

**Aviva Children's Services Volunteer and Visitation Programs
for Child Protective Services**

**KIDS AT HEART
SPRING 2008**



Volunteer "Pays it Forward"

by Anne Sankey

Sadly, some people never recover from child neglect and abuse or from the many subsequent trips back and forth between home and foster care. Others manage to do okay. But, happily, some survive and emerge triumphant. Meet Natalie McGee, a compassionate dynamo, who says it is traumatic for a child to suddenly find herself in foster care, but "if it weren't for CPS and foster care I would not be alive."

The story begins in 1930s Tucson. Natalie's well-to-do mother, here from Chicago for asthma treatment, became severely addicted to the prescription drug, Phenobarbital. While living at the Santa Rita Hotel she met and married a hotel kitchen employee, a young Arizona ranch cowboy - the 'black sheep' of his family and an alcohol addict. Their mutual addictions led to arrests for improper conduct. Neither was able to parent the three babies that had arrived by then, a 3-year-old girl and Tucson's smallest surviving premature infants, Natalie and her twin sister.

When Natalie was two years old, Mother disappeared and Father took the girls to Arizona Children's Home, then known as an orphanage. But within a month, he reclaimed the children from ACH and hired

Blanch and Elmo, a couple who "took in" the girls. Never allowed in the house or required to bathe, the three slept in a windmill and shed for the next four years. The wife's sister, the immediate 'caretaker', placed food on the porch for them and provided minimal, but kindly oversight, including attendance at Amphi Elementary. If the girls were "bad", they were put into the scary cellar. Some summers were



Natalie and her twin, age 2½, at the Arizona Orphanage (now Arizona's Children Association.)

spent at the family ranch with Father's relatives, kind people who provided the only normalcy they had ever known. One cousin began to teach them to read and write.

When Natalie was seven, the girls' lives changed. Father had remarried and moved to San Francisco. He sent for the girls and for a short year they lived in a transformed and seemingly idyllic environment, with a kind stepmother who taught them cleanliness and to eat with silverware. But it all

ended abruptly when Father beat his wife.

Natalie and her sisters went back to live with Blanch and Elmo and were there for three more years, for Natalie, ages 8 to 11. Two brief, but important events occurred. A move back to San Francisco, that ended when Father again beat Stepmother and again the girls experienced the trauma of witnessing domestic violence. Secondly, an unexpected visit from their Mother - a phantom none of the girls knew or remembered. She walked into the room and collapsed onto the floor in tears and had to be attended to by Natalie's older sister. But, very significant for Natalie, before Mother vanished again, Natalie had had a chance to see that she existed and to touch her face.

Two years later Mother came back into their lives again. Living in Phoenix with her new husband, she sent for the children. At that point, Mother was smart, interested in them, and sad they couldn't read. Natalie remembers an Easter egg hunt with 500 eggs. But within six months, their drunken stepfather, an ex-fighter named 'Gorilla', beat Mother horribly, leaving indelible images of terror. When a school friend told Natalie about being molested by her own father, a

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**Aviva
Children's
Services**

Mission Statement

The mission of Aviva is to enhance services that improve the quality of life for children who are victims of neglect, abuse, and poverty, and who are in the care of Child Protective Services.

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If you have article contributions or ideas for our Fall 2008 issue, please contact Bonnie at 327-6779, ext. 13. All articles and photos by Aviva staff unless otherwise noted.

United Way Donors-

Please consider designating Aviva. Our number for ECAP donors is 9797. All other donors use 1113. Thank you!

Natalie, continued...

series of events led to CPS investigations of both their homes and a CPS ultimatum went to Natalie's Father to remove the children from their Mother and Stepfather. From age 13½ to 16, they lived in LA with Father and Stepmother, with Father requiring that Natalie stand watch for the cops while he ran a bookie joint. At age 16, the twins left their parents, took jobs at the phone company and rented an apartment in L.A. They were free at last to shape their own destinies.

Returning to Tucson to look up her mother's treatment record at a Tucson psychiatric facility, Natalie met a social worker who became her mentor and encouraged her to attend college. At age 18, after teaching herself to read and write, she completed a Bachelor's degree in Social Work at the University of Arizona, followed by an MSW at San Diego State. And, her name was on the Dean's list.

