



Fall 2011

Betty K. Marler Youth Services Center

Bulletin

September 11, Do You Remember?

September 11, 2011 marked the 10-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks against our Homeland. Many of us remember where we were and what we were doing on that fateful day in 2001, including our students. Rather than dwell on the destruction that September 2001 morning, we wanted to honor and respect the memory of the heroes that ran toward danger that day to save so many lives.

In an effort to pay homage to the heroic feats of our country's first responders, several students from the Betty K. Marler Youth Services Center wrote letters of



Students admire the symbolic meaning of this United States Flag made from fire hoses. We won't forget, They will never forget.

thanks to our local firefighters for their service to our community. The students personally delivered the letters – along with homemade cookies and brownies – to the brave men and women of the West

Denver Metro Fire Department. The firefighters were humbled and flattered by the students' act of kindness, and told the students stories of a handmade American Flag fashioned from old fire hoses. The firefighters also showed the girls a piece of steel, displayed at the firehouse, that was recovered from the collapsed World Trade Center towers after 9/11. Showing their gratitude was a meaningful way for both the students and the firefighters to create a positive memory associated with Patriot's Day. 9/11 changed American lives forever, we will never forget the memory of those who gave of themselves selflessly.

Restorative Justice For All

On August 9, 2011, three students and one Rite of Passage staff member from the Betty K. Marler Center experienced a life changing event. The students went to the Fitzsimmons Veterans' Home to deliver crocheted blankets made by the students as a part of the knitting program offered at the Betty K. Marler Youth Services Center. The students engage in a variety of restorative justice service activities throughout the year and one such project is crocheting and knitting items for those in need.

Although the young women at the Marler Center understand that a variety of people serve in the military, this experience provided them with a chance to grasp the true meaning of appreciation for those who have valiantly served and

fought for the freedoms we have in our country.

The students were initially unsure of themselves and a bit intimidated of speaking with the older veterans. In no time at all, they began to feel comfortable, easily engaged the veterans in conversation and provided each with a



Students from Betty Marler learn from those who have served, now have new found appreciation.

blanket that represented their gratitude.

As one student shared, "...it was not what I imagined it would be, seeing this generation of people really makes me appreciate what I have and grateful for all that they have done for us."

Many of the students remarked that having the chance to listen to the stories the veterans told made their service experience much more meaningful. The men and women were so humble and appreciative in accepting their handmade blankets. One student remarked, "It was amazing to witness how selfless these people are. It's almost as if they didn't think they deserved it." This experience had a significant impact on the young women of the Betty K. Marler Center as well as the veterans they visited.

Idaho Springs Elks Lodge #607 Sponsors Prom

Spring is a time when flowers start to bloom, the snow begins to recede in Colorado and high school students are making plans to attend their high school Prom dance. Many of the young women at the Betty K. Marler Center have missed the "traditions" of high school due to personal issues which may have significantly impacted their family as well as themselves. During these times, attendance at school may be negatively affected, and certainly attendance to a dance may be of little interest or seem improbable.



On May 1, 2011, several members of the Elks Lodge #60,7 located in Idaho Springs, organized a Prom for some of the high school stu-



dents with Rite of Passage: ten young women from the Betty K. Marler program and eleven young men from the Q-House. The Mardi Gra themed dance was held at the Elks Lodge. Several members of the Elks Lodge prepared dinner for the students, provided hairstyling and make-up for the girls, donated prom dresses and accessories, provided photographs, a DJ for the music and even helped chaperone.

These young women and men looked and behaved much like any other teenager attending a

high school prom. Their outfits were very stylish, and they were initially awkward with each other and seemed afraid to talk much less contemplate dancing together. With some prompting from the adults and a few of the Elks "tearing up the dance floor," the students soon began to dance, laugh and make requests from the DJ for special songs. As the afternoon came to a close, the students asked that the dance be extended for "just a few more songs" as each was having the experience of a lifetime.

The generosity, support and appreciation of our students by the Idaho Springs Elks Lodge was emotionally moving for all in attendance.

Thank you!



A Note from a Generous Volunteer

willPower® for girlpower teaches girls a balanced approach to getting fit, enabling them to "Work Smarter, Not Harder." Our fundamental mission is to educate, inspire and MOVE young women, teaching them to get fit, train efficiently and develop positive philosophies. We help girls land on their feet ... gracefully.

I have had the privilege of leading the women at the Betty K. Marler Center through over 50-60 willPower & grace® classes over the past year and a half. The challenge begins by encouraging the young ladies to move barefoot with me. Self-confidence and pride begins to be established in such a small unique act.

Each week at the center is different, presenting me with a new obstacle, challenge, encouragement or inspiration. Regardless of how each class begins, each one has ended the same – at least one girl, if not more, comes to me to say, "I did it!" She may try to hide a smile or excitement, but I can see it in her eyes; she is proud of herself, knowing that she CAN move well ... right ... free ... gracefully. As an instructor, a teacher and a coach, that is the greatest fulfillment!

willPower has moved me. It has changed me. I've told the girls during several classes, "I have come with this gift for you, and it is always your choice to receive it."

My goal is that through the heights, depths and challenge of specified movements in this class and with the infusion of positive philosophy, they learn true "willPower" on an individual level - how to resist negativity, how to maintain self-control, how to say no, all the while empowering each girl to reach her goal ... moving with grace. - **Coach Stacey Kraus** (willPower & grace® donates two classes per month for the students at the Marler Center)

