

Share a little magic



Big Brothers Big Sisters
Edmonton & Area

Relate

Winter 2009

Christmas Party

For all matches, waitlist kids
and immediate families

Sunday, December 6

Age 11 & under

Monsters VS Aliens



OR



Sunday, December 13

Age 12 and up

Bandslam

Lunch, gifts, festive photos and a
visit from Santa following the movie

Empire Theatres, City Centre Mall, 10200 - 102 Ave, 3rd Floor

Doors open 10am • Movie starts 10:30am

Party ends at 1:30pm

Please RSVP the date of your choice to Karen at
424-8181 ext 221 or k.sauve@bbbsedmonton.org



Letter from Liz

Thank you volunteers!

As we look back on another year, and consider all the children's lives our volunteers impact, I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to each and every volunteer!

You contribute to children's

well-being in so many ways throughout the year, and our community is a better place because of you.

You will see many pictures in this newsletter of the celebration we hosted at the Telus World of Science October 27, 2009 to say thank you to our volunteers. It was wonderful to see so many of you. Thanks for all your kind words and encouragement, your smiles keep us going when the times are tough.

We are looking ahead to 2010 with some anxiety! Every charity including BBBS has been impacted by the economy this year, and we anticipate next year may be difficult. The demand for support increases every year. We have been very well supported by our funders and supporters for many years and we are indebted for their support. We know that new economies will mean that it will be tougher for them in 2010 as well as the agencies they support. We hear every day from parents, teachers and community members that tell us about children who would benefit immensely from a relationship with a caring adult, and there are currently hundreds of kids waiting for a mentor.

Fifty three percent of charities recently surveyed experienced a drop in revenue in their current fiscal year. Many charities dealt with this year's budget challenges by looking for new sources of revenue, or undertaking more fundraising. This

means that more organizations are searching for what is, essentially, a shrinking pool of funds. One-quarter of charities laid off staff in order to cope.

We are grateful at BBBS Edmonton to have retained all of our employees and served more children than ever in 2009. We believe that we will experience a drop in some key revenue areas in the future, with a continued increase in demand for our services. We are paring back to remain lean and want to continue to provide services essential to support more kids that need our help. You'll notice changes such as our annual Christmas Card... this year we have chosen to invest the funds we would normally spend on printing and mailing you Christmas greetings to supporting more children getting matched. You'll continue to see changes throughout 2010, and our goal, first and foremost will be the children! Please consider buying a ticket on our Dream Home #30, available November 30th, and encouraging your family and friends to do the same. It our most important fund raising project annually, our primary opportunity to raise significant funds every year, and one of the many ways you can lend your added support. You can order tickets at 1.877.483.8832 or online at www.bigbrothershomelottery.org.

As we begin to prepare for the year end celebrations, Chanukah, Winter Solstice, Christmas, Kwanzaa and New Year, I hope you and your loved ones are healthy and well, and will continue on the journey with us in 2010!

Liz O'Neil, Executive Director



A Big Thank You

Telus donated \$14,000 to BBBS programs. Many Telus employees volunteer in our mentoring programs! Thanks for your fantastic corporate support Telus!

Pictured from left to right: Liz O'Neill, Executive Director, BBBSE; Martin Garber-Conrad, Board Member of the Telus Community Board; Dr. Bob Westbury, Chair of the Telus Community Board and Maureen Cush, President of the BBBS Board of Directors.

News from Youth in Care

We're all busy back in group, school and with our mentors!

Congratulations to **Lyz, Aiyana** and **Chris R.** for receiving their Silver Level of The Duke of Edinburgh Award... Received from Lt-Gov. Norman Kwan on November 13 at Government House along with recipients from all over Alberta! Many more of us are soon to follow their lead. Congrats to **Giorgio, Ruby, Morgan, Amanda D., Amanda F.** and **Annie-girl** for achieving their Bronze Level Duke of Ed Award in June. Special thanks to **Mary-Ann** our Duke of Ed mentor who keeps us on track and motivated.

