



Family Ties



Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.

Volume 17 Number 10

Newsletter

October 2014

Celebrate National Adoption Awareness Month this November by taking part in an Adoption Scavenger Hunt!

1. When is National Adoption Day?
2. Which United States presidents were adopted as children?
3. Which member of the Beatles was adopted by his aunt?
4. Where is AFFM located?
5. Name one actor or actress that has grown their family through adoption
6. Name an actor or actress that had been adopted
7. Name three ways you can find out when a support group is meeting in your area
8. Like AFFM's Facebook page and tell others how you plan to celebrate Adoption Awareness Month
9. Name a TV show that features adoption
10. What is it called when an American family adopts from another country?

First to send in answers to info@affm.net wins a prize! Prizes include a lovely stuffed pink gorilla, a fine porcelain doll, robot attack battle packs, and a street flyer skateboard.



The History of Adoption Awareness Month:

1976: Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis announced an adoption week to promote awareness of the need for adoptive families for children in foster care.

1984: President Reagan proclaimed the first national adoption week.

1995: President Clinton expanded the awareness week to the entire month of November

1998: President Clinton directed the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a plan to expand the use of the internet as a tool to find homes for children waiting to be adopted from foster care

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/about/history.cfm>

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Adoption Announcement!



Jared and Nichola Wilson are pleased to announce the adoption of Brittney age 9 and Brandon age 8. Emily and Daniel are very happy to have more siblings to play with. They are all happy to be together as a family forever!



Have you recently legalized an adoption? Want to share the exciting news with others? AFFM would love to create an adoption announcement in our Family Ties newsletter. Send a write up and photo (if you wish) to meagan@affm.net or call the office at 827-2331. AFFM looks forward to hearing from you!

A Huge Thank You!

AFFM's Ready Set Go to Learn Backpack Program has come and gone and was once again a huge success! We could not have provided this service without the amazing help from the following businesses and individuals: The wonderful team at Prudential in Portland, Poland Spring Academy, St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Brunswick, Christ Community Fellowship in Madison, Positive FM, Walmart in Brunswick, Topsham Dental Arts, Dr. Jeremy Burden from Bath, Coastal Pediatric Dentistry in Brunswick, Meghan Painton, Tracey Peck-Moad, Tammy Cutchen, Gianna Finley, and of course L.L. Bean. AFFM is honored to partner with such incredible people! Here's to a happy and healthy school year!



Kinship Corner

AFFM Salutes Grand parents Every Day!

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc. and the Kinship Program, (AFFM) remembered grand parents on their special day Sept. 7, 2014 but additionally we celebrate and applaud **grand** parents who open their hearts and homes to parent their grandchildren every day all year long. AFFM is a non-profit organization that partners with DHHS to provide support, training , education, listening support, referrals and materials goods to resource parents (foster, adoptive and kinship). The services are also available to families who are not involved with DHHS.

If you or someone you know is parenting one or more of a relative's children, AFFM has special resources to help you meet the needs of the children. The people you talk to when you call have "walked the walk and talked the talk". Our trained staff is sensitive to the complexities of families who have members that struggle and have found parenting overwhelming and need the support of extended family members to aid them until they are able to handle whatever keeps them from successfully providing for their children.

Parenting a second and or third generation of children requires more of everything from the caregiver. AFFM can help you navigate the systems you may encounter as you travel this often twisting and sometimes seemingly endless road. The systems you may encounter may include: child protection, education, special education, corrections and the court system.

Call toll free 1-800-833-9786 or locally 207-827-2331. We are a state-wide non-profit association and our services are free to those who provide kinship care either in the formal or informal system.

You may also email us at info@affm.net or visit our website www.affm.net

AFFM Honors Mentors



AFFM staff and Board of Directors extend a sincere thank you to the new mentors.

These amazing people attended the training and have become mentors/ peer partners to other Resource Parents. As we all know, parenting although filled with love and rewarding on many levels, is never easy! Parenting another family's child can be very challenging. We all need someone to support us in this very important role.

AFFM salutes all who provide this very special type of parenting whether it is for a relative's child, an adopted child or a child in the foster care system. AFFM extends a sincere thank you and a very special recognition to the many Resource Parents who not only provide resource parenting but additionally make themselves available to support others who provide this service. The individuals we are recognizing today are people who participated in special mentoring training and are now volunteer mentors through AFFM's newest service offering mentoring supports. These individuals have combined the training they received from AFFM with the knowledge they have gained through their personal experience of walking the walk as Resource Parents themselves, and they are now providing a valuable service to new Resource Parents.

