



Links

linking kinship caregivers

Shearing Love for Kinship Caregivers

by Dionne Simmons

In the spirit of Mother’s Day we would like to show our love for women caregivers. Every day we hear from grandmothers, aunts, sisters, cousins who are raising relatives’ children. Many of these women take on the responsibility of raising more children without any additional financial support. A large number of kinship families are faced with difficult financial decisions that generally result in the caregiver giving up their personal luxuries. A luxury most women enjoy receiving is professional hair styling services.



Tonia Merritt—Hair Stylist
JoAnna Neal—Grandmother raising 5 grandchildren

Twelve licensed cosmetologists have donated their services to a deserving kinship caregiver. All of the hair stylists were more than willing to support those individuals who are caring for

children other than their own. My personal hair stylist, Tonia Merritt, was the first one I approached and she offered her assistance without hesitation. Mrs. Merritt has been a licensed cosmetologist for nearly twenty years. She stated, “It would be my pleasure to provide my services to someone so deserving.” As she signed on so did others in the salon and throughout the city of Dayton. I sent the request to a few friends and co-workers and we were able to obtain a dozen donations in a few weeks.

We all know when we look good, we feel good. We are constantly reminded how hair is connected to looking and feeling good – from women’s magazines to verses in the Bible. *1 Corinthians 11:15*, for example, tells us “*but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her.*” Our interpretation is, long or short hair, all women appreciate well managed

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hair. It is our hope that the **"Shearing Love for Kinship Caregivers"** campaign will become a program that continues to grow and become well known across the country.

If you would like to be considered for a free hair style service:

- Please write two or three paragraphs describing how and why you are providing care for relative children. Send your entry to: Adel Samad, Center for Healthy Communities, 1 Elizabeth Place, Suite 110, Dayton, OH 45417, or email to: adel.samad@wright.edu. Please include your name and telephone number.
- The information you share with us will not be printed without your permission.
- A drawing will be done every month and if you are the lucky winner, you will receive a call from a Kinship Navigator.
- To participate in the drawing you must be a client working with a Kinship Navigator.
- For additional information about the program call Adel Samad at 937-775-8247.

Thanks to our **"Shearing Love for Kinship Caregivers"** Hairstylists

Tonia Merritt - Meridian Hair Salon
Jenny Dewberry - Meridian Hair Salon
Tshana Davis - Meridian Hair Salon
Tammi Byrd - Meridian Hair Salon
Connie Dumays - City Stars
Natasha Norvell - City Stars

Monica Williams - City Stars
Davia Foster
Ytona Brewer - Mahogany's Hair Salon
Lisa Dutton - Salon Ventures
Heather Walter - Salon Exp (providing 5
free hairstyles)



"Happy Mother's Day"

"Happy Mother's Day" means more
Than have a happy day.
Within those words lie lots of things
We never get to say.
It means I love you first of all,
Then thanks for all you do.
It means you mean a lot to me,
And that I honor you.

But most of all, I guess it means
That I am thinking of
Your happiness on this, your day,
With pleasure and with love

Shining the Spotlight On

Joanna Neal is the Shearing Love for Kinship Caregiver Recipient

We would like to shine the spotlight on JoAnna Neal. Ms. Neal is a widower and grandmother caring for five grandchildren ages ranging from six to fifteen. They are all girls except the oldest who is a boy. Ms. Neal has been caring for her grandchildren for the past eleven (11) years.

The Neal family recently moved from Mississippi via Peoria, Illinois to Dayton, Ohio. JoAnna has been working with Adel Samad (Kinship Navigator) for the past two years. Adel Samad has been

very helpful in referrals to community resources that have helped to sustain and inform the family of vital community programs. During this time, Ms. Neal has become an active member of the Trotwood Madison Grandparent Support Group. Additionally, she serves as the Co-Secretary of the Ohio Grandparent Kinship Coalition.

Ms. Neal has shared with us that it is often difficult caring for the children because of the diversity of their personalities. She explains, "Raising someone else's child presents many challenges because of the circumstances that brought them to me. Many legal and family obstacles have brought us to this point. As grandmothers now raising our

grandchildren full time, we must prepare ourselves to assume a totally different role than the one we had as grandmothers not in a full time parenting role. Combined with the psychological and emotional adjustments we must also be physically prepared." Grandparents often observe that most of the time there is little or no interaction or financial support from the biological parents. Grandmothers note it is often more difficult when there are no positive male role models available in the children's lives.