Ruby, Amanda F. and **Chris R.** attending GMC, **Amanda D.** and **Jacob K.** at Center High, **Chris O., Aiyana, Mark P., Amanda K., Joey Sp.** and **Shianne** in grade 12 now, **Morgan** almost finished Business College and **Giorgio, Jacob P.** and **Ashkon** now in High School.

Thanks to all for supporting us in our transition to independence in the community: **Ruby, Aiyana, Natalie, Chris R., Chris O., Jacob K., Morgan, Amanda F., Shianne** and **Magic Trevor** are all balancing school, work and independent living.

Many of us are also working: **Morgan, Ruby, Shianne, Magic Trevor, Aiyana, Lyz, Chris R., Joey Se** (just promoted at

Save-On Foods), **Amanda D.** and **Joey Sp.**

A big thanks to **Canadian Tire Jump Start** for funding provided for athletic pursuits. We loved the Splash 'n Ride Summer passes. **Giorgio** attended a week long summer Table Tennis Camp while brothers **Joey** and **Erik Se.** started Arashido Martial Arts with their mentor. **Amanda K.** is still soccer crazy and **Giorgio** is on his school hockey team... **Amanda K.** is learning the ins and outs of directing a school play at Victoria School. **Jacob K.** and mentor **Robin** working toward their Bronze level swimming/lifeguard course this January!

A special welcome to new teens: brothers **Mark P.** and **Jacob, Raven, Nikita, Brandon** and **Victoria**... we're so glad to have you in our program. A big welcome to new mentors **Kelsey** (matched to **Mona**), **Lacey** (matched to **Kassie**), **Ashley, Kendra** and **Alisha** (group mentors) and of course a huge thank you to all of our "veteran" mentors who continue to stand beside us and believe in us. We all look forward to each of you visiting us in our groups!

We are still in need of mentors to match with our new teens as well as mentors are needed to co-facilitate in our groups, so if you know someone who would be interested please call us at BBBS 780.424.8181.

Mentors & Moments

Congratulations to **Big Brother Steve** and **Savanah Bosch** who were married July 11 at the Morinville Catholic Church

A Big **THANK YOU** goes to **WestJet** for giving two AMAZING littles in our agency the chance to reconnect with their relatives here in Edmonton after they had gone to temporarily live out on the eastern coast of Canada. The girls are very excited to make the trip and extremely appreciative of this opportunity.

Celebrate Kwanzaa!

Kwanzaa is a unique African American celebration with focus on the traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce, and self-improvement. Kwanzaa is neither political nor religious and despite some misconceptions, is not a substitute for Christmas. It is simply a time of reaffirming African-American people, their ancestors and culture. Kwanzaa, which means "first fruits of the harvest" in the African language Kiswahili, has gained tremendous acceptance. Since its founding in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, Kwanzaa has come to be observed by more than 18 million people worldwide, as reported by the New York Times. When establishing Kwanzaa in 1966, Dr. Karenga included an additional "a" to the end of the spelling to reflect the difference between the African American celebration (kwanzaa) and the Motherland spelling (kwanza).

Kwanzaa is based on the Nguzo Saba (seven guiding principles), one for each day of the observance, and is celebrated from December 26 to January 1.

Community Facility Enhancement Grant



Many thanks to Castle Downs MLA Thomas A. Lukaszuk. He presented a cheque in the amount of \$125,000 to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton Board Chair Maureen Cush at the Board of Directors meeting on September 21.

The cheque was a grant from the Community Facility Enhancement Program (CFEP). The CFEP, in partnership with the Government of Alberta, assists Albertans in enriching the quality of family and community life in our province.

Pictured from left to right: Thomas A. Lukaszuk; Maureen Cush and BBBSE Board Member Phillip Peters.