Natalie's goal after becoming fluent in sign language was to work with and for the deaf. As a new social worker, she requested assignment of all the cases involving the deaf and handicapped. Also as a payback for tuition waiver, she was given cases at the Juvenile Court involving domestic violence, a most difficult assignment for her, but one which helped her to face and conquer the residue of



by Anne Sankey,
Executive Director

all she had experienced – it was “a wonderful healing,” she said.

With 10 years at the Juvenile Court completed, Natalie was free to fulfill the mission she envisioned. Becoming an advocate for the deaf, she carefully planned strategies for success and became instrumental in passing the Americans with Disabilities Act. “No one ever told me I couldn't, so I just did it.”

That task accomplished, she returned to Tucson to begin a business at the family ranch – growing cactus and producing Prickly Pear Nectar, a natural health food concentrate that has been found to reduce cholesterol and lower blood sugar among other benefits. Her business is thriving and Prickly Pear Nectar is soon to be distributed worldwide.

But at age 68, Natalie isn't content just to run a success-

ful business. She is concerned about people, especially children. She is committed to helping those who are helping others, and while making her business rounds in Tucson, she stops at various charities to get acquainted and help out. Upset, like so many, with the child deaths in the news, she is vitally interested in planning strategies that will help to improve child welfare rationale, practices and systems. Natalie became an Aviva advocate in December, 2007 when she directed toys and other donations toward the Christmas project. She continues to assist us in our efforts.

How does a woman emerge from a childhood of chaos, uncertainty and fear with such positive energy and the ability and confidence to translate a goodwill spirit into action? What helped her survive? Was it the close bond between her twin and herself (“always being placed with my twin kept me connected and kept me from being lonely”)? Was it the glimpses into the functional lives of the large, extended family during those summers at the ranch? Was it her native intelligence and ability to observe and access, and then without having experienced much of it, to ascertain that the world could offer a different life? Was it the counselor/mentor who showed her she could attend college? Natalie feels that had she not escaped living with her Mother and Father, she would have internalized their negative behavior patterns, their destructive adaptations to the worlds they created. She is proud and grateful for



Anne, left and Natalie at Aviva.

Christmas Eve, 2007 - A Very Special Visit to the Tucson Children's Museum

By Jason Farlee, Visitation Field Supervisor

December 24, 2007, Aviva Visitation Services hosted a special Christmas Eve visit for 36 of the families we serve. The event took place at the Tucson Children's Museum. We thankfully received transportation support from many Foster Parents and American Pony Express. Aviva covered entrance fees for the families and provided a stuffed animal, candy cane and ornament to every child in attendance. The Tucson Children's Museum supported the event with a group discount rate and a dinosaur mascot to entertain the children.

The response from families was overwhelming gratitude for the event. Parents and children had fun interacting with the various museum activities. Some of the families took the opportunity to exchange gifts with their children and have a Christmas meal on the Museum's lawn. Many parents expressed their thanks to Aviva Visit Supervisors and Staff for providing a Christmas event when they otherwise would not have had the opportunity to visit their children on Christmas Eve. With the success of this event we are looking forward to providing similar opportunities for our clients in the future.

May is National Foster Care and Foster Parent Month

A Blue Ribbon event will be held May 31, 2008, to bring awareness to the community of the hundreds of children in need of foster families and to show appreciation and recognition for the tremendous contributions already made by foster parents. Currently twenty states organize celebrations of foster and adoptive parents through Blue Ribbon events nationwide. In addition to the foster and adoptive families, the event brings together CPS and DES workers, CASA's (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Foster Care Review Board Members, licensing workers and members of the community to honor foster and adoptive families.

This year the Foster Care Awareness committee is excited to collaborate with the Arizona Heart Gallery for this special day. The Arizona Heart Gallery is an organization that takes, frames and displays beautiful photos of the children in care in order to showcase adoptable children.

The day of celebration includes food and activities for children, such as jumping castles, clowns and face painting. There will also be opportunities to speak with families who have fostered and adopted to provide a real-world scenario of the life of foster and adoptive parents. Additionally, the individual case managers for the children who are showcased in the Heart Gallery will be invited to come and speak about the children who are available for adoption. Finally, the event will be highlighted by releasing approximately 2,000 balloons tied with blue ribbons - each balloon will represent a child living in Pima County who is in need of a temporary or permanent home.

