

20 moment in history ...

Memory Lane

In the late fall of 1950, Margie Straw, 24, and her good friend June Blevins, 19, went to the movies in Nebraska City where they were deeply moved by a story of suffering children. That random experience changed Margie's life forever.

"June and I went to the picture show and it was about an orphanage where the children were mistreated so badly," Margie, now 86, explains. "I decided right then and there that I wanted to work for an orphanage and straighten them out. Well June had the same idea, so we were off."

Margie and June did some research and sent out employment applications to agencies in the area. One agency responded noting openings for a position in which they would care for 8-year-olds and do housework. Child Saving Institute responded that there were immediate openings for them to serve as nurses' aides



to the little children—and no housework. The young women opted for CSI.

They moved together to the "big city" in 1951, living in a dormitory in the CSI orphanage located at 42nd and Emilie Street. Margie recalls that as a condition of their employment, they were asked "to sign papers that we would never enter a bar within 10 miles of the orphanage and we couldn't use bad language." They signed on the dotted line and their adventure began...

Read more of Margie's story online at childsaving.org/memorylane



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CS Insider

Child Saving Institute News | Spring 2012

Loving Support

Thanks to you and others like you, Jade is well on her way to making a good life for herself and her toddler son, Say'Vonn.

It is more than she could have hoped for in the dark months following her expulsion from school a few years ago at age 14.

Jade got in an argument with a girl at school. When the girl punched her, Jade hit her back. The following day, she was expelled. She fell into a deep depression, and with no advocacy at home, she became lost. Eventually Jade entered an alternative school, but instead of being allowed to learn, she struggled to survive the near-daily duress of physical threats, brutality and sexual harassment by the other students. Jade dropped out of school and became gang-affiliated, experimenting with drugs and alcohol.

When she learned she was pregnant at 16, she took a hard look at her life and the dreary outlook for her unborn child if she continued on the same path. "Here I was going to be a single mom and I still had no education, no direction...I knew things had to change," Jade recalls. She learned of CSI's 10-week parenting class through the Young Parents Program and there she found hope and help with social worker Tricia Wagner. "Tricia is the best support I've ever had," Jade says enthusiastically. "She has helped me in so many ways. She tells me I'm a wonderful mom, and I can get my education. She helped me get started in Independent Studies...She's been there every step of the way."

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Mark Your Calendars!

Don't miss out on a moment of the fun and philanthropic opportunities we have planned for you in the coming months! Visit our website or call 504-3661 for more information about these events and how you can get involved! childsaving.org

Cabaret 2012 | Saturday, May 12

CSI's Board will present its biggest fundraiser of the year—Cabaret 2012—on Saturday, May 12. "An Evening with Lucie Amaz" will feature the multi-talented songstress singing your favorite hits from Broadway to Birdland. The daughter of legendary entertainers Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, Lucie regularly tours the world with her critically-acclaimed nightclub act and now she's bringing it to Omaha for one unforgettable night.

Honorary Chairmen for the event are Pat & Dick Bell; General Chairmen are Stephanie & Nick Vondrak and Gail & Shane Graeve. KETV Channel 7 is the media sponsor and *Metro Magazine* is the print sponsor.

To purchase tickets, visit childsaving.org or call 504-3661.



Golf Fore Kids! Monday, June 25

Please join us for this long-running event, sponsored by Carson Wealth Management Group, a multidivisional golf tournament benefitting CSI! Visit our website or call 402-504-3664 for details.



PurseOnalities Wednesday, August 29

Great purse packages and great fun, all for a great cause ... the CSI Scholarship Program! "Save the Date" arriving soon!



Touch-a-Truck Saturday, October 6

It's FREE fun for the whole family! Bring the kids, the critters and the whole kit and kaboodle for this fabulous day of fun with trucks, cranes, copters and more!





Peg Harriott,
President & CEO

A hum of happiness

Every day at CSI I am greeted by a “joyful noise.” For those of you who love the squeals and laughter of children, I wish I could share an earful with you.