BBBSE Volunteer Apprecia



Female Little of the Year Sammi S.



Male Little of the Year Adam G.



Female Mentor of the Year Laurie Anderson.



Male Mentor of the Year Darcy Hans.



Volunteer of the Year Liz Richards-Covey.



25 Year Volunteer Kay Ritchie.

ation Night

And the winners are ...

Female Little of the Year	Sammi S.
Male Little of the Year	Adam G.
Female Mentor of the Year	Laurie Anderson
Male Mentor of the Year	Darcy Hans
Volunteer of the Year	Liz Richards-Covey
25 Year Volunteer	Kay Ritchie
Media Partner of the Year	Paul Ackerman

Thanks

This year our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Night was held on October 27 at the TELUS World of Science. It was an evening of delicious food, funny photos, exciting exhibits, a heartfelt awards presentation and an amazing IMAX movie.

We had a number of our generous funders attend the evening as well including: **Nancy Reynolds**, Board Member, United Way Capital Region; **Anne Smith**, President/CEO, United Way Capital Region; **Bernie Kollman**, Vice President, IBM; **Cynthia Farmer**, Director, Public Information, Education and Outreach Programs, Sustainable Resource Development; **Mike Cooper**, Alberta Education/ Alberta Mentoring Partnership; long-time supporter **Bill Day** of Daye and Company, and **Sandi Roberts**, Safe Communities.

Special thanks to **Rod** and **Jason** at **Big Guns Productions** for putting together a touching Awards video. Thank you to our Board President **Maureen Cush** for all of the outstanding work you do in helping Big Brothers Big Sisters. Thank you to the **TELUS World of Science** for your terrific staff who went above and beyond to make this event exactly what we wanted. **McBain Camera** generously donated use of photo printers for the night. **Creative Quality Catering** provided us with the delicious food throughout the night. **Global Edmonton** donated bottled water for our guests to enjoy. Thank you to everyone who helped make the night extra special and everybody who came to participate in recognizing our wonderful volunteers and friends. It was a night that brought everyone together as part of the Big Brother Big Sister family.

The Making of...

By Lana Tordoff

Wednesday, October 14 was Edmonton's first snowfall. I was worried because it was also my first video shoot... first big project really, for Big Brothers Big Sisters. Cameraman, Rod Maldaner, was the first to arrive and promptly began scoping our little Riverdale office for best filming locations and backdrops, while Jena ran about trying to find activities so everyone would look natural and enjoy themselves. Our wonderful Volunteer Appreciation Award winners, their families and friends, began to arrive at 5 and suddenly, there seemed to be people everywhere. All I could think to do was make sure they knew there were cookies in the kitchen.

If we've had the chance to talk since I started in September, you'll know I'm pretty casual. This extends to my approach on just about everything including interviews. So while the extremely professional and prepared people around me were concerned about getting the right footage, I decided to wing it. Gratefully, between the frenzy and the cookies, the participants were extremely patient, waiting for their turn to shine. And shine they did.

A sparkling Sammi (Little Sister of the Year) brought her grandparents and little brother. With this brilliant smile and mischievous look in her eyes, I knew we'd have no trouble getting the two kids to throw snow at each other, despite the weather.

Darcy (Big Brother of the Year) and his "Little" Brother Darcy came together and I'll be honest, I wasn't sure if I was going to get a serious answer out of either of them. I swear they spent the evening entertaining the entire group. In the end though, their mutual admiration came through loud and clear.

The kicker for me was Liz (Volunteer of the Year), who clearly shone alongside Little Sister Amanda and Amanda's Mom and brother. I was so moved by the story of mutual respect and dedication to making Amanda's life richer. It became clearer and clearer throughout the evening, why working at Big Brothers Big Sisters means so much.

After such an exhilarating night, it was hard for me to sit in my little office for the next two days. Then Saturday. Sunday came, sunshine-y and warm, and it was back to filming.

