

MIDWEST CHRISTIAN SERVICES

Volume 1, Issue 1

Spring 2011



THE PATH...LIFE TAKES

Spring

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A year has passed by since we lost one of our own. On April 14, 2010, Heather Strandberg passed away from a short battle with cancer and has been greatly missed by all. Heather worked for MCS for about 13 years and played a large role in the boys' lives. She started working at MCS as a residential counselor, working directly with the boys in the housing unit for a year before moving to the social worker position. As we take this opportunity to reflect on the memories, Heather Strandberg has left us with, we would also like to remember others who have touched hearts and played a special role in the services of MCS. We would like to do this by constructing a walking path around



Heather Strandberg

the grounds of Midwest Christian Services. This pathway would be a place for us to display park benches, trees, stepping stones, markers, etc. in honor of the memorials MCS has received. This path would too serve the double purpose of providing a place for families to enjoy the quiet and peacefulness of the outdoors by taking a walk together, walking to our shelter house area to picnic, or relax on a park bench with their child while they are here at MCS to visit.

In the future as this project progresses, we may be looking for volunteers or donations

to help us with making our vision a reality. We are very excited and hopeful that we can make this happen.

Our "Memorial Path" will lead to our Shelter area. Benches, trash cans and picnic tables were donated by R.J. Thomas Mfg. in Cherokee, IA



MEET OUR INTERNS

LARA LETSCHE



Lara Letsche is a new face at MCS as an intern. She is currently working as a residential counselor in the houses with our boys. She is a senior at Iowa State University working towards a degree in Child, Adult, and Family Services and will graduate in May of this year. Lara resides

at her parent's home outside of Remsen, IA and has 5 brothers and sisters, which 4 are older and one is younger. She is a bright addition to our team here at MCS and has much to offer. She is very active and enjoys many activities. Some of her favorite hobbies are playing softball and volleyball, reading, listening

to music, hanging out with her family and especially helping her dad with work on the farm. Lara is very excited to be a part of the staff here at MCS during her internship.

"God never closes one door without opening another"

JULIANNE MILLER



Julianne Miller is also a new face at MCS as an intern. She is also working as a residential counselor in the houses with our boys. Julianne is a freshman at Iowa Central Community College and will be attaining her AA degree at the end of the

summer. She was raised in Cherokee, IA and enjoys many activities. Julianne's hobbies are drawing, playing basketball, and hanging out with family and friends. Julianne is very excited to be part of the team here at MCS and looks forward to getting to know the boys and helping

them learn new things. She has many bright ideas and will be a great addition to the already wonderful staff here at MCS.

NEEDS LIST

Throughout the year many people inquire about our areas of need. As we look ahead to the warmer months we are in need of the following items:

- Pillows
- Large electric skillets
- Socks
- Bathroom rugs
- Framed art
- Spiral notebooks
- Flip flops
- Twin sheets/Blankets
- Mesh shorts
- Outdoor games
- Large Storage Totes
- Shower mats
- Loose leaf paper
- Kitchen utensils
- New pots and pans
- Hand mixers
- Thank you/B-day cards
- Used refrigerators (in good shape)
- Pajama pants
- Cookie sheets
- Craft supplies
- Bath towels/wash cloths

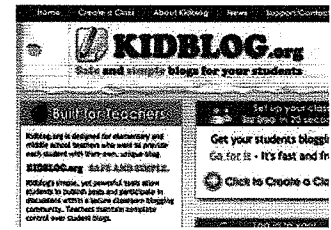


TRANSITION SCHOOL'S BLOG

The transition school here at MCS is offering a new way for the boys to share their thoughts and general day to day activities. Mr. Huebner, one of the teachers at the transition school, thought of the idea of blogging. He incorporated it into the classroom to get the boys motivated to write and type.

To start the blogging off, Mr. Huebner helped get the boys started by giving them a list of questions. Some of the questions were : "What makes me laugh?" "What I like about school" and "I have a dream". The blog is for public access and the boys have had responses from people all across the country. They have

received feedback from Egypt, Japan, South America and other places as well. Mr. Huebner says the boys do great with the blogs and it really motivates them to blog more when they get responses. Check out what the boys are up to at www.kidsblog.org/mrhuebnersclass.



Site used for the blogs at the transition school.



"Life brings simple pleasures to us every day. It is up to us to make them wonderful memories"
-Cathy Allen

SPRING EVENTS

Spring is right around the corner and that means the boys can get some of their energy out in the fresh air. There are many fun activities planned that the boys will enjoy. To officially start the spring season off, the boys will be flying kites with the Florence Chris-

tian Church from Omaha, they will also be attending the Shrine Circus. The boys really look forward to the nice weather that comes with the spring season so they will not be "cooped" up in their houses anymore! They are looking forward to playing ball outside, riding bikes,

helping plant the garden and just being out in the nice sunny weather. Along with these activities, the boys will enjoy celebrating the graduation of one of their peers from Sioux Central in May. The boys look forward to an eventful spring and summer!

2011 GRADUATING SENIOR

Evan has resided at MCS since October of 2008. He will be graduating from Sioux Central this May. Evan enjoys being outdoors and working with animals. His dream is to work on a ranch someday and train and ride horses. In

Evan's free time you can find him reading horse and ranch magazines. He thinks horses are magnificent and would love the chance to work with horses the rest of his life. When asked what his favorite memories are of MCS, Evan stated

that his favorite memories at MCS were going to the rodeo in Cherokee and checking on Bob Barnes' gates where his horses are kept.





4509 20th Ave.
Peterson, IA 51047

PHONE:
(712) 295-7601

FAX:
(712) 295-7600

E-MAIL:
dscottmcs@yahoo.com

"Building Better Lives"



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51047
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Notes From Deanna's Desk

Happy Spring to you all!

Winter is finally over and spring has arrived!! I hope this greeting finds you all happy, well and looking forward to the warm sunny weather.

It has been nearly a year since our last newsletter was posted. Although we have gone through some changes in that past year, adjusting to the loss of a long term employee, making personnel changes to accommodate for the loss as well as some state changes, MCS is still going strong. I continue to be thankful for the continued involvement and support we receive. It takes a

combined effort to "Build Better Lives."

We have been blessed to continue to be running at full capacity of 25 young men. We have discharged and admitted a number of boys already in the beginning of this New Year. On top of the one individual whom we are preparing for high school graduation, we are also anticipating a few more discharges by the beginning of the summer. Please say a prayer for these young men as they get discharged that they will utilize what they have learned, here at MCS, and become productive citizens!

The boys are looking forward to the upcoming events in the near future. The boys will be flying kites with an Omaha

Church Group, attending the Shrine Circus, a few are running with the Sioux Central Track Team and just getting to do a little fishing.

Projects for the spring and summer are being planned. It is again time to update some painting, replace some flooring in the housing units, put up some interior walls in the office building and hopefully start our "Memorial Path."

I again would like to thank all of you who take the time to think of Midwest Christian Services in each of your own special ways.

Take Care and God Bless You All,

Deanna
MCS Director

