



FOCUS

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN UNITED SOCIETY



FOCUS July 2021 Newsletter

Edited by Ethel Kallsen

Pat Robitaille, President

June was a very special month for FOCUS with two very special messages:

1. One of the most successful Rummage Sales in FOCUS History
2. Award of a Community Grant from the City of Coronado



RUMMAGE SALE

A special thank you to Roger Clapp and Sharyn Blongiewicz for all their efforts in organizing and managing the Rummage Sale that has netted over \$9,600. We had tremendous community support with a record number of donations and incredible shoppers. But best of all was the outpouring of support from the many FOCUS members who helped with receipt/organizing/pricing of donations as well as the tremendous help on the "day of" to encourage shoppers in their buying and making the check-out so smooth. Then, FOCUS members were there in force to help with the cleanup and distribution to so many agencies. I was so proud to be a member of FOCUS and be associated with such a great group of people.

CORONADO COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM

I am pleased to announce that FOCUS was officially awarded a Coronado City Community Grant of \$16,253 to help fund our Holiday Gala - Yuletide Magic. Sharyn Blongiewicz and I submitted the request earlier this year, outlining our challenges with fundraising last year and the benefit a grant provides us to commit more of our revenue from the event directly to the kids in need. At a city meeting last week, the board agreed to grant our request. We are thrilled.

BACKPACK PROGRAM

We are so pleased to be able to restore our Backpack Program this year. This is another project that requires a lot of support from our FOCUS members. I will be sending out a request and encourage you to sign up to help. This is a great team building project and ever so rewarding. We will be looking for workers to:

1. Unpack and layout supplies
2. Assemble backpacks with supplies
3. Deliver backpacks to agencies

MEETINGS

VP, Lisa Storey

Join us for a very fun evening of music and dancing at The Coronado Shores. A special thank you to Coronado Premier Properties for underwriting all the costs of this event.

Enjoy a FREE Concert on July 24, 4-7 pm at South Lawn, La Perla at The Shores

Featuring: Side Traxx Band



Bring your chair, snacks and favorite beverage.

Enjoy a free concert while supporting a good-cause charity

A donation may be made online or mail a check to FOCUS, PO Box 180023, Coronado 92178

VISTA HILL is having their major fund raiser, a Fashion Show/Luncheon on September 25 at the Sheraton Harbor Island called "The Show Must Go On".

VISTA HILL, whom FOCUS supports, provides guidance and resources to families with challenges of mental illness and substance use disorder.

Please mark your calendars for a fun time and support a worthy organization! Reserve a table for you and your friends. Call Clarice Perkins, 619-435-2323, for more information.

MEMBERSHIP

Lorna Perez-Caster

Our membership continues to grow with 3 additional members this month. This brings our membership to a total of 121.

Active Members: 69 Patron Members: 52

Please add the following members to your membership directory.

Joann Palmer

Lynda Pippenger

Ron Verneti

Please continue spreading the word about the great work of FOCUS. If you know of anyone who may have an interest in perhaps becoming a FOCUS member, please forward their mailing address to lcaster@focus-sdkids.org and an information packet will be sent to them.

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday to all of our members celebrating their birthday this month!



Lois Maxam 7/6

Stephanie Abbott 7/7

Jonathan Webster 7/12

Carla Bacon 7/17

Sandy Shugert 7/20

Carin Cross 7/24

Jeri Barsz 7/26

Trish Murnighan 7/27

Sue Gormican 7/30

FUNDRAISING

Sharyn Blongiewicz

The 2021 Rummage Sale was a big success ...thank you, **Roger Clapp**, for chairing this event and for all your hours of hard work. Great job!!! A **HUGE** thank you to all the FOCUS members (and non-members) that worked tirelessly to haul, sort, price, sell, cashier and clean-up! The event is always popular and, despite the hard work, it is always a lot of fun and a wonderful opportunity to work alongside old friends and meet new ones! Thanks to all of you, the sale (with money still coming in) netted about **\$9,600**.