You are invited to attend to learn more about becoming a foster or adoptive parent, or if you would like to volunteer to staff a food or game booths, or to tie the blue ribbons onto the balloons. *Please call Angela Martinez at 795-1858, ext. 242, or Bonnie at 327-6779 ext. 13 for information.*

The Blue Ribbon Event, Saturday, May 31st
4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
at Thoroughbred Nissan
5163 E. 22nd Street

Foster Care Terminology

Licensed foster care - The State pays the foster parents for food, clothes, education and the child is also covered for medical and dental expenses.

Group Home - Homes in established neighborhoods providing care for 5-10 children. They are licensed by the State and most are run by large agencies. They are staffed around the clock.

Unlicensed or relative placement - This is typically a relative or friend who takes in the child(ren) and does not get reimbursed or funded by the state. The state mandate is for workers to place the child(ren) with relatives unless this is not possible.

In-Home Care Unit - Children are still in the home with the parents and the parents voluntarily work with CPS. Poverty is one of the most common causes for these families to be involved and these are the families Aviva tries to help the most since they don't get any resources from CPS.

Out-of-Home - This refers to all of the children who do not live with their birth parents and are involved with CPS. They can be in a licensed foster home, live with relatives or in a group home.



Bright Spots



***We know that all of you are Bright Spots and we welcome the opportunity to highlight you or your group in upcoming newsletters. Call us if you want to see your Bright Spot here!
Thank you for all you do to make the lives of children brighter!***

Margaret Lucas and Linda Scheel —

More than 500 blankets have been made by this mother/daughter team. Their blankets are unique –they sew a big pocket on the front of each blanket into which they tuck a stuffed animal or little toy.

Rosie Schmidt —

Rosie has been one of our Bright Spots since August 2003. She and her friend, Vi, brought in a donation of school supplies and asked what else we needed. We told them about the Bags for Kids Project and since that day Rosie has made 1,035 bags and 484 Christmas stockings for CPS children. She even recruited her sister, Carol, who lives in Prescott to make Bags for Kids ! Rosie has donated thousands of school supplies, hundreds of diapers and much more. One of our favorite donations was the “Rosie Cart “. We use it every day!

Vi Kaim —

Vi is the other part of the Rosie and Vi team! Like Rosie, Vi sews with a passion! She has made 877 Bags for Kids, 113 quilts and afghans, 262 Christmas stockings, and countless crocheted and knitted children’s sweaters and vests. Vi also has donated hundreds of school supplies and so much more.

Harriette Stein —

Harriette has magic hands! She has crocheted over 1,000 blankets for CPS children. Her workmanship is beautiful and each afghan is unique. She also crochets ponchos that have kept so many little girls warm and stylish on cold mornings. Harriette and her husband, Sam, bring in school supplies each year too, along with toiletries gathered from their travels.

Roadrunner Quilters —

Quilting for CPS since 1995, this group’s efforts have provided hundreds and hundreds of beautiful quilts, 1,000+ Christmas stockings, fabric book covers, toys and many more child oriented items to children in need. Their generosity and dedication to children are inspiring.

Sunflower Quilters —

This dedicated group of quilters and crafters has been making things for CPS children since 2003. They donate

beautiful quilts, Bags for Kids bags, CD/ gift certificate holders, stuffed animals and various other items. Their enthusiasm always brightens the day!

Grace Quilts —

Grace Quilts encompasses several programs held at Grace Community Church that have benefited CPS children since 2003. These amazing groups have made hundreds of Bags for Kids bags, thousands of Christmas stockings, and many, many quilts as well as donating stuffed animals and countless other necessities. Barbara Moore coordinates much of the work of the groups and has been Aviva’s “Go To” person for years. Working with Barbara is Maybelle Murphy who sews stockings all year round, making them 100 at a time. Deanna Brost, described as a major helper in the Tucson Stocking Project, cuts fabric, makes kits and sews stockings. Joy Whited makes quilts and coordinates deliveries for the quilting group. Jan Mahoney, “The Bag Lady”, who makes Bags for Kids kits for others to sew as well as sewing bags herself.