Ms. Neal is a committed and dedicated caregiver supported by her



After
(Hairstyle provided by Tonia Merritt –Meridian Hair Salon)

never overuse the words please, thank-you, and what can I do to help. Ms. Neal explains, rather than wallowing in self pity when she falls down, she just gets right back up again!

great faith in God and guided by a desire to provide the best possible opportunities for the children's future success. She has adopted the motto, you can

Summer Camps



It is that time of year when you are looking for summer camps for the children. Here is a list of summer camps the Kinship Navigators have compiled for your convenience.

Summer Camp	Phone	Zip code	Ages	Dates	Prices
Lohrey Center	937-333-3131	45420	3-5 6-12	6/13 – 8/5	\$65.00/weekly or income based
Northwest Center	937-333-3322	45406	3-5 6-12	6/13—8/5	\$65.00 weekly or income based
Cruis'n With kids Camp	937-415-2340 937-415-2339	45414	6-12	6/12—8/22	\$90.00-\$100.00weekly
YMCA Downtown	937-223-7711	45402	5-12	6/7-8/12	Title XX Accepted/ Financial aide
Fairborn YMCA	937-754-9622	45324	5-12	6/7-8/12	Title XX Accepted/ Financial aide
Kleptz YMCA in Englewood	937-836-9622	45322	5-12	6/7-8/12	Title XX Accepted/ Financial aide
Neighborhood Development Center—Trotwood	937-854-9622	45426	5-12	6/7-8/12	Title XX Accepted/ Financial aide
Dakota Center/Bots N Girls Club	937-228-8961	45402	7-15	6/13-7/29	\$80.00 for 8 weeks
Huber Heights YMCA	937-236-9622	45424	5-12	6/5-8/26	Title XX Accepted/ Financial aide
YWCA Dayton	937-461-5550 ext. 135	45402	Girls 12-15	6/5-8/5	Scholarships available
South YMCA in Kettering	937-434-1964	45429	4-12	6/5-8/19	Title XX Accepted/ Financial aide
West Carrolton YMCA	937-866-9622	45449	3-14	6/6-8/19	Title XX Accepted/ Financial aide
East End Community Services	937-259-1898 937-542-5678	45410	5-10	After school and all summer	Free for low income families
Boonshoft Museum of Discovery	937-275-7431	45414	5-15	6/13-7/22	\$75.00-\$149.00/weekly *scholarships available
Our Magical Self	937-262-9912	45426	6-18	6/13-8/12	\$160.00 income based
Upward Bound Program	937-775-3135	45435	9th-10th grade	Students will live on campus for 6 weeks	Free for low income families
4-H Camp Graham	937-224-9654	45402	8-14	6/27-7/4	\$175.00 or income based

Looking for Something for the Kids to do this Summer? Try Rookie Reds Success League!

From June 13 through July 6, 2011, the City of Dayton will be hosting the Rookie Reds Success League at Kettering Fields. This is the third year for this local program which focuses not only on teaching young people the fundamental skills involved with the sport of baseball, but also teaches and instills in them the personal qualities that build upstanding human beings. The league takes place on Mondays and Tuesdays from 9:00am until 1:00pm and is focused on children ages 7 to 12.

To obtain an application contact Mr. Johns at 937-333-1139 or by email at brian.johns@daytonohio.gov. If you would like to know more you can find the details for the program at redsyouthbaseball.org.



AHAVA Inc. Hosts Focus Group

AHAVA is committed to serving children of incarcerated parents. The AHAVA Inc. is hosting a focus group on Thursday, June 2, 2011 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm at Casano's Health Center, 165 Edwin C Moses Blvd. We are looking for children age 9 to 12 year old whose parents are incarcerated or have been under court supervision. Refreshments will be provided as well as your name will be entered into a drawing. There will be (2) \$25 gift cards given away at the conclusion of the focus groups. For more information please contact Ms. Erica Cain at 937-830-0203.

Resources

Let's Get Rid of the Winter Blues with Dance!

The Greater Dayton Recreation Center, at 2021 W. Third, Dayton, OH 45417 offers line dancing on Mondays and Fridays from 10:00am to 12:00pm. Free to seniors over 55. Please call 937-4735 for more information.

Trotwood YMCA, 506 E. Main Street, across from the library, offers line dancing on Tuesdays and Thursdays 5:30pm - 7:00pm for a minimum fee of \$3.00 per class and Free to YMCA members. Please call 937-854-9622 for additional information.