I was amazed at the turnout for these final three award/recognition recipients. Our intrepid E.D. Liz was first to film and I'm sure she'll tell you we were trying to get her killed. Between the street sounds and the fact that nobody in Riverdale seems to stop at stop signs, I had my fingers crossed the whole time that nobody would end up dead or dismembered on my watch. That said, Liz eloquently and gracefully continued to prove why I want to be her when I grow up.

In her own words, Kay Ritchie couldn't believe she'd been a volunteer with BBBSE for 25 years. This lovely, genuine and inspiring woman was so very concerned about her performance that ultimately, gave us all so much to aspire to.

Laurie (Big Sister of the Year) came with her hubby and boss in tow. No – they weren't the same person. Hubby tried to keep his distance while Mary Jane spoke with clear admiration for Laurie's contributions to BBBS. Riverdale was awash with the sounds and sites of autumn in Edmonton.

Continued on page 6

A 'Little' Bit of Fun!

Winter 2009



The Quest for a New Christmas Fairy

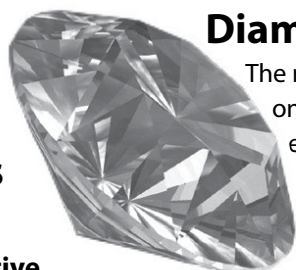
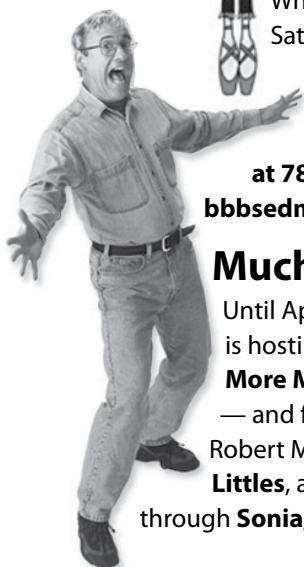
Popup Players Interactive Children's Christmas Play

Fun-Filled Entertainment for the Whole Family. Friday, Dec. 11 at 7pm, Saturday, Dec. 12 at 7pm and Sunday, December 13 at 1pm. Caernarvon Hall, 14830 - 118 Street. **Contact Karen in advance for complementary tickets**

at 780.424.8181 ext 221 or k.sauve@bbbsedmonton.org

Much More Munsch

Until April 5, 2010, the Royal Alberta Museum is hosting a travelling exhibition entitled **Much More Munsch**, which explores the imaginary — and fascinating — world of children's author Robert Munsch. **Free admission to Bigs and Littles**, as long as an advance booking is made through **Sonia, 780-453-9131**. Ideal for young children.



Diamonds

The museum opens another travelling exhibition on October 31 entitled **Diamonds**, which explores Canada's diamond industry, from mining to diamond rings! Again, **admission is free to Bigs and Littles** with an advance booking through **Sonia, 780-453-9131**.

The Festival of Trees

Shaw Conference Center, Thursday, November 26 through Sunday, November 29, 9am - 9pm.

Admission: adults \$6, children \$1 (2-12yrs), Seniors & Youth \$3 (3-17yrs).



Christmas Reflections at Fort Edmonton Park

December 6 - 23, Fort Edmonton Park. Hours of operation: Dec. 6, 13 & 20, 4 - 8pm; Dec. 11, 12, 17-19 & 21-23, 6 - 10pm. **Admission:** \$16/general (13 years and older); \$10.75/child (2-12 years).

The Making of ... *Continued from page 5*

We decided to head to the park for the rest of our footage. We continued with Laurie and Little Sister Tannan, who was accompanied by her brother. Eventually, Caseworker Vivien arrived with two other brothers. It was really amazing to see this little family together and all loved and supported by Laurie and her family. Laurie made me cry...but I guess turnabout is fair play, since apparently I did the same to her. And Tannan was incredibly genuine and so clearly impacted by having Laurie as her Big Sister. At one point, Laurie walked away to chat with one of Tannan's brothers. Cameraman Rod and I watched this

moving scene as she put her arm around his small shoulders in a sincere gesture of affection.