Project Linus —

Project Linus provides quilts and blankets to CPS children monthly. As our need for quilts increased over the past year, Mary Dimercurio, Aviva’s Agency Coordinator, stepped up and delivered even more adorable quilts, blankets and afghans. Her enthusiasm is contagious and she leaves us all with a smile! Aviva is very grateful too, for the care and concern of Cheryl Reif, Jody Elmer, and the Project Linus area team leaders, as well as all those in the Tucson community who have made a blanket for Project Linus. They have provided so much comfort and warmth to children in need.

Matt Knight, Life Book Writer —

Matt recently finished a Life Book for a little boy. Matt researched the history, wrote the narrative and combined it all into a beautiful book. Matt combined his love of writing with his photographic hobby, printing each narrative page on a background of photos taken on a recent road trip. Matt explained in the book that, “You’ll find that the road in all of these backgrounds never reaches an end

destination; that’s because from here it’s up to you to determine where you want to go and what you want to do.” The Life Book created by Matt will surely become a treasured item of not only the little boy but his new adoptive family, too.

Ryan Nelson, Mentor —

Ryan came to Aviva seeking an opportunity to make a difference in the life of a youth in foster care. Currently a student at the University of Arizona, Ryan has been an amazing mentor. He has provided his mentee with consistency and support. Of course, his mentee challenged him as our youth can do, but Ryan was not deterred and never missed a beat! His compassion and dedication shined through, and you could tell that he really cared for his mentee and wanted him to become the strong and positive person he could be if he only believed in himself first. For all those qualities and efforts, we thank Ryan for giving his all with his mentees.

Jessica Kriteaman, Social Worker Assistant —

Jessica wants to help people. Being a family studies major with a sociology minor, she thought that learning what that really meant was something she needed to do. She began in the fall as a volunteer assisting the case managers in a CPS on-going unit and then decided to work again this semester as an intern for credit. She helps them get caught up on their filing, runs errands, goes on home visits and supervises visits. In addition to being our volunteer she attends the U of A full time and works part time.

Tanque Verde Lutheran —

Janette and Hubert Austin were the team who started delivering clothes and shoes to Aviva, items collected from the generous folks at church. They showed up faithfully with a car full of shoes and clothes at least once a month. The newest bright spot is Nancy Lauber who is the current clothing collector, sorter and deliverer.



Bright Spots



St. Andrew's Presbyterian —

Long time volunteer, Carol Backus, and the sewing group at St. Andrew's have been making and donating adorable crocheted, knitted, quilted, and sewn items for many years. Carol is active with the American Sewing Guild and also coordinates their Aviva donations.

LDS Pantano Ward —

Becky Thies is the contact for a variety of projects from collecting clothing and school supplies to sewing Bags for Kids and quilts. She delivers everything to Aviva and adopted a family at Christmas.

Pantano Christian Church — Peggy Tate was the angel who called and said she was going to get the church to adopt our families at Christmas. She did. They adopted 33 families and many sent generous donations of money, gift cards and toys.

Christ the King — For almost as long as Aviva has existed, Georgia Reinert has been bringing school supplies, money to purchase Payless Shoesource gift cards, Easter baskets and spearheading the Arizona Young Adult Program Christmas adoption project.

St. Mark's United Methodist —

The Heartworks Group has been making adorable quilts and very special Bags for Kids bags for many years. Lots of comfort and warmth have been generated by Heartworks.

Our Savior's Lutheran —

Mary Lou Barker and the sewing group at the church donate lovely knitted items, quilts, and so many more items.

New Life Wesleyan —

Cathleen Harrison has brought in 100s of quilts, fabric and school supplies donated by members at New Life Wesleyan. Their years of support have helped many CPS children.

TR Ellis —

His generosity abounds by adopting our largest families every Christmas and then turning into the "Birthday Guy" who continues to provide presents during the year for each of those children. We know we can count on him to contribute school supplies, undies and socks and whatever else Aviva is requesting. TR also mentors a very lucky little guy.

Erna and Gene Rosten —

They are our amazing weekend yard sale heroes. They come in almost every Monday with furniture treasures they have found while doing what they love most.

Dodie and Milan Kriho —

They are the social pair who belong to a variety of clubs and organizations and get every one of them to provide something for our children. They show up frequently with something hand-sewn by Dodie or handmade out of wood by Milan. They also bring in much needed toiletries collected from many organizations.

