

Northeast Ohio Adoption Services
Melissa Tharpe, Editor

June 2009 Edition

Vacation on a Dime

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Want to plan a few days away and save money? Here are a few things to think about when choosing a family vacation destination.

A priority is age-appropriate activities that aren't mind-numbing for adults or boring for kids, and we also try to mix in a blend of physical activity, education, and sight-seeing opportunities. National parks like Yellowstone are always good choices, but don't ignore urban areas with eye-opening sights and stimulating museums. Affordable accommodations are important, as is accessibility. Australia is wonderful, but plane tickets are generally not cheap. And of course, safety is key—even families who desire something exotic don't need the added stress of an impending coup or temperamental volcano.

A few ways to stretch your vacation dollar:

Although rising gas and airfare prices make everything more expensive, there are still deals on transportation. Some hubs, like Miami, Los Angeles, and Seattle, always seem to attract sale-priced tickets. And sometimes you can get deals on local attractions and lodging with airline promotions. Flying alternative routes, having a flexible schedule, or adding a stop-over can keep ticket prices down.

Getting the most bang for your buck can be as simple as a close-to-home destination, which will reduce a significant portion of your travel expenses. Driving can be cheaper than flying—even at today's prices, as the mini-van doesn't charge by passenger.

When you make reservations for restaurants and lodging, always say, "I'm looking for budget-conscious deals for a family vacation—do you offer group discounts?" Families are an important demographic in the tourism industry, and more organizations realize that being family-friendly pays. And when booking reservations, don't forget discounts provided by membership organizations (AAA and AARP are obvious, but many other groups, from bike clubs to schools to small business organizations often qualify for discounted rates.)

Also be sure to look for lodging where kids stay free. Many tour companies offer per-person discounts if you share your room with kids. Some hotels charge a nominal fee for a folding cot, but you can buy lightweight, highly packable sleeping bags for a fraction of the cost of a second room and put kids on the floor. To cut down on food costs, seek restaurants with kid's menus. Some restaurants, especially those in family-friendly resorts, let young children eat for free. Get a room with a refrigerator—by preparing some meals yourself, restaurant tabs won't be so high. And hotels with free breakfast buffets offer no-cost access to the most important meal of the day.

When you reach your destination consider transportation options. Good mass transit can save big dollars on rental car costs. Consider renting bikes, mopeds or even golf carts (local traffic permitting). And don't rule out boats, trains or even walking!

Lewis-Roberts Foundation Award: NOAS Social Worker of the Year 2009--
Tim Williams, LSW—"Does an excellent job..." says Kim Stewart



Owen, Tim Williams, Carter Lewis, Julia

Do you know Timothy Williams, LSW, Permanency Planning Specialist? Tim was chosen as the NOAS Social Worker of the Year 2009.

Tim's honor was announced by Carter P. Lewis, at the Trumbull Country Club at the 16th Annual Golf Outing, "Play it for the Kids," on June 1. Carter Lewis is president of The Eileen Price Lewis and Barbara Lewis Roberts Foundation, and he presented the \$500.00 award and plaque on behalf of the Foundation at an awards ceremony. Motorsport Broadcaster and Analyst Griff Allen, seen on ESPN and Fox's Speed, was master of ceremonies for the fundraising event.

Carter Lewis says, "The Lewis-Roberts Foundation keeps the legacy of my late sister Barbara Lewis Roberts, in sight as we begin the 31st year after she founded the agency, with a focus on older children. Barbara would be pleased to know the dedicated staff and many volunteers and donors who continue to support the cause of NOAS kids!"

Kim Stewart, Director of Permanency Planning, comments on Tim's work to find adoptive families, "His work stands out because Tim believes in the philosophy of the agency's founder, Barbara Lewis-Roberts, that there is a family for every child. He is dedicated to finding adoptive families for the children he works with, and he does an excellent job of identifying the qualities that help families successfully parent special needs children."