Coronado Parade is being held on Saturday, July 3rd. The theme; The American Dream, is a perfect fit for FOCUS because we all offer support and help to children as they strive to achieve the American dream. We have children and adults walking in costumes representing different occupations.

Thank you, **Betty & John Lepore** ... luckily, our parade team will be lining up right by their home and they will, again, be offering water, snacks and a bathroom while we wait our turn to walk!!

Holiday Boutique 11/20/21 is back at CCYC ~ Yea!! Vendors are already signing up and there is a lot of pent-up energy and excitement. We all are so happy to be getting back to "normal"! Members have already volunteered for big parts of the job; (reservations & food) ***I need a co-chair ... who will help me? 619-921-2026***

Yuletide Magic 12/18/21 "Save the Date" notice has gone out to all FOCUS members and friends of FOCUS. You'll see a copy of it in this newsletter. Please make sure it's on your calendar and forward the invitation to anyone you know that might want to join us.

This is our biggest and most important event of the year. It's going to be a lovely and elegant dinner party with some big surprises in the works!

Volunteer ~ Volunteer ~ Volunteer ... We need your help!!

Your first 2021 Holiday Season invitation!

"Yuletide Magic"

PLEASE...

Save the Date!



Saturday
December 18, 2021

Nautilus Room
Coronado, CA

*The committee is already hard at work to ensure that
this dinner party will be elegant, beautiful,
delicious and full of holiday surprises and cheer!*

Please put it on your calendar today.

All Details and Reservation Information
Will Follow.



The Christmas Spirit is all about helping others...



FOCUS
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HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

CHAMPAGNE, MUSIC,
ELEGANT PASTRIES AND COFFEES WHILE YOU SHOP

DOZENS OF FABULOUS ITEMS...
LADIES FASHION & ACCESSORIES, HOME & GARDEN
DECOR, CHRISTMAS & THANKSGIVING DECORATIONS,
ART, JEWELRY, PLANTS, LUGGAGE & TOTES, PET
ACCESSORIES, PILLOWS, KITCHEN WARE, JAMS &
FOODS AND MUCH, MUCH MORE.

*Happy Holidays!!
We're back at CCYC ... in person!
See you there!!*



FOCUS
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Coronado Cays Yacht Club
30 Caribe Cay Blvd.
10 am ~ 2 pm

Saturday, November 20

\$10.00

All proceeds benefit San Diego children

PROJECTS

Barbara Donahue and Carin Cross

We have had a very good response from our agencies and are planning the **Backpack Project** for later in July. We really need your help to prepare them. Look for the announcement soon.

FOCUS has supported **David's Harp** since their beginning. The latest news is that they received a \$1,000,000 grant last week from Mackenzie Scott.

Thank you to FOCUS....

"During this year of great uncertainty, **Azeltine School** has been comforted, encouraged and humbled by the outpouring of generosity and support from our community, especially FOCUS. You are the heroes and we thank you for helping us.

For Mason, a student with autism, the toll of school closure was greater than we could imagine. It was a loss of routine, structure and consistency.. School staff met on-line daily concerning Mason who gradually connected with our them. He finally shows self-confidence and trust in us to participate in school activities and progressing in academics and social skills.

"Thank you for your donation of supplies to **Second Hand Youth Garden**. Your support helps our program provide young adults with meaningful skill development and helps make fresh nutritious food available for people in our community.

FOCUS Financial Report for May 2021

Sharon Shelton



Balance as of 1 May 2021

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Available for Projects | \$16,398.26 |
| Grant Allocation | \$47,500.00 |
| Reserve | \$25,000.00 |

Income

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| May meeting | \$ 1,138.79 |
| Membership & donations | <u>\$ 633.34</u> |
| Total | \$ 1,722.13 |

Expenses (Projects) \$ 3,368.97

Balance as of 28 May 2021

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Available for Projects | \$14,751.42 |
| Grant Allocation | \$47,500.00 |
| Reserve | \$25,000.00 |

AS OF 30 JUNE 2021, FOCUS **HAS ONLY RECEIVED \$40.02 FROM AMAZON.SMILE**. PLEASE MAKE FOCUS YOUR CHARITY OF CHOICE WHEN PURCHASING ITEMS ON AMAZON!!