In January of this year, Jim Hatch, Research and Program Specialist for AFFM, along with our partners at the Office of Child and Family Services in Augusta and several program assistants and the licensing supervisors at the district offices of DHHS, began carefully planning and researching both the need for a mentor service as well as strategies for designing and ultimately implementing this unique system of support. Although, relatively new, and yet to be implemented in all DHHS districts, the Mentor Service is off to a strong start and is already meeting multiple needs. (Mentor training and ultimately a minimum of 3 mentors per district will be available throughout the state by October 2014). AFFM is proud to have been instrumental in development of this much desired service.

Here is what the resource parents say about the mentors they are teamed with and the difference it is making their capacity to provide resource parenting:

"I hit the resource parents jackpot when I was teamed up with my mentor. Her 15 years of experience as a resource parent have helped me navigate my way through the many questions that came up with our first foster placement. If our mentor didn't know the answer she found it and always followed up with me. I couldn't imagine how we could have found our way through without her. Her knowledge and experiences shared, have made my job easier. Going forward I hope to learn more from her as a mentor and a friend. Maybe some day I will be someone's mentor and I hope to be as much support to them as my mentor has been to me. Thank you for starting this mentor service."

"I have a mentor that has a lot of experience, and being new to foster parenting that was important to me. We figured out ways that we could communicate easily in our busy schedules, including email and texting! It is such a relief to have this service. My mentor always provides an ear and when I'm frazzled it is immensely helpful. I have also bounced ideas and thoughts off her about a situation and she pointed me to find resources or help with my particular situation. I am so happy that we got connected. Even though we don't talk every week just knowing someone is there to talk to is invaluable."

AFFM will honor the Mentors at the Annual Adoption Awareness Tea at the Blaine House on November 6, 2014.

To send words of appreciation to these dedicated resource parent leaders please call AFFM and we will assist you with addresses etc.

9th Annual Festival of Fostering Trees!

The *Festival of "Fostering" Trees* is back for another year continuing our mission of joining the entire community together by providing a beautiful festival of decorated Christmas Trees for your viewing pleasure while giving back to our community, all at the same time!

Where: Foster's Clambake 5 Axholme Road York, ME

When: Thursday December 4th, Friday December 5th, Saturday December 6th 10:00am-8:00pm, Sunday December 7th – 10:00am-4:00pm, Raffle @ 4:15pm with calls placed 6:00pm-9:00pm, Pick-up of **ALL** trees Monday, December 8th between 8:00am-12:00pm & 5:00pm-7:00pm.

Admission is "FREE": Voluntary donations of non-perishable food items or a monetary donation for the York Food Pantry or a new toy for Toys for Tots can be made at the door. Come enjoy the *"Spirit of the Season"* without spending a penny, purchasing raffle tickets is optional.

Raffle Tickets: 25 raffle tickets for only \$5.00, available to purchase at the Festival.

How can I participate? Donate a decorated artificial Christmas tree, any size, style or fashion, traditional or non-traditional, using any type of materials (be creative) and the tree will be raffled off at the end of the festival. All trees will be set-up and decorated by the participants. Please write your tree's name on your tree box. Extension cords are provided.

Can I donate something else instead of a tree? Monetary donations & gift certificates are great ways to participate in the Festival & **ALL** items will be used appropriately.

Who receives the proceeds? The Festival of "Fostering" Trees (FOFT) supports youth who are involved in the Maine Foster Care System. Our goal is to serve the unique needs of each youth in a supportive and cost effective manner, while easing the difficulties that they experience. Adoptive & Foster Families of ME, Inc., a supportive non-profit agency, currently serves as our fiscal agent. This Festival was started in 2006 with the specific goal to bring the pure "magic" that it provides to the town of York!

How can I enter a tree? Contact Janalee @ janaleemoquin8@yahoo.com or call 351-1988 or 423-4281 FMI.



Top 10 Reasons to Become an MT Program Parent with Community Health and Counseling Services

- 10 You will learn how much a teenage boy can eat.
- 9 A teenager will propel you into the 21st century with their techno skills.
- 8 You will become an expert in the mystifying behaviors of teenage girls.
- 7 You will become a master of "The Bob".
- 6 You will hear the phrase "Evidence Based" a lot!
- 5 You will become more skilled at dealing with your own teenagers' behaviors.
- 4 You receive a daily phone call from our PDR caller.
- 3 You have Access 24/7 to the MT program supervisor.
- 2 You will receive \$75 daily reimbursement.
- 1 But most important of all, you will make a difference in the life of a Maine teen!



Families are important to CHCS,
Healthy Families means Healthy Communities

Call Melodie Rand at 213-2164
to learn how to become a MT program parent.

Celebrate National Adoption Awareness Month!

