



NEWSLETTER

January/February 2010

Big Brothers & Sisters
of Portage County

A program of
Family & Community Services

102 children matched with mentors. Over 85 children waiting. You can help. Volunteer or donate today. Call 330.296.6655 or visit www.bbsportage.org

Bowl for Kids' Sake 2010

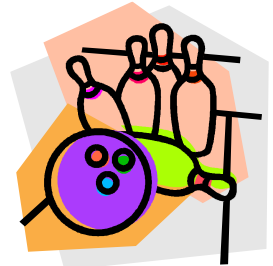
BFKS 2010 will be held on

Saturday March 6, at 1:00 p.m.

and will be hosted by AMF Twin Star Lanes in Kent.

There will be bowling, food, door prizes & rewards everyone can earn by collecting donations to help support Big Brothers & Sisters.

More information will be coming soon!



National Mentoring Month – January 2010

January 2010 is National Mentoring Month. The board and staff at Big Brothers & Sisters would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of the volunteer mentors from 2009. These are the men and women who selflessly gave their time to children in need of a friend, a role model and a little bit of fun in their lives.

Our Big Brother and Big Sister volunteers are people from age 18 to 72. They come from all walks of life, educational backgrounds, career backgrounds. They live all over Portage County. They represent a vast range of interests - cooking, sports, computers, woodworking, crafts, fishing, cars, fashion, indoors and outdoors. There is really only one thing that they all have in common - the desire to help a child.

Our volunteers make a commitment to spend 12 hours a month, for one year, with their Little Brothers and Little Sisters. Together they gave over 13000 hours of volunteer service in 2009.

Check out our website at www.bbsportage.org to see the list of everyone who volunteered as a Big Brother or Big Sister in 2009. We are very thankful and also very proud of them. These people are your friends and neighbors. Read the list. You just might see someone you know. If so, ask them about their Little. They'll be happy to tell you.

***Thank you to all of our
Big Brother and Big Sister volunteers!
You are the best!***

Thank you to...

- Marty Baynor & the Browns Backers for donating tickets and inviting 2 matches to the tailgating party.
- Dave Scott for donating Cav's tickets.
- Employees of the Tommy Store at Aurora Farms for donating gifts at Christmas.

Email Newsletter

Help us save money on postage and paper by signing up to receive your Newsletter through email. Just send an email to info@bbsportage.org. Your Newsletter will arrive sooner and in color!

Christmas Card Thank You

The following "thank you" is meant for all who created Christmas cards to send to the Veterans Hospital.



Louis Stokes
Cleveland Department of
Veterans Affairs Medical Center
10000 Brecksville Road
Brecksville, OH 44141

December 22, 2009

Big Brothers & Sisters of Portage County
705 Oakwood St., Suite 103
Ravenna, OH 44226

In Reply Refer To: ^{541/135B}

Dear Volunteers & Children:

On behalf of the Louis Stokes Cleveland Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Brecksville Division, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude for remembering the veterans with beautiful handcrafted Christmas cards.

The time and love evident in this donation lets our hospitalized veterans know that they have not been forgotten, and that the sacrifice they made to preserve our way of life is appreciated.

Again, our heartfelt thanks to you for taking the time to remember. It has indeed made a difference.

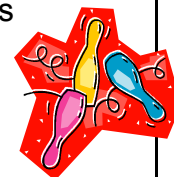
Sincerely,

LOVEL HENDERSON
Voluntary Service Officer

Upcoming Activities

Attention all Bigs & Littles! When you do your check in, be sure to check with your match support specialist about coming activities, including Bowl for Kids' Sake.

We already have several sponsored lanes for Bigs & Littles, which means your match only needs to collect enough in donations to pay for one person but you can both bowl, eat pizza and have fun! But these lanes are first come, first served so call today and sign up!



Wish List

Our Wish List is made up of items the agency needs or would like to have. Any donated items reduce our operating costs. If you or someone you know could fulfill these wishes, please call our office at 330.296.6655 or email deb.ferrell@bbsportage.org.

Gift cards to office supply stores
Copy paper
Postage Stamps
Free tickets to places and events for our Bigs and Littles to use

Activities Update



- Domino's Pizza in Ravenna was the place to be on Nov. 21. About 20 Bigs & Littles learned all about making pizza and then designed their own! Everyone went home full and happy! Thanks again to Terry and Debbie Stephens, owners of Domino's, for hosting our event.
- Almost 100 people were at our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Holiday Dinner. Everything was very festive with food by the Stepping Stones, entertainment by The Kids Party Dude and a visit from Santa. All the matches created Christmas cards that were sent to veterans at the Brecksville VA Medical Center.



Look Who's Waiting...for You?

This waiting Little Sister is 15 and lives with her mom and her brother. She is a friendly and talkative young lady. She describes herself as an artist and said she likes ceramics, pottery and all types of crafts. She likes school and math and chemistry are her favorite subjects.



Do you have 12 hours a month to volunteer as a Big Sister to this child? If you would like more information about her or about our program please call us at 330.296.6655 or check our website at www.bbsportage.org. This Little Sister is waiting to meet you.