MEMBER in the SPOTLIGHT
PAT ROBITAILLE

by **Don Swanson**

Pat Robitaille is an over-achiever. Perhaps it was because she had eight brothers and sisters. Maybe it's because she has both the aptitude to see the big picture, as well as the very minute details of a plan. But when it comes to FOCUS, Pat has left her footprints as an over-achiever.

Born in San Francisco, her parents moved to Maryland when Pat was 16. After completing high school, she entered the University of Maryland, where she studied Computer Science while she started her career in the field. She met her future husband Ed on the ski slopes of Vermont, and married in 1975. They have two boys Chris and Kevin. One a general contractor, who oversaw the complete rebuild of their home in the Coronado Cays, and one who works at Apple in Cupertino.

Ed is a new FOCUS member this year and has already been spotted at many of FOCUS functions such as the recent rummage sale, and working the bar with Fred Kallsen at the bingo meeting. Ed is a volunteer aboard the USS Midway, having been a former Aviation Ordinance man.

While the Covid pandemic took a toll on the activities of all people, Pat entered 2020 as the newly installed president of FOCUS. What is remarkable is what she was able to achieve. During the year, FOCUS did not turn down a request, and funded 38 projects for over \$72,000. It was a year with great demands for food and technology, and coming up with creative ways for agencies to continue with their programs posed some interesting requests, but FOCUS met them all.

While fundraising was almost impossible due to the quarantine, FOCUS was able to leverage the technology platforms that Pat brought into the organization. With the Rummage Sale, Holiday Boutique and Gala all being cancelled as in-person events, a virtual holiday boutique was created. Pat worked with each of the vendors to build their virtual booths, and upload all their items for sale. Virtually is not correct because it was entirely on line, and it was a huge success. The cash registers rang for both the vendors and FOCUS. An on-line fund-raiser that brought in over \$5,000 where people stayed at home and purchased quality items delivered to their home. Pat also helped organize two food drives so members could directly contribute to the agency requests. These were hugely successful, and so very appreciated.

Now let's look at 2021. A sold-out wine tasting event bringing in over \$1,500. A fun bingo meeting, that generated additional income. A community grant from the city of Coronado for over \$16,000. And, the 2021 Rummage sale that brought in a walloping \$9,600, compared to \$5,800 in 2019. Thank you Pat, and Roger Clapp, who was chairman of the sale. All of this has been achieved through the month of June. Mention should also be made that a printed FOCUS directory was put together, and distributed this year to our members.

If that was not enough, read what is yet to come. A new FOCUS logo has been created, and now in use. A new website will be launched in August. FOCUS aprons, hats, t-shirts are on the horizon. Coming events include the school backpacks, the holiday boutique back at the yacht club, and the Yuletide gala. Sometime in the not to distance future, you will also see a FOCUS banner on Orange Avenue commemorating our fortieth anniversary.

Have you heard what the July 24 meeting is going to be like? Possibly not. **Lisa Storey** is underwriting a stage and band for the meeting with a free concert and dancing at the Shores. Wait until you hear more about this event!

Several FOCUS members have met Pat's mom who lives in the San Francisco bay area, and is 96 years old, as well as still going strong. Perhaps that is where Pat has inherited her energy and over-achiever characteristics.

I had thought about giving a quiz to all the readers about what has happened under Pat's leadership. But I suggest, instead of a quiz, a challenge. How many members of FOCUS will have the stamina to keep up with Pat by walking in the 4th of July Parade for FOCUS, attending the July meeting, volunteering with the backpack program and distribution, helping and attending the boutique, attending the Yuletide Gala, purchasing a FOCUS hat or shirt, and/or visit, and explore the new FOCUS website ?

Pat is a very modest person. She doesn't take credit for anything. "The support I have received from other board members, other members, and even vendors who want to help FOCUS has been overwhelming," Pat stated, "FOCUS is about people helping people, helping children," she insisted. She also re-emphasized that no one gets paid at FOCUS, and we are all volunteers.

The spotlight shines on you, Pat Robitaille!