November 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Attend a support group and share your adoption story
2 Share how you will celebrate adoption awareness month on AFFM's Facebook page	3 Hall of Flags 9-11am hosted by OCFS	4 Create a new adoption tradition	5 Teach your child how to make a traditional family meal	6 Blaine House Tea 2-3:30PM RSVP: 1-800-833-9786	7 Read your child an adoption related book	8 Watch a movie with an adoption theme
9 Have you recently adopted and still have questions? Ask AFFM about our mentor services	10 Adoption Legalizations All over the state!	11 Write thank you notes to those who helped finalize your adoption	12 Spread the word about adoption!	13 Celebrate with family and friends	14 Have a family game night	15 Donate to or volunteer at a local organization
16 Have a get together with another family who recently adopted	17 Make a list of things you are thankful for	18 Take a day off and spend time with family to celebrate	19 Make your own custom adoption announcements and send them to family and friends	20 Plant a tree in remembrance of your adoption. Watch it grow with your family	21 Light a candle and have a moment of silence for children who wait to be adopted	22 National Adoption Day!
23 Visit an adoption website and learn about fun activities around adoption	24 Ask the child's favorite radio station to announce the adoption and play one of their favorite songs	25 Take a family drive and enjoy Fall!	26 Take part in the scavenger hunt at the front of the newsletter and win a prize!	27 Happy Thanksgiving! Give thanks for your loved ones!	28 Provide a surprise meal to an adoptive family that you know	29 Go out to eat at your favorite restaurant
30 Attend the Holiday Party at the Ramada Inn in Bangor. RSVP by calling 1-800-833-9786						

"A hundred years from now,
 it will not matter what my bank account was,
 the sort of house I lived in,
 or the kind of car I drove,
 but the world may be different
 because I was important
 in the life of a child."
-Forest E. Witcraft

"You may not have my eyes
 or my smile
 but from that very first moment
 you had my heart"
-Kathy R. Jeffords

State-Wide Resource Family Support Groups



State-Wide Resource Family Support Groups

At times meetings are cancelled due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances, cancellation notices are sent out via the AFFM email list serve. Families are urged to call or email info@affm.net to be added to this service.

The email list serve also provides information about available donated goods, social family activities, training events, DHHS and legislative updates, and more.

★ *Recently Added Support Groups!*

Augusta – Kinship only: 3rd Wednesday of the month from 6:00 - 8:00 pm, The Buker Community Center, 22 Armory Drive, Augusta. Free on-site childcare available. For more information, please call Maine Kids-Kin at 207-941-2347 or 1-866-298-0896.

★ **Augusta-Foster/Adoptive/Kinship.** Meets the 1st Wednesday of the month from 6:00PM-7:30PM at the Kaplan University Learning Lab rooms 101 & 102 (14 Marketplace Drive, Augusta). Sorry, no childcare available at this time. Please call 1-800-833-9786 or email: Jim (jim@affm.net) or Sheila (sheila@affm.net) to RSVP. (3-4 days in advance).

Bangor –Kinship only: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month from 6:00 - 8:00 pm, Families And Children Together, 304 Hancock Street, Suite 2B. Free on-site childcare available. For more information, please call Maine Kids-Kin at 207-941-2347 or 1-866-298-0896.

Belfast- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. A faith based support group that meets on the 3rd Friday of the month at the Calvary Chapel Church in Belfast 147 Waldo Ave. in the rear entrance of the Wentworth Building. Contact: BraveFamilies@gmail.com to RSVP and visit www.facebook.com/bravefamilies for more information. 10:00 AM prayer & Devotion (optional), 10:30 AM coffee/social, 10:45-12 PM support group. Sorry child care is not available at this time.

★ **Biddeford- Kinship.** Meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10:00AM-11:30AM at the J Richard Martin Community Center, 189 Alfred Street Biddeford. Onsite child care is available with advanced notice. Please contact Diane Loranger at 423-2543 or call 1-800-833-9786 or email Meagan at meagan@affm.net to RSVP. Please RSVP before you come.

Bridgton- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 3rd Monday of the month at 6:30PM-8:00PM at the Community Center (Behind Reny's), 15 Depot Street Bridgton. Childcare is not provided at this time. Please RSVP to Vanessa at 647-2317 or AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 before you come.

★ **Brunswick- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship.** Meets every 4th Tuesday of the month at 5:30PM-7:00PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church (25 Pleasant Street, Brunswick). Onsite child care is available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 to RSVP.

Caribou- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship parent support. Meets every 1st Thursday of the month at 5:30PM at Caribou Adult Education Building on Bennett Drive in between Caribou Rec and the gas station. Child care is not provided at this time. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: info@affm.net to RSVP.

