's is driven by our mission statement to empower at-risk children in a home-like environment to heal from past trauma, discover their strengths, and develop the skills they need to achieve life-long success. Every person who works with us is encouraged to carry out their duties with this mission in mind. Every month, we recognize the employees who have built these principles into their daily routines. Below are the individuals who have earned this recognition last year.

Providing A Home-Like Environment

- Serena Hernandez—January
- Yvette Cordova—February
- Francis Vega— March
- Brenda Torres—May
- Lacisha Zapata-Smith—June
- Iris Ocampo—August
- Jackson Hamilton—September
- Jackson Hamilton—December

Help Heal Past Trauma

- Angie Martinez—January
- Casey Davenport—February
- Iris Ocampo—March
- Casey Davenport—May
- Vanessa Garcia—June
- Lacisha Zapata- Smith—August
- Victoria Navarro—September
- Vanessa Garcia—December

Develop Skills for Success

- Angie Martinez—January
- Dusty Peterson—February
- Albert Ramirez—March
- Jill Haley—May
- Imelda Ceja—June
- Frankie Jones—October
- Teresa Gonzales—December

Discovering Their Strengths

- Lacisha Zapata-Smith—January
- Andrew Avila—February
- Israel Sanchez—March
- Lisa Flores—May
- Israel Sanchez—June
- Casey Davenport—August
- Frankie Jones—September
- Teresa Gonzales—December



DONATION FORM

Name _____ Amount Donated _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to:

Chamberlain's Children Center, Inc.
Federal Tax I.D. Number 94-2357401
Mail to: Chamberlain's Children Center
PO Box 1269, Hollister, CA 95024-1269

We appreciate your support!

Another Chamberlain's Employee Graduates Distinguished LEAD Program!

Chamberlain's Children Center likes to promote staff development in many different ways. We provide on-campus trainings, educational reimbursement programs, and off-campus professional development through local partnerships when available. The Leadership Education and Development Program (LEAD), is one local program offered through the Community Foundation for Monterey County available for nonprofits in the communities of Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties. It is just one of the offerings the foundation provides the nonprofit community through the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, providing training and resources as the website notes "to inspire nonprofit staff, board and volunteers from throughout the Monterey Bay region to think strategically, govern and operate effectively." The program grooms leaders to become more effective in their roles and have the confidence to push beyond them in order to become better leaders in their community. The program accomplishes this by equipping them with the skills and knowledge regarding organizational management as a whole. We have had several of our leadership staff members go through the program which has proven to benefit both the staff member individually and our organization. Both our Program Director, Patrick Ellis, and our Program Coordinator, Gracie Lucatero, are previous graduates who have noted that the program really provided a great foundation for building up their professional leadership skills. Our most recent graduate of the program is our Office Manager, Krystal Jones. She has



been a dedicated employee for nearly nine years! She was hired as an office assistant and has become a critical part of our administration team over the years. In addition to handling many of our HR and payroll issues, managing the administration office, and accounts payable, she is also always willing to jump in to help others fix whatever issues they may be dealing with or just generally lend a hand. This year, she also served as the Co-Chairperson of Tickets during the 2nd Annual San Benito Olive Festival. Krystal is adamant that she has grown significantly from her experience in LEAD. She says "As with anything else in life you only get out what you put in. LEAD has helped me to see that I am, in fact, a leader. Whether I want to be or not, I was forced to step out of my comfort zone and challenge myself to think outside of the corner I put myself in. There are a multitude of tools that I was introduced to in our LEAD sessions that shed light on the fact that we all work for non-profits, and therefore tend to carry a heavier workload where resources are limited, and will need to create systems and prioritization tools to coordinate the work load so that we can continue to serve our population more effectively. I now have a handy little binder filled with a wealth of information that I can refer to as I take on the next challenge." We are exceptionally proud of Krystal and the colleagues who have graduated before her for investing in their professional development and have made Chamberlain's staff a group that excels in what they do for the benefit of themselves and our children!

Intero Foundation and Kohl's Sponsored Holiday Shopping Spree

In addition to making sure we provide Christmas gifts and family-style holiday memories for our children during the holidays, we take great measures to give them other special experiences throughout their holiday break while they are here with us and home from school. This year, thanks in large part to generous funding from Interio Foundation and matching funds from the 12 Days of Giving, we were able to bring the children to Kohl's to pick some items of clothing out that they liked and needed. Kohl's Department Store in Gilroy has also been a regular supporter of Chamberlain's Children Center in recent years. This support has been spearheaded by store manager Jesse Jimenez and Carolyn Trimble. They were gracious enough to extend a discount to our purchases to make sure that the dollars went even further for each child. On Saturday, December 20th, all of our children made the trip to Gilroy with their housemates and took their turns picking out new clothing, shoes, socks, undergarments, and other accessories. We were joined by Sonja Romero from Interio Foundation who helped children shop. This was an especially significant trip for one of our newest girls who had come to us just days before with relatively little in the way of these items. Our children are routinely provided with clothes when needed when they arrive and when returning to school after the summer, and that is supplemented with gently used clothing that is donated throughout the year. However, getting the opportunity to go pick out special clothing beyond the basics was a special treat for them. They all enjoyed themselves and their time out at the store. We appreciate the special support from both of these organizations throughout the year, but it was especially thoughtful during this special time!



Lions, and Tigers, and Bears...