Ron Bush, Miracle Center Thrift Store and Patty Vallance, 1st Rate 2nd Hand Thrift Store —

They are always thinking of our children when they get furniture into their stores that we can use. They work with us to make sure we get the best prices, as well, in order for the dollars in the Abused Children's Fund to stretch their furthest.

Pam Kline —

Along with her dedication to the Bags for Kids Project, Pam's boundless energy results in our children having an abundance of unique child appropriate gifts and supplies throughout the year. No matter where Pam goes, she always has an eye out for something that would benefit one of the Aviva projects and CPS children.

Seniors for Kids —

Lawrence (Larry) Mullica brings the cutest wooden toys, handmade dolls, bags and stuffed animals, knitted caps and Christmas stockings. In addition, he always has luggage and toiletries that the group have collected and sent with him.

Sunquest (formerly MISYS) —

When Ken Wickert calls to invite our staff to their annual barbeque we know the Christmas Season has officially begun. Every year he and his team put on a delicious feast for all of the employees and those generous folks donate toys, gift cards and thousands of dollars to jump start our holiday programs.

Sun Riders Motorcycle Club —

Mama Bear, Jodi, Rabbit, Papa Ron, Bear, Linda and Bones aren't just bright spots, they are neon lights. This is the group who for 26 Christmases have provided toys for all the CPS children who wouldn't otherwise have any or many. These guys and gals work all year in order to raise the money that for the most part makes up and sustains the Abused Children's Fund. There are less than 20 members who put on the Annual Holiday Toy Parade each year.

This Christmas they donated \$45,000 and raised an additional \$10,000 from GoDaddy.Com whose president, Bob Parsons, was the Grand Marshall.

Accurate Products —

Owner Christian Frueh, his parents, and their company have huge hearts for children. In December of 2005 Christian heard about our last minute need for toys and sent a truckload of basket balls to our gift wrapping location. In December 2006 CPS children were the beneficiaries of a very large cash donation for toy purchases, and in December 2007, along with another cash donation, Accurate and its employees sponsored and delivered an enormous truckload of household items and many, many toys to a very large, needy family.

The Quality of Life Medical Center —

Combining good health promotion and altruism, the hardy Quality of Life Staff organized and ran its first annual marathon on December 2nd, 2007, designating Aviva's Life Book Project for CPS Children as the beneficiary.

Swift Family —

The Swift family first came to Aviva when daughter Jessica volunteered to be a mentor. Not long after, Jessica's mother joined the volunteer program as well, first to do a Life Book and then to be a mentor herself. Their generosity and their financial support of Aviva's Christmas Project and the Life Book Project have touched the lives of many children.

Stang Foundation —

For 10 years the Stang Foundation has been a major supporter of the Life Book Project. Their grants have made it possible to provide support and guidance to volunteers as they work through the process of researching, writing and scrapping Life Books. The Stang Foundation support has been invaluable in helping us help the children we serve.

Kim and Brian Beck —

They are the unsung heroes of the Aviva newsletter. They edit and format material that comes to them in many different forms and ultimately produce an amazing newsletter for us and for you! Originally, Kim came to Aviva as a Life Book volunteer in the mid-1990's and has continued to volunteer her time and expertise in many different capacities along with her newsletter work. Thank You Kim and Brian!

2008 Bags for Kids Sew-A-Thon a Tremendous Success!

By Marnie Pollard

The 2008 Bags For Kids Sew-A-Thon was a tremendous success. Approximately 140 volunteers attended and 1,438 bags were completed, setting a new record! Thanks to their perseverance of our hardworking and dedicated volunteers, the generosity of the community, beautiful weather, and months of planning, Tucson's foster children will be spared the embarrassment of having to pack their precious belongings into plastic garbage bags. Instead, they will have beautiful, handmade duffel bags.

Volunteers sacrifice their time and comfort because they understand how something as simple as a duffel bag can help to preserve the dignity of a child. The end of one Sew-A-Thon marks the beginning of the next.

Reflecting back on last year's "Sew-A-thon Journal" reminds us of just how much teamwork and preparation was required.