Tim and his wife Meredith and son Owen, grade 7 and daughter Julia, grade 4, live in Girard.

--Judy McCartney

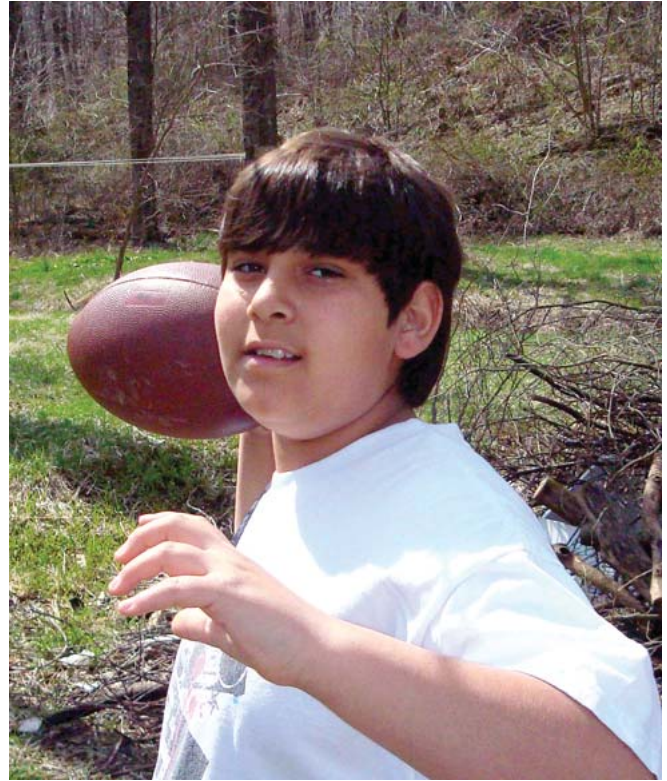
Zack Needs a Family

Zack is only eleven years old, but already he has been learning all about wood working. He hopes to become a carpenter someday. For now he is living in a foster home in the country. He has a foster mom and dad, two foster brothers close to his same age, and their cat. His foster dad says that he is very helpful with family projects, and loves to learn all about safe ways to help with carpentry. Zack has been helping to build a deck railing. Zack says that when he helped with it he “eye-leveled the boards, then squared them up.” He feels proud of the final result. His foster dad says that if a family chore needs done, Zack is the person that he can really count on.

When it is time to relax, the family goes fishing in a motorized bass boat on a nearby lake. Once Zack caught a huge carp, and stretching out his arms, smiling and saying, “I like a fish with fight.”

The spacious front yard and little creek, where he now lives, offer lots of entertainment for kids. Zack catches minnows, shoots hoops, rides a dirt bicycle up and down some hilly “ramps,” and throws a football around with his foster brothers. Zack, one of the biggest guys in his fifth grade class, has a solid build and a strong throwing arm, good assets for football. He hopes to be on a sixth grade team, if he gets the chance next year. Zack is learning more about baseball, too, but says that his hitting needs practice. He had a favorite teacher, who took him to see a baseball game, and he smiles to remember that they really had fun.

Zack likes going to school, and usually handles his homework with a little help, especially in spelling. He has earned grades ranging from B's to D's, but plans to do better this year, by “practicing and reading more.” Math is his favorite subject, and a knowledge of numbers might be a good thing for a future carpenter to know. In his school he is learning fractions and a little geometry, and likes using a protractor in class. Tools of all kinds are fun for Zack. Once he helped put brakes on a car and change a tire. If he had an



adoptive family who liked mechanical projects, that would be fun. If they had a nice dog, Zack would help take care of it.

If Zack were adopted, he would help cook, inside or out, with his mom. He already knows how to make some spaghetti and macaroni dishes—he's a real noodle chef.

