

Connecting With



Nevis Welcomes Reading Buddies

"I enjoy it very much," says Reading Buddy, Bev Romer. "It's nice to know we can help the first graders learn to read better. You can go so many places when you read."

It all began with six adults showing up at Nevis Elementary School on a Monday afternoon last January. They each met up with a first grader, got a few books from the child's teacher, and headed off to the library. There they spent the next twenty-some minutes reading together.

The first session was such a positive experience for everyone involved that the teachers requested the Reading Buddies come every Monday, rather than every other week. The volunteers were happy to oblige.

"Kinship was really eager to strengthen its service to children living in the Nevis area," says Kinship Executive Director, Jennifer Therkilsen, "and we think offering Reading Buddies is a great way to do this. Research shows that reading skills are absolutely essential to academic success and the better a child learns to read, the more likely they are to do well throughout their entire school career. Kinship helps children succeed and giving them encouragement to read is one way we do that."

The number of Reading Buddies grew over the next months so that by spring, a dozen adults were gathering outside the office each Monday afternoon, waiting for the children to return from recess and join them in the adventures of reading.



Nevis Reading Buddy, Bev Romer, and Nevaya enjoy reading one of many books donated to Kinship Kids by Barnes & Noble

Darlene Severtson and Wayne Luksik shared their buddy, Pat, as they were both gone for a month or more of the winter. "I enjoyed seeing the change in the student I worked with," says Darlene, "and how we bonded together."

Becoming "buddies" is as important to many of the students as is learning to read. Pam Johnson, one of the first grade teachers, says the children enjoyed the program and looked forward to that special one-on-one time with their new buddy. Some of them

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*Kinship Connects
Adults With Kids
And
Puts Hope In
Their Hearts*

The Magic of Kinship Group Activities

By Del Holz, President of the Board

While shooting pictures at the Kinship Ice Skating Event, I was again struck by the “magic” of our group activities. Our Group Activities **empower kids!** We had kids willing to try skating for the first time (think back to your first time!).

They were empowered by mentors who were right by their side, and by the fact that other Kinship Kids were doing the same. And no one laughed when some one slipped and fell; no one put anyone down. They learned an important life lesson: It’s ok to fall down as long as you get up and try again!

Our Group Activities not only empower kids, but they also **enrich kids** (and adults, too). Kinship Group Activities offer a host of first time experiences and empowerment: Making Terry’s famous “Campfire-meals-in-foil”, Stone Soup, Tacos in a bag, and fresh Churned Ice Cream. Going Swimming, Canoeing, Biking, Cross country skiing, Skating, and Fishing. Playing “King of the Raft,” Ring Toss, and Croquet. Learning Photography at Itasca State Park, Selling Raffle Tickets, Doing Volunteer Work at the Fish Fry and Spaghetti Dinner, and Packing food for Kids Against Hunger. They learned about future jobs through visiting the Ark Animal Hospital, Park Salon, and North Star Orthodontics. Wow, what wonderful opportunities for enrichment!

Finally, our Group Activities encourage and allow kids to **develop social skills**. It is a joy to watch kids interact with other kids and adults, in environments that are non-judgmental and supportive. Participants are accepted for who they are and where they are in their life’s journey.

The “magic” of our Group Activities is made possible by our Activities Committee and Executive Director, and especially by our caring Mentors who are right there, encour-

aging and supporting kids with: “Good effort!” “Try again!” “I know you can do it!” “Good job!”

I just wanted to take this opportunity to say “Thanks for the parts you play in making the ‘magic’ happen!”



2010 Donors

We gratefully acknowledge those who made financial gifts to support the mission of Kinship of the Park Rapids Area from January 1 to May 31, 2010. Donors are recognized for accumulative gifts made throughout each calendar year. Your generosity helps Kinship put hope in kids' hearts!

Advocate (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Hubbard County Child Abuse
Prevention Council

Mentor (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Northwoods Dental, Tina Robin
Pine Manor, Inc.
St. Joseph's Area Health Services
Township of Lake Emma

Guide (\$500 - \$999)

Kevin & Renee Brauer
Jennifer Therkilsen
Itasca Mantrap Operation RoundUp
Investment Service Center
Mantrap Township
Riverside United Methodist Church
Township of Straight River
Bethany Lutheran Church

Role Model (\$250 - \$499)

Minnesota Power
Park Rapids Lions Club
Township of Todd
Wal-Mart Foundation

Supporter (\$100 - \$249)

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Dennis Dodge
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Roman & Joy Horejsi
John & Brenda Mason
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Roy Therkilsen
Janine & Mike Weideman
Clay Township
Clover Township
J&B Foods
Park Rapids-Walker Eye Clinic
Super 8 Motel
National Catholic Society of
Foresters
Township of Hubbard

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Melvin & Mary Ann Yliniemi
Bill & Bobbi Zigmant
Aljana Bookkeeping
J&B Foods
NorthStar Orthodontics, Inc
RiverBend Home Expressions
St. John's Evening Guild
Thomason Law Office