Late January, 2007-Reorganized Sew-A-Thon Storage Units: Ronda Chance, of the Division of Developmental Disabilities (D.D.D.) meticulously managed the 2007 Sew-A-Thon supplies. The Service Opportunities for Older People, from the Mennonite Church, prepared bags for delivery. All fabric, equipment, and supplies were sorted and organized.

February, 2007 & Ongoing-More Completed Bags: Tireless volunteers, continued to complete bags from home and then delivered them to Aviva.

March, 2007 & Ongoing-Initial Delivery of Completed Bags: Completed bags were delivered throughout the year to Aviva Children's Services, CPS Units, group homes, and crisis shelters to be made available to foster children in crisis.

March-April, 2007-Letters & Awards of Gratitude: Thank you notes were written and plaques were made to express sincere gratitude to diligent volunteers and generous sponsors.

May, 2007 & Ongoing Public Relations: Coordinator spoke to sewing groups, youth groups, and schools about Bags for Kids and Annual Sew-A-Thon. Enthusiastic groups made bags and gave donations.

Spring, 2007 & Ongoing-Newsletter & Request for Donations : 2007 Sew-A-Thon was featured in the Aviva Newsletter. Individuals began

The Bags for Kids Sew-A-Thon is sponsored collaboratively by the Community Partnership of Southern Arizona, the Division of Developmental Disabilities, Child Protective Services and Aviva Children's Services.

making generous donations of beautiful fabric, cording, and supplies. Corporate donations that are essential for the upcoming event were requested.

Summer, 2007 & Ongoing-Brainstorming and Shopping: Aviva Staff and Line Leader Pam Kline brainstormed ideas for 2008 event gifts and supplies.

Fall 2007-Serging and Cutting Day: Line Leaders and Aviva Staff gathered to pre cut, serge, and sort fabric.

Winter 2007-2008-Press Releases, Pre-event Meeting & Favors: The countdown began! Media members were contacted. All Line leaders gathered to discuss final details and assemble 150 Favors for participants.

Thursday prior to 2008 Sew-A-Thon-Grocery Shopping: Aviva staff loaded up on delicious food and refreshments for hardworking volunteers.

Friday, Day before the Sew-A-Thon-Event Set Up: Line Leaders, Aviva Staff, and the AMAZING & WONDERFUL D.D.D. Maintenance Crew set up the Community Resource Campus for the Sew-A-Thon. The kitchen was readied for lunch for approximately 150 people!

February 9th, 2008, The 9th Annual Bags for Kids Sew-A-Thon:

5:30 A.M. Before dawn, Pam Kline's family and friends put out signs and balloons.

6:00 A.M. Line Leaders and Aviva staff begin arriving. Food donations were picked up.

6:30 A.M. Kitchen set up stations for coffee, donuts and bagels. Preparations for lunch began.

9:00 A.M. Sew-A-Thon Volunteers began to arrive.

10:30 A.M. David Pavlovich, gifted Bisbee Harpist, arrived to play beautiful, Celtic music during lunch.

11:00 A.M. Volunteers worked away at their machines, sergers, and cording...and were getting very hungry. **Noon** Volunteers enjoyed a much deserved lunch.

2:00 P.M. Eegees, cookies, and candy were served. Volunteers were working feverishly and really needed a sugar boost!

4:00 P.M. The whistle blew and it was time to clean up and go home. A new record was set! Everyone left tired, but happy.

Our Volunteers Mean "Sew" Much!!

Our youngest volunteer joined in the SAT fun. (below)



Terry Lingel, pictured at right, pushing bags!



Lupe and her Sorority Sisters, above working on Bags for Kids!



LA MESA RV staff, above, far right, has fun while helping kids!

Lenaya Jones and her grandmother, Eleanor, had fun designing and sewing these adorable Christmas stockings. During Christmas 2007, more than 1,200 filled stockings were delivered to children in CPS.



Spring arrived at Aviva bringing with it blankets, bunnies and smiles for all of the children who received these goodies. Pictured at right are Margaret Lucas and Linda Scheel.



MEET OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS!!

Ron Olin's face is usually the first you will see when you enter Aviva's front door or the first voice you hear on the phone. He joined Aviva's office staff as Administrative Assistant in October, 2007 after he and his wife, Shelby, moved from Minnesota. They both love being in sunny Tucson after so many dreary Midwest winters! Ron



worked in a small business office for the previous eleven years and had somewhat of a cultural shock upon coming to work for a non-profit agency. Yet he has adjusted quite nicely and is so willing to assist - either in helping to carry your donations into Aviva and then give you a receipt or to help the case workers find the donation they need for the children, along with his many other tasks.