Our kids got another chance to get up close and personal with animals during their break when they got to visit the Monterey Zoo in Salinas. This is an amazing animal sanctuary located on Vision Quest Ranch where animals who have worked in the entertainment industry go to retire. This organization has also supported our annual fundraiser for the last two years with a donation to our raffle. It is very unique when compared with other zoos because it gives guests the opportunity to get closer to the animals than they would at a normal zoo. However, the experience is through a guided tour that they give daily. During the tour the kids got to see lions, tigers, bears, elephants, camels, zebras, and an assortment of other animals. After they were done with the tour, they got an opportunity to feed the elephants up close! Children and staff were amazed at all the animals they got to see and how much the zoo staff members knew and cared about each of the animals in their care. One of our children was so excited about the trip that she wants to volunteer there over the summer! Teaching the children about animals is not only educational, but it gives them an opportunity to practice empathy and learn social skills related to the care of animals and themselves. It was another amazing opportunity that was granted by the generosity of the Interio Foundation this Christmas! If you would like more information about Vision Quest Ranch or the Monterey Zoo, you can visit www.visionquestranch.com.



Executive Director Report:



It's been another successful year at Chamberlain's Children Center, filled with milestones, new partnerships, new supporters, school innovation, reunifications, and most importantly happy, healthy children.

This was demonstrated this past holiday season. As I told anyone who would listen, for some of these kids their Christmas at Chamberlain's may be the one and only special one they ever have. The entire community stepped up! As mentioned in the newsletter, wish list items were delivered; amazing holiday parties with food and gifts were had, amazing campus wide cultural celebrations and a wonderful Christmas morning with presents a plenty to open! I was fortunate enough to help with the Kohl's Shopping trip and the Monterey Zoo. The Kohl's trip was humbling and rewarding. My super volunteer Tiana helped our newest child who arrived at our door just a few days before with only the clothes on her back, pick out some nice clothes and a new pair of shoes. The new child was apprehensive at first but then worked with Tiana to pick out some shirts, sweaters, socks and jeans she really liked. As she got in line with a cart full of clothes, she was grinning from ear to ear. I helped out a child shop who was definitely a fan of the "Frozen" movie! Thank you to staff members Victoria, Josh, Rachel, Charlotte, Octavio, Serena and others for helping our kids shop! A huge thank you to Sonja Romero with Intero for championing our grant and helping on the day of! Sonja showed even more generosity by purchasing extra stuff for our children! Thank you to Tiana for her help and to the Kohl's staff who always step up for us!! Camille and Danielle, Kipper staff, helped our teen girls pick out some great outfits and some very practical items! Thanks to Kim for helping me ring items up and getting them bagged and ready for wrapping!!

As for the Monterey Zoo, our children were wide eyed the whole time. As the article mentions, they were just a few inches away from majestic Lions, Tigers, Bears, Alligators, Kangaroos, monkeys, baboons, and my favorite a Bobcat that is too regal to actually walk on his strolls, he has to be put in a wagon!! But the highlight was feeding the Elephants. A once in a lifetime experience! I was overwhelmed by the experience; I can only imagine what the children were feeling!!! By the way, very slimy!!

As we prepare for another year, we take a deep breath and say let's push ourselves to the limit! This year we have two very important goals to achieve: National accreditation and preparing our clinical department for Medicare funding and new stringent standards and reporting. Accreditation is an external evaluation by outside experts that provides impartial evidence of the safety and quality of care an organization is providing, and ensures that the organization is meeting national standards of care. We will be accredited by the Joint Commission. Joint Commission accreditation is widely respected across behavioral and residential programs, providing a mark of distinction recognized by many professionals. Their standards are considered by many to be the most rigorous. Go big or go home right!! As for Medicare, we are looking forward to a partnership with Edge-wood Center for Children & Families who will assist us with billing the Counties we serve. Along with everything else we do to make a nurturing home away from home for the children in our care,

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Chamberlain's Welcomes New Cottage Staff



We would like to welcome our new cottage supervisor, Sandy Leifheit, who will be leading staff in our Acres cottage. With an educational background focusing on social services and nearly five years of experience working with at-risk youth, probation youth, and hospital diversion, it is expected that Sandy will bring an experienced and enthusiastic approach to her new position. She is also already familiar with many of Chamberlain's policies and procedures having been with us for about a year previously. We are very excited to have her back with us and to see her excel in this role. Welcome back, Sandy!

Executive Director Report, Continued

everyone will have just a few more things on their plate!

Chamberlain's Children Center could not have gotten to this point in time without support from you. On behalf of Chamberlain's Children Center, I extend my deepest gratitude to all of our friends, partners, donors, and board members for your ongoing generosity and commitment to our children. It is a privilege and an honor for me to be a part of helping children recover from their past traumas, to provide supports as families are reunited, and to provide a safe and loving home to very fragile and vulnerable children every day. I hope this newsletter will help capture the tremendous work happening at Chamberlain's Children Center so that you can experience it too. Look out 2015. Here we come!

A shout out to Kim Meininger who diligently puts together our newsletters and coordinates our fund development! Kim and her husband Matt are expecting their third child (and first daughter) in just a few weeks. We will try to hold the place together while she welcomes her new baby into the world!

So let me wrap up with a few comments from the kids. On Christmas Eve one of the young boys came up to me, give me a hug and said "Please say thank you to Santa for me". At Kohl's, one of the teen girls turned to me and asked "We really get to pick out what we want and get to keep it?" I said "Absolutely, have fun with it!" Her reply "Wow, someone must love us!" I said to her "Sweetheart, there are a whole lot of people that love you!" (Yep, que the water works!) So on behalf of the children, thank you to a whole lotta Santa's for your love!!!

Robert Freiri
Executive Director



Chamberlain's Children Center Work Day

Saturday, April 25th
8:30am to 3pm

1850 San Benito Street Hollister, CA 95023
Lunch Provided! We have lots of fun projects.

RSVP by contacting us!
831-636-2121, ext. 123