2010 Tributes & Memorials

In memory of ~

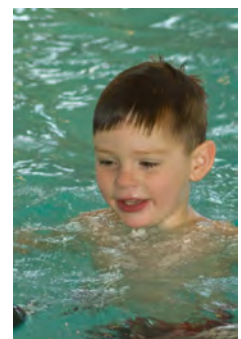
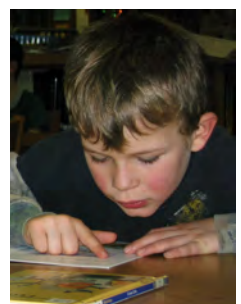
Clyde Johnson
Kevin & Renee Brauer
Steven Weckerly
Donna & Ed Weckerly

In tribute to ~

Our nine grandchildren
Arlene & Jerry Novak
Ken & Judy Thompson
Ed, Ethan & Evan Neidviecky

Gifts to Kinship Endowment

Jeraine Hokanson
In memory of Kip Gauldin
Barb & Gary Gauldin
In appreciation of Carter Hedeem
Jennifer Therkilsen & Duane Gebhard
Happy Birthday Del Holz
Jennifer Therkilsen & Duane Gebhard



We try hard to include all of our contributors accurately and apologize for any errors. Please call 732-0058 to let Jennifer know if your name was misspelled, listed differently than you would like, or accidentally omitted. Thank you!

Friends of Kinship ~

Thanks to these friends who, in addition to other Board members, Mentors, Reading Buddies, and Kinship Kids, helped with office tasks, the Kinship Fish Fry, and in other special and assorted ways:

Dennis Anderson & Chandler
Ruby Anderson
Terese Bervig
Brittany Boe & Evan
Mike Cohrs & Ethan
Edie Evarts & Viviana
Rich & Mary Frahm & Damion
Duane Gebhard
Carter Hedeon
Alice Holz
Del Holz
Faye Jasmine

Brittany Johnson
Shelley Lof
Greg Johnson & Luke
Sherry Johnson & Farrah
Marilyn Kaping
Dick & Karen Kok & Kyron
John & Joyce LaFrance
Mia Long
Dennis Mackedanz
Gail Manlove
Helen Marsh
Joel & Mary Maxwell

Kathy & Bill Medellin
Terry Morris
David Niemela & Brennen
Trudy Overmyer
Pat Pederson
Ericka Randall
Bill Simpson & Sara
ElLoise Underwood
Bonnie Welch, Alycia & Caiden
Jody Wizik
Dan Zimmerman & Noah
Lezli Zimmerman & Jessie

Donors of Gifts In Kind

Calvary Lutheran Church
Delahunt Broadcasting
Park Avenue School of Cosmetology
Park Rapids Enterprise
Park Rapids Hockey Association
Riverside United Methodist Church
Kevin & Renee Brauer



Many thanks to the 2010 Kinship Fish Fry Chair, Lezli Zimmerman!

Thanks, too, to all those who came to the event, those who volunteered their time and deserts, and to those who donated and/or bid on auction items! You helped raise \$3,000 for Kinship Kids!

Silent Auction Donors to Kinship Fish Fry

Ruby Anderson
Annette Detmers
Mary Maxwell
Carolyn Nickerson
Cathy Reich
Jennifer Therkilsen
Bonnie Welch
Lezli Zimmerman
Albrecht Jewelers
Ben Franklin
Brookside Resort
Carol's Sheer Pleasure
Cattail Creek Framing
Fresh Catch
GLIK'S
Good Life Cafe
J&B Foods
Main Street Meats

Max Bailey Photography
MinneSoda Fountain
Moose Creek
Park Avenue Salon
Park Rapids BP
Park Rapids Floral
Park Theater
Pine Beach Resort
RiverBend Home
Expressions
State Bank of Park Rapids
Tin Ceiling
Toys for Boys
Trading Post
Warnick's Janitorial Service
Wildwood Enchantment

Nevis Reading Buddies

Barbara Haugen
Beverly Romer
Brittany Boe
Darlene Severtson
Dick Miller
Jeanne Ciffra
Jeannette Dudley
Jeannine Frank
Judy Novak
Kathy Medellin
Linda Johnson
Mike Childs
Peg Odegaard
Raeann Mayer
Wayne Luksik

A Special THANK YOU to Ken & Iris Shepard for donating hundreds of books from Bronson Page to Kinship. Watch for future sales!

Welcome New Mentor Matches!

Kathie Kavolak and Carol, Steve Long and Joshua, Trudy Overmyer and Treasa, Phil Sailer and Nate, Curt & Sue Sumner and Victoria, Cliff & Joan Tweedale and Cole!