Troy Kimball is Aviva's new Volunteer Coordinator, who will work with mentors,

tutors and life book writers. He was born and raised in Phoenix, and after high school, he went directly to the University of Arizona. He changed majors three times and finally graduated with a B.A. in history from the College of Education, with a minor in sociology. After he abandoned his plan to teach high school history he secured a position with Child Protective Services. Troy worked for two and half years in an ongoing case management unit. It was a very rewarding, but very difficult job. "However," Troy says, "I wouldn't trade my experience there for anything. My work with CPS led me to a very close professional relationship with AVIVA...which lead me to my new position as the Volunteer Coordinator. I am very excited about working with everyone and am happy to bring all of my experience to the organization." Troy has been married for six years to Kristin, who is also in social work.

Pat Palmer, our new Special Projects Coordinator, has been dropping off donations to Aviva for the past four years. During one of her visits she mentioned how much she loves what we do. So we asked her "How would you like to be a part of the team coordinating special projects?" She said okay - even with our busy Christmas project fast approaching. She told her husband, Ron, it was just for a few weeks.



After her third day she went home and proudly announced she had her own desk, computer and phone extension. Two and a half months later, the Christmas Project concluded. Pat is looking forward to recognizing our special volunteers during National Volunteer Appreciation month and then to the Undies Sundays Project. Pat and Ron were foster parents of teens for 16 years. They are currently on the CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Council and Pat trains foster parents for Arizona's Children Association. They are "retired" and love to travel when they can get away from their busy volunteer and work schedules.

CRAFT CORNER

Thank you for your contributions! Aviva Children's Services is happy to give you a tax receipt for your donations.

Quilts and Blankets

Aviva provides 60 - 75 quilts and blankets per month to children of all ages who love blankets and quilts of all sizes! The love that is stitched into each quilt and blanket brings these children so much comfort. The children love them all - crocheted, knitted, quilted, or sewn. We pair each blanket with a stuffed animal to help brighten a child's day and to give them something extra to cuddle. For more information about this project, or to donate a blanket, please contact Cindy 327-6779 ext. 14.

Bags for Kids

The need for bags is ongoing. If you like to sew and you want a simple project, Bags for Kids may be just right for you. The bags are easy to construct and we need them in lots of different sizes. Large bags are used to move children's belongings from place to place, medium bags are used as diaper bags, and small bags are used to hold toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, etc.) We have an ongoing need for boys' bags made in solid colors or prints. Camouflage, denim, and dark solids work great for these bags. Call us if you would like a pattern for the bags or if you have fabric or cording that you would like to donate. Contact Marnie at 327-6779 ext. 16.

Can You Help?

- **Fabrics** - We are always looking for lightweight cotton and cotton blends, mid-weight fabric and even some heavyweight fabrics. We share the fabric with quilters and sewing volunteers who love to sew but may not be in a position to buy fabric for their quilts or bags. Don't worry about sorting your fabric; we are happy to do that for you. *And remember, if you make space by donating some of your fabric, you will have room to buy more!*
- **Yarn** - Do you have leftover yarn from a project or yarn that never got used? Bring it in and pass it along to a volunteer that knits or crochets.
- **Cording** - Any type of cording, ribbon, or soft rope can be used for Bags for Kids bags. That leftover 1970s macramé cording is perfect for cording the bags!
- **Zippers** - Zippers at least 18" long are used by several crafters who make duffel type bags.
- **Thread** - Neutral colors
- **UFO's** - Did you make a bunch of quilt squares or a quilt top that you just never got around to finishing? Some of our volunteers would be happy to finish that project and then we will make sure it gets to a child who will love it!



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SPRING/SUMMER CALENDAR

April

Child Abuse Prevention Month
Volunteer Recognition

May

Undies Sundays or "Fundays"
Foster Care Awareness Month
Foster Parent Appreciation

June/ July / August

Back to School Supply Drive

If you would like more information on any of
these events, please contact Pat Palmer at
327-6779 ext. 36, or email her at
holidays@avivatucson.org.

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