Dover-Foxcroft- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6PM-7:30PM at Mayo Regional Hospital, Borestone and Sebec conference room. Onsite child care available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: info@affm.net to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Ellsworth- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 5:30pm-7:30pm at Ellsworth Elementary/Middle School 20 Forest Ave. in Ellsworth. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact Mindy Kane, Community Health and Counseling Services (CHCS), at 263-2014 or 461-8878 or email MKane@chcs-me.org to reserve a spot for childcare. Thanks to a local grant awarded to CHCS, AFFM is able to provide mileage reimbursement for families traveling more than 30 miles from home.



Farmington- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 3rd Wednesday of the month from 6:00pm – 7:30pm at the Roberts Learning Center (Rooms 201 & 205), University of Maine at Farmington. No childcare available at this time. Please call 1-800-833-9786, or email: Jim (jim@affm.net), or Sheila (sheila@affm.net), to RSVP. Please RSVP 3-4 days in advance.

Houlton- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets every every 2nd Thursday of the month from 5:30pm-7:30pm at Houlton CHCS 2 Water Street. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: info@affm.net to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Lewiston- The Tri-County Adoptive Foster & Kinship Assoc. meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month 6pm-8pm at the B Street Community Center 57 Birch Street Lewiston. The group offers training, as well as local support & resources. On-site childcare is provided with advanced notice. Call Denise Gove at 782-1138 or email her at drdgoe@aol.com or contact David Nielson at 409-3609 to RSVP.

Machias- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 1st Friday of the month 5:30PM-7:30PM at Rose M. Gaffney Elementary School 15 Rose Gaffney Road, Machias. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact Mindy Kane, Community Health and Counseling Services, at 263-2014 or 461-8878 or email MKane@chcs-me.org to RSVP. Thanks to a local grant awarded to CHCS, AFFM is able to provide mileage reimbursement for families traveling more than 30 miles from home.

Old Town- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets from 6:00-8:00 PM on the 3rd Monday of every month at 294 Center Street, Old Town. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: info@affm.net to RSVP. Please call before you come.

Sherman- Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets the 1st Monday of the month at 7 Cow Team Road in Sherman. Please contact Debbie Irish at 365-7133 for more information. This group does not meet during the summer.

Skowhegan- The group meets 5:30-8:00PM every second Wednesday of the month located at Skowhegan Federated Church 13 Island Avenue in Skowhegan. Onsite Child care available with advanced notice. Please contact AFFM at 1-800-833-9786 or email: info@affm.net to RSVP. Please call before you come.



South Paris- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets every 1st Thursday of the month from 6:00PM-7:30PM at the Paris Public Library, 37 Market Square, South Paris. Sorry, no childcare available at this time. Please call 1-800-833-9786 or email: Jim (jim@affm.net) or Sheila (sheila@affm.net) to RSVP. (3-4 days in advance).

South Portland- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship support. Meets 5:30PM-7:30PM. This group will meet every 2nd Tuesday of the month. Please contact Meagan Stearns at meagan@affm.net or call 1-800-833-9786 or email: info@affm.net to RSVP and for location information. Please call before you come.

Waterboro- Massabesic area foster and adoptive support group. Meets every 4th Thursday of the month at 6:30pm. Meets at Waterboro Town Hall 24 Townhouse Road, East Waterboro. Please contact Brigid at Brigid.MAAFFSG@gmail.com.



Wiscasset- Foster/Adoptive/Kinship. Meets every 3rd Thursday of the month from 6:00pm – 7:30pm at St. Philip's Episcopal Church, 12 Hodge Street. No childcare available at this time. Please call 1-800-833-9786 or email: Jim (jim@affm.net), or Sheila (sheila@affm.net), to RSVP. Please RSVP 3-4 days in advance.

Please RSVP to Support Groups

It is very important for you to notify the support group facilitator before every support group meeting. Please let the support group facilitators know at least 3 days in advance (if possible) that you plan to attend a meeting. (We understand that unexpected changes happen). Notifying the leader of your support group, helps in the following ways:

- Helps ensure that there are enough childcare providers available.
- It helps invited speakers/guests preplan their agenda.
- Helps us decide the quantity of snacks, drinks, and handouts.
- Helps to ensure that we have a meeting space that meets everyone's needs
- Helps us to know who we should contact of an unexpected cancellation.

The contact for each support group is listed on the Support group listing. The listing is sent out in the AFFM welcome packet, it is printed in the Family Ties Newsletter, and can be found on-line on the Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine website at <http://affm.net/SupportGroups.aspx>

Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Inc.
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Affiliated With:
The North American Council on Adoptable Children
National Foster Parent Association

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COMMENTS TO: EDITOR, FAMILY TIES, AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE.

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