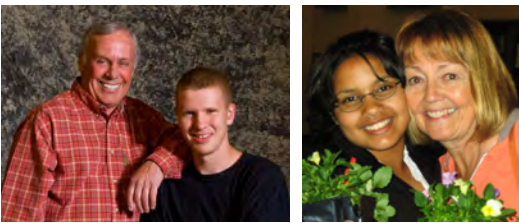
What do newly matched mentors and kids do together? Kathie and Carol milked a goat, Trudy and Treasa are sewing a top and pair of shorts, Phil and Nate are biking with Itascatur Sii & Bike Club members.

Families Benefit, Recommend Kinship

While not all results are yet in, preliminary figures from the parent/guardian survey show that Kinship families are deeply grateful for the program and their child's mentor.

100% of respondents feel they or their family have benefited from their child having a mentor; 100% would recommend mentoring to other families and can see that mentoring has made a positive difference in the life of their child (one match is still too new to tell).

Look for more survey results this fall.



(Nevis Reading Buddies continued from page 1)

especially benefitted from having a dependable person show up just for them week after week.

The purpose of Reading Buddies is for the children to experience listening to a story, and for them to practice reading to the adult. The volunteer takes time to visit with them about what they are reading, to encourage engagement and clarify comprehension, to enjoy a funny story together. It is designed to be a fun and enjoyable time, to help the children develop positive attitudes toward books and reading.

Perhaps the greatest gift volunteers give to the children is twenty minutes of their undivided attention ~ wrapped in the context and joy of reading together.

Kinship Reading Buddies programs will be offered at Nevis and Century Elementary School in Park Rapids again next fall. New volunteers must provide references and agree to a background check. Call Kinship at 732-0058 for more information.

Stay With Us As We Grow

By Jennifer Therkilsen,
Executive Director



The phenomenal support you have shown Kinship in recent years has made amazing growth possible:

- Twenty-nine people stepped forward, underwent the thorough screening process to become mentors, and were matched as individuals or couples with 23 children and youth in the last twenty-four months.
- Last August we celebrated breaking barriers by growing to 30 children and youth matched with mentors; this May, just nine months later, Kinship celebrates serving 40 mentor matches.
- The Reading Buddies program has grown by 40% as Kinship volunteers befriended 32 first graders in Park Rapids and 12 in Nevis this recent school year.
- Local businesses, organizations and individuals stabilized and doubled Kinship's income with larger and more frequent gifts.

While many not-for-profit organizations around the state have pulled back due to a drop in both financial and volunteer support, you have shown a strong commitment to investing wisely in youth by supporting mentoring. This has enabled Kinship to serve more children than ever before.

We at Kinship are grateful for your trust and generosity. We promise to continue working carefully to sustain the high quality and efficiency of Kinship programs for the growing number of children whose families seek our services. The wait list was down to 6 children a few weeks ago, but has burgeoned again to 13 with another 12 applications in process.

Your continued support is vital. Thanks for however you invest ~ with cash gifts, volunteering as a mentor, reading buddy, board member or office helper, attending special events, hosting the clubhouse, donating silent auction items or buying raffle tickets!

Every investment counts. And each one pays dividends in happier, more resilient kids and a healthier community!

Kinship to Upgrade Technology

A recent grant of \$10,190 from the Compassion Capital Fund/ Northwest Minnesota Foundation, designed to help community organizations build capacity to serve, will fund upgrading technology for Kinship. It will make possible the development of a new web-site, promotional DVD, computer and office equipment.

Watch for kinshipparkrapids.org this fall!



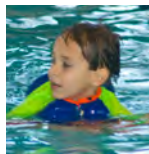
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Jennifer Therkilsen

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Maxwell Photography
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Terry Morris
Del Holz



You Can Win this Clubhouse!

Northwoods Bank did it again! We didn't know how they could top last year's model, but this year's clubhouse donation to Kinship does it. The table and chairs come with this cheerful, 6' x 6' weather resistant cedar dream home for little ones!

See it for yourself at one of the businesses below. Better yet, purchase a \$5 raffle ticket from one of these supporting businesses and win it!

Park Rapids ~ Northwoods Bank locations, Kinship office, Northern Convenience, Park Rapids Building Supply, Park Ace Hardware, Park Rapids BP, T&M Express, Trading Post
Akeley ~ T&M Express
Dorset ~ Professor Nil's Photography
Nevis ~ Northwoods Bank, T&M Express
Osage ~ Floor to Ceiling Store

Raffle drawing will be at 5 PM, August 14 at Red Bridge Park, Legends & Logging Event, Park Rapids.

All proceeds go to Kinship to support mentoring programs for local children. Only 2,000 tickets were printed, so buy lots!



Thanks to Northwoods Bank employees and friends who built, then donated this Clubhouse to Kinship!

Save the Date: Ice Cream Social on 9/9!

Calling all ice cream lovers to the **Dorset House** on Thursday, **September 9 from 5 to 8 pm** for an Ice Cream Social! Proceeds will go to Kinship. Mark your calendars now!

Kinship Spaghetti Dinner: Friday, Sept 24 at Century.