Be a friend. Be a mentor. Just be there.



Happy Birthday...

January

LS Brittany
LS Courtney
LS Jessica
LB Dominick
BS Debbie
BS Donna
BS Jami
BS Jenna
BS Katie
BS Vanessa
BB Barry
BB Matt
BB Stephen

February

LS Alexis
LS Jerica
LS Kayleigh
LS Kimberly
LS Marlana
LS Merissa
LS Paige
LS Shannon
LB Tyler
BS Alexa
BS Maureen
BS Sarah
BB James
BB Jeremy
BB John



Match Anniversaries



January

LS Jerica / BS Rebecca Alexander – 4 years
LS Jazmin / BS Gretchen Schwab – 3 years
LS Aajah / BS Keri Montgomery – 3 years
LS Marilyn / BS Bonnie Jones – 2 years
LB Dion / BB Stephan Laird – 1 year
LB Christopher / BB Michael Crandall – 1 year

February

LS Ashley / BS Candace Kaptain – 5 years
LS Ty-Lyn / BS Carol Gatian – 5 years
LS Eva / BS Janet Froelich – 4 years
LB Christian / CM David & Cheri Walter - 3 years
LS A'Lanyae / BS Christine Lucketic – 1 year
LS Jessica / BS Maureen Sweeney – 1 year

Welcome New Matches

LS Ashlynn / BS Alexa Drnjevic
LS Hannah / BS Devicka Ojha
LB Robert / BB Tyler Martin
LS Amber / BS Janelle Colecchi
LS Alexis / BS Lindsey Gregory
LB Ryan / BB Kevin Hogan
LS Chey / BS Courtney Crossen
LS Ashley / BS Stephanie Moran
LB J.T. / BB Jeremy Powell
LB Mike / BB Matt Smith
LS Paige / BS Candice Pipoly
LS Tristle / BS Janie Mottershead
LB Jasper / BB Tom Collins
LB Jerod / BB Kip Sherwood
LS Michelle / BS Jenna Richards
LB Curtis / BB Scott Face
LB Jesse / BB Joe Baum

Do You Have News?

- Congratulations to BB Sean Buchanon for passing the bar exam. LB Trevor and his mom Linda are very proud of him.
- LB Trevor is on the Roosevelt cross country team and singing a solo in the Roosevelt's Men's Choir.



To Do...

- Play in the snow - snowmen, snow angels, sledding
- Make Valentine cards
- Have a board game day
- Go on a winter hike
- Check out your local library for activities
- Check out our website
- Make lunch together and try a new food
- Visit the KSU Fashion Museum
- Free ice skating rink in Downtown Akron; skate rental \$2
- Have a spa day at home
- Feed the birds - check the internet for pinecone and peanut butter recipes
- Cut out paper snow flakes and hang them in windows



Road Trip ~ Polar Bear Days at the Cleveland Zoo

January 2- 31, 10 am - 5 pm

Whenever the high temperature for the day is 32 degrees or below, it will be declared a *Polar Bear Day at the Cleveland Zoo*. That means Zoo visitors receive half - price admission on that day. To confirm a Polar Bear Day at the Zoo, visit the Zoo on the internet at www.clemetzoo.com or call (216) 661-6500.

Winter visitors will find plenty to see and do at the Zoo. In Northern Trek, polar bears, along with other winter-loving animals including wolves, tigers and deer, are at their most active at this time of year. For those who prefer warm and cozy, visit The RainForest where it's always a balmy 80 degrees. The RainForst features more than 600 exotic animals, including anteaters, porcupines and orangutans, as well as 10,000 tropical plants native to the jungles of Africa, Asia and the Americas.



Support Big Brothers & Sisters
Shop Fabulous Finds Thrift Superstore

- Clothing fashions feature name brands such as Gap, Mudd, Levi, Elizabeth and Liz
- A great place to shop for quality used furniture, sporting goods, house wares, exercise equipment, bedding, books, movies, games, toys and craft supplies
- Located at 9058 SR 14, Streetsboro, 330.422.0039
 - Open Monday through Saturday, 10 am - 8 pm; Sunday 11 am - 6 pm

***A portion of all sales is donated to
Big Brothers & Sisters***

Program Manager

Andrea Neidert

Office Manager

Deb Ferrell

Match Support

Lauren Cieslak

Julie Arnold

Grace Ford

Volunteer Recruitment

Linda Umbayemake



Big Brothers & Sisters
of Portage County
705 Oakwood St.
suite 103

Ravenna, OH 44266

P 330.296.6655

F 330.296.6766

www.bbspportage.org

Cars for Kids
We'll take your clunker!



"Car for Kids" helps to raise funds for Big Brothers & Sisters
One-to-One Mentoring program.

To donate your running or non-running car or truck:

- ♦ Call the BB&S office at 330.296.6655
- ♦ Your vehicle will be towed free of charge, usually within 48 hours
 - ♦ Donors need to provide the keys and title
- ♦ Donors may also claim a tax deduction for making a charitable donation