As the children in CSI’s Early Childhood Education Center arrive in the mornings, a beautiful sonata starts to build. I hear whoops of excitement from young children when their parents bring them into the center and they spot their teachers and friends. The energy and music of their voices builds to a crescendo throughout the morning as I listen to them play. In harmony to the sounds of fun are the sounds of learning, the subtle “ooohhs” and “aaahhs” as kids grasp new skills and ideas. Then, there is a gradual quieting as lunch arrives and a gentle hush falls on the Center as the lights are dimmed and soothing naptime music plays. After a musical rest, the magical sounds of glee again fill the air as the little ones awake and the fun and noise builds anew.

And the summer months bring their own special sounds...Do you remember the shrieks of joy that erupt from children running through a water sprinkler in the summer? I have the great fortune of hearing that wondrous music on a regular basis. How about the percussion of basketballs pounding the pavement? Add to that the sounds of our shelter teens shouting with excitement as the basket almost makes it in—and then the tinny “ping” as it bounces off the rim off—and you’ll understand the “rhythm” of my day.

Of course, not all the sounds we hear at CSI are joyful—there are cries of longing and frustration and shouts of anger—but I am always confident the staff are listening closely and responding with compassion and understanding as the children and teens learn to express their needs.

There’s one more sound I wish I could share with you—the sound of my voice giving heartfelt thanks for your ongoing interest in CSI’s kids. You make our work possible, and the laughter of children is our reward. **Thank YOU for helping to raise this joyful noise.**

Loving Support, continued

Now Jade attends an intensive, accelerated program where she earns credits toward her high school diploma over the course of weeks, rather than semesters. She and Say’Vonn had been living in a shelter sponsored by the Salvation Army, but she recently returned home to live with her mother.

“Jade inspires me,” Wagner says. “She is working so hard—studying and taking good care of her baby. She even wants to go to college

and dreams of being an obstetrician some day. That girl is a dynamo and I know she can accomplish anything she sets her mind to.”

“I changed everything to be a better parent to my son,” Jade says quietly. “He’s my light at the end of the tunnel. In addition to being an OB-GYN, I’d also like to talk to young people about making good choices. I’d like to teach them how to be strong like Tricia has helped teach me. You can change your life around. There is hope. ♥

music to our ears

Giggle, squeal, laugh, chuckle, gaffaw. Our favorite sounds.



makin' music

In February, ECEC preschoolers explored the wonderful world of music with Adam Goos and Maryle Reimers from the Omaha Symphony Education Department. In addition to “playing” a violin, the kids also made their own rhythm instruments and played them together.

Couponing for kids

In the spring of last year, Susan Nabity sat on her sofa, feeling anxious and desperate—one of the clients in her small house cleaning business had just passed away and it was a huge blow to her monthly income.

Not only did she have bills to pay, but she was feeling the pressure of being a single mother to a teenage son—a very big teenage son who at 6’5” and 300 pounds required lot of food to fuel his athletic pursuits at Fremont High School.

“I really didn’t know what I was going to do,” Nabity explains. The television had been on in the background, but suddenly Nabity became aware of the program—“Extreme Couponing.” She watched with growing interest as the show featured enthusiastic shoppers planning and clipping their way to unbelievable savings. “I thought to myself, this is either really fake or I can do this!”

With an inkling of hope, Nabity began clipping coupons and watching sales while continuing to watch the show for further pointers. She asked her friends and customers to save their coupon circulars for her as well, and she started seeing the results of her efforts. In fact, on one particularly successful shopping trip at Walmart, her coupons garnered her \$300 worth of product as well as \$78 in cash!

So what do you do with so much stuff? Well if you’re Susan Nabity, you help others in need. “God blessed me and saved me at a rough time in my life,” she notes. “So I thought I should turn around and give to others.” A former paraeducator who had facilitated after-school educational programs for public schools and a non-profit, Nabity had a particular fondness for kids in need. Acting on the suggestion of one of her customers, she approached Child Saving Institute with her “bounty.”

Over the past several months, Nabity has dropped off donations of toothpaste (hundreds of tubes!), toothbrushes, floss, diapers and diaper crème, baby shampoo, bath wash and lotion, deodorant, hair products, razors, body lotion and gum. In turn, these items have been distributed to clients in CSI’s programs, including the emergency shelter, Young Parents Program and, most recently, to CSI’s Foster Families.

“I can’t begin to know what these kids have experienced or what they’re going through now,” Nabity says quietly, “but just knowing my hobby can help them is overwhelming. I’m just so glad I can do it.” ♥

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