Zack is on the quiet side, with a dry sense of humor, and hopes for an active, easy-going, outdoor family who also likes to joke around sometimes—for a healthy balance of supervision and fun. His hands-on learning style and helpfulness should also be real pluses for the adoptive family. Ready? To swing open your friendly front door—and put your welcome mat out—especially for Zack?

If you want details about adopting Zack, contact Tim Williams at 1-800-686-6627, ext. 139.

HAPPY ADOPTION DAY!

One of the happiest days of a child's life is the day he or she becomes a member of an adoptive family.

Richard and Diane M. adopted Dustin on 5/12/2009

Gordon C. adopted Eric on 6/2/2009

Jeff and Sarah J. adopted Billy on 6/2/2009

Carolyn H. adopted Crystal on 6/2/2009

Lynette C. adopted Yasmine on 6/4/2009

Congratulations!

SUPPORTING FAMILIES IN NEED OF SERVICES BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER AN ADOPTION



Adoption Support Group

An Invitation to All Foster and Adoptive Families

What I can expect from the group:

- People who will listen and offer helpful advice
- People who will not judge
- A place to just listen to others
- Connection with others who have similar experiences
- A place to find out about resources and current information

Group meets the 1st Thursday of every month at NOAS Warren Office
5000 E. Market St. Suite 26 Warren, OH from 7-8:30 p.m.

To register, phone Cynthia Wallis at 1-800-686-6627 x 147



Northeast Ohio
Adoption Services

Northeast Ohio Adoption Services
5000 E. Market Street
Warren, Ohio 44484

Phone: 1-800-686-6627 x147
Fax: 330-856-5586
E-mail: cwallis@noas.com



Guardian Angels Support Group
East Fairfield United Methodist Church
45675 St. Rte. 558
New Waterford, Ohio 44445

Six years ago, Kelly Harding formed a Christian faith based support group for families who are raising a special needs child. The group meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm at the address listed above. She strongly feels that when a child with special needs enters the family, the family itself becomes a special needs family. Her support group is comprised of 50% foster and adoptive families from various agencies in the surrounding area. All family members are encouraged to attend the support group (childcare is provided) and the family outings that are planned. If you would like more information regarding this support group, please call Kelly at #330-482-4630. She will be happy to answer any of your questions. There is no registration required for attendance.

*Northeast Ohio Adoption Services and
the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program present*

Brothers and Sisters in Adoption: Helping Children Navigate Relationships When New Kids Join the Family

It is often a struggle to manage an adopted or foster child AND meet the needs of the family's birth children. If you are a parent concerned as to the impact of fostering or adopting on your children, this workshop will be of help to you. Discussion includes the expectations of the children already in the family prior to the family accepting the placement of a new child. The post-placement impact of bringing a child with a history of trauma into the family is then examined. The workshop concludes with strategies to help each family member forge strong relationships. The content of this learning activity is enhanced via the video, *Supporting Brothers and Sisters* in which 14 brothers and sisters share their experiences of living with foster/adopted siblings.



Saturday, June 20, 2009

Northeast Ohio Adoption Services

5000 E. Market St., Suite 26, Warren

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Trainer – Arleta James, MS, PCC

Arleta James, MS, PCC, a former foster care and adoption social worker who is now a therapist with the Attachment and Bonding Center of Ohio and the author of Perspectives Press' newest book Brothers and Sisters in Adoption: Helping Children Navigate Relationships when New Kids Join the Family.



To register call:

**Northeast Ohio Adoption Services
Gail, (330) 856-5582, ext. 128 or by email at
gseekins@noas.com**

This workshop is approved for 6 hours toward the annual foster parent training requirement.

Sorry - there is no child care.

Certificates will be provided.



Buy a Frosty.™
Help America's Foster Children.

50¢ will be donated by Wendy's® from any Frosty product purchased on Saturday, June 20, and Sunday, June 21, to help open doors to permanent, loving homes.



**DAVE THOMAS
FOUNDATION
FOR ADOPTION®**

Finding Forever Families for Children in Foster Care

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www.frostycard.com!