My little actor Adam (Little Brother of the Year) was an absolute rock star. Between swinging on the monkey bars and chasing his sister, he found some time to pose as if for a fashion magazine. It was like he'd been in front of a camera his whole life. Mom Katharine explained how Adam's life has changed since his match. I was reminded of the selflessness of parents who make the difficult decision to share their child with strangers, doing everything they

can to support their development and potential.

Filming for video production isn't nearly as exciting as it sounds. Long days and tedious setups are made more difficult by environmental conditions and uncooperative subjects. For two days in October, this was most definitely not the case. Thank you so much to all the participants for what became my true induction into the reality of Big Brothers Big Sisters. And thank you, whoever's decision it was to allow me to join this amazing group of people who really do make a difference every day.

Help From the Top of the World

By Navneet Singh Josan

To reach the highest point of our planet is no small feat. To arrange several trips to the highest peaks around the world in order to raise funding for our in-school mentoring program is an even greater feat. For the past few years

that would help with the event. Wally Berg has summated Everest and reached the top 4 times.

The expeditions began in 2006 with a trek to the Mount Everest base camp, a trek that can take up to 3 weeks. The mountain itself has a height of 29,028 feet. Following this, there was an expedition to Mount Kilimanjaro in 2007, a mountain with a height of



Jim Barr and friends.



19,340 feet. Most recently, in July of 2009, the adventurers went to

Mount Elbrus, the highest peak in Europe, with a height of 18,510 feet. Along with the actual fundraising expeditions, Jim Barr and fellow trekkers went school to school to share their experience and enthusiasm for the trips in both Canada and the countries

of the expeditions. They have made presentations at 15 schools this year sharing the cultural diversity between all the students.

For the efforts and help that these events have brought to our in-school mentoring program we would like share our appreciation for Jim Barr, along with give thanks to The Edmonton Sun, The Edmonton International Airport, Camper's Village, SHAW TV, Berg Adventures International, the Sutton Place and the Russian Cultural Heritage Development Association.

Congratulations!

Long Term **Board Member Sandra Woitas** has been awarded the **2009 Alumni Honour Award** from the University of Alberta. The celebration was held on October 1 at the Francis Winspear Centre for Music. Congratulations Sandra on your excellent achievements.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area were honoured this September at the Edmonton **Laurel Awards for Innovation and Creativity**. BBBSE won bronze for their **Fifth Dimension After-School Homework Club** in the *Not-for-Profit Organization* category.

The Edmonton Sun's Climb for Kids which is presented by the Edmonton International Airport did just that. With a driving force created by Jim Barr, a former Edmonton Sun journalist, the program has been able to raise over \$40,000, along with helping to recruit 150 volunteers to the program. Jim Barr, along with Wally Berg of Berg Adventures International, helped in arranging the trips, recruiting the adventurers, and finding the funding

Gifts of Retirement Fund Assets

For a growing number of Canadians, their RRSPs or RRFs may be one of their largest assets. However, those that are planning to leave that nest egg behind for their children often do not realize the massive tax bite (as much as 40%) that could be taken out at the time it is passed to their heirs. An individual could designate that some of these tax dollars could be directed to the Edmonton Big Brothers Big Sisters Endowment Fund at the Edmonton Community Foundation instead of the government.

For those who may have significant retirement plan assets with no heirs, these unused assets could be directed to the Edmonton Big Brothers Big Sisters Endowment Fund.

For more information about potential gifts of retirement funds, please contact Ruth McIntyre at (780) 424-8181 x231.



The Children's Circle is a group of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area friends who are committed to the future of the agency and our mentoring programs for future generations through our new endowment fund.