Roosevelt Commons, 101 W. Third Street, line dancing classes offered on Mondays and Fridays 10:00am to 11:00am. FREE. For additional information call 937-333-4732.

Beavercreek Senior Adult Center, every Monday, beginners at 1:30pm, advanced 2:30pm. No sign up required. Call 937-426-6166 for additional information.

Vandalia Senior Recreation Center, 1111 Stonequarry Road, Beginners Class, Thursdays 9:30am to 10:30am. FREE. For additional information call 937-415-2340.

Upcoming Events

Come Out and Learn Behavior Tips with Other Caregivers

Come to the Kinship Caregiver Conversation Corner to learn about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) from Anita Koerner, LISW. Bring your lunch and enjoy a lively discussion on Tuesday, May 10, 2011 from 11:30am-2:00pm in the Chapel at Elizabeth Place. Parking is free in the visitors lot, located at the front of the building. Enter through the main entrance and the chapel is located in the southwest building. To reserve a seat call 937-775-8248.



Links

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For more information or to make suggestions, please contact Dionne Simmons, Program Director, Kinship Caregiver Coalition, at the Center for Healthy Communities, 1 Elizabeth Place, West Medical Plaza, Ste 110, Dayton, Ohio 45417; (937) 775-8249.

The Center for Healthy Communities is primarily funded through Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine, Sinclair Community College, Area Health Education Centers (AHEC), Dayton Public Schools, JXT, Inc., Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services, Ohio Commission on Minority Health, Ohio Department of Health, Michigan Department of Community Health, National Libraries of Medicine, and the United States Social Security Administration.

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Save the Date! 2011 Ohio Grandparent Kinship Coalition Conference "Healing Hearts—Kinship Care"

Please join us for the third bi-annual OGKC Training Conference at Embassy Suites in Columbus, Ohio, on September 9, 2011, from 8:00am-5:00pm. The mission of the 2011 statewide kinship conference is to educate and train kinship caregivers and the professionals working with them, and to encourage collaboration and build supportive networks between kinship caregivers in the state of Ohio. In addition, OGKC would like to acknowledge obstacles and provide some resources for kinship families when trying to navigate multiple systems.

Deadline to register is Wednesday, August 31, 2011. Registration forms are available online at www.ohiograndparentkinship.org. For additional information contact Dionne Simmons at 937-775-8249.

Are You In Need of Legal Assistance?

A free Legal Services Clinic will be held on Tuesday May 18, 2011, from 5:30pm until 7:30pm at the Wesley Center located at 3730 Delphos Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45417. Attorneys will provide legal assistance and information at no charge to participants. In addition to seeing an attorney a general information session will be provided on how the court system works. Attendees should bring any paper work that they would like to discuss with the attorneys. For additional information contact Ms. Mary McCallopp at 937-263-3556.

***Kim Owens, Wright State University,
Research and Sponsored Programs,
donates handmade scarves to
kinship families***



I had been crocheting scarves in my spare time for a few years without any specific purpose. I didn't have room for the stockpile, so I sent an email out to the Wright State University community seeking organizations with a need for the scarves. One of the first emails I received in response was from Dionne Simmons at the Kinship Caregiver Coalition. I had never heard of the Coalition, so I did some research and loved the purpose and mission of the organization, especially for a group of individuals who don't receive a lot of attention regarding their challenges. I am now more dedicated to this project and many of my friends donate



yarn for the scarves. Part of my motivation is selfish: I love the idea of someone (especially a child) receiving a brand new scarf in their favorite color to brighten their day and keep them warm.

Kinship Heroes

Congratulations to Bonnie Grooms on Her Retirement!

We would like to congratulate Bonnie Grooms on her retirement from Wright State University, Center for Healthy Communities. Bonnie has worked as a Kinship Navigator in Montgomery County for the past eleven years. She has worked on many initiatives over the last several years. Ms. Grooms has been committed to serving families over and beyond her duties.

Bonnie is known for her willingness to go the extra mile for kinship families. Bonnie's passion will be missed by kinship families in Montgomery County.



Congratulations on behalf of the :

Ohio Grandparent Kinship Coalition
Christ United Methodist Church –
Grandparent Support Group

Southwest Ohio Kinship Navigators

Kinship Caregiver Coalition



**Can a Kinship
Navigator help you?**

Call the Kinship Navigator
Intake Line at
937-775-8245 or visit:
[www.med.wright.edu/chc/
kinship](http://www.med.wright.edu/chc/kinship)