Our Staff

Executive Director

Liz O'Neill

Executive Assistant

Penny Dietz

Manager of Finance & Technology

Dawna Morgan

Finance Assistant

Irene Devins

Administrative Assistant

Karen Sauve

Manager of Development

Ruth McIntyre

Fund Development Assistant

Allison Cammaert

Communications Specialist

Lana Tordoff

Marketing & Communications Assistant

Jena Bishop

Manager of Mission Effectiveness

Tracy Lockhart

Quality Support Caseworkers

Erica Lauridsen, Angie Undheim

Customer Relations Case Workers

Robin Way, Anita Saini

Managers of Service Delivery

Kerry Woodland, Chris Arsenault

Coordinators of Service Delivery

Annette Malin, Roslyn Henderson,

Kari Readman, Kimberly Bradburn,

Sandra Pate, Shellie Dodd

Enrollment Caseworkers

Tanya McKay, Amy Rozak,

Vanja Krslak, Justyna Cieszynska

PFK Caseworkers

Cindy MacNeill, Janelle Maharaj,

Amy Jeske, Andrea Yacyshyn,

Lasina Ironstone, Breanne Noel

Program Support

Gail Wallace, Aura Acevedo,

Alyssa Butler, Judy O'Reiley, Katie Plazier

Event Planner

Kristyn Emmerzael

Training Facilitators

Kristyn Emmerzael, Katie Plaizier

Community Caseworkers

Janice Gargas, Viki Panos,

Ashley Cantwell, Vivien Lam,

Katie Rees, Jody Belter,

Chelsie McFarlane,

Meagan Emes, Cindy Mason,

Cheyenne Peters – Strathcona,
Shannon Baert – Francophone Gabrielle Roy,

Tina Macumber – Parkland,

Laura Sturrock – Vegerville,

Shelly Bertschi – Lac Le Biche,

Laurie Russell – Mornville,

Alison Stang – Camrose

Club Connect Keleigh Larson

Our Funders

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area is proud to be a member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada and receives funding from:

Alberta Advanced Education & Technology

Alberta Children & Youth Services: Edmonton, Lac la Biche, Vegreville

Alberta Culture and Community Spirit

Alberta Justice

Alberta Lottery Board

Alberta Mentoring Partnership

Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks & Wildlife Foundation

Alliance Pipeline

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada

Butler Family Foundation

Canadian Tire Foundation for Families

CanWest Global Foundation

City of Edmonton, Community Services

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Region 5- East Central Alberta Child & Family Services Authority,

Edmonton & Area Child Family Services Authority, Region 6

Edmonton Community Foundation

Family Centre

Boys and Girls Club of Edmonton

Moffat Family

Edmonton Public School Board

Enbridge Pipelines

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Indo Canadian Women's Society

Family & Community Support Services: Edmonton, Strathcona, Lac la Biche

The Muttart Foundation

MasterCard

Telus Foundation

TransCanada

United Way, Alberta Capital Region

Thank you!

Phone (780) 424-8181

Fax (780) 426-6689

Email bbbs@bbbsedmonton.org

www.bbbsedmonton.org

Volunteers Needed!

Thanks to the **Edmonton Oilers Association** for selecting BBBS as a **50/50 draw recipient for 2010!** We need 65 volunteers (18 years +) to sell 50/50 tickets at the January 23, 2010 game.

Edmonton Police Foundation Half Marathon & 5KM Run/Walk. Sunday, April 25, 2010. We are looking for participants and volunteers. Visit www.epfhalfmarathon.ca

Call Allison Cammaert at 780.424.8181 ext 249 to sign up for any of these events.

RELATE is going electronic!

Beginning in 2010, we will send your RELATE newsletter by email to all volunteers that have email. Littles and volunteers with no email will receive their by regular mail unless you request otherwise. Big Brothers Big Sisters is going green to be more environmentally conscious, reduce our costs and to improve communications with all of our RELATE readers.