



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Central Missouri

August 2008

Office: (573) 874-3677
www.bigsofcentralmo.org

Countdown to Kickoff
Countdown to Fun!



A Pizza Celebration



MU Head Football Coach Gary Pinkel explains why he's involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters at the 2007 Countdown To Kickoff.

The opening kickoff for the MU Football Season is just weeks away and accolades are pouring in – Unanimous pick to repeat as Big 12 North Division Champ — A Sports Illustrated Magazine Cover – Preseason Honors for Quarterback Chase Daniel and several of his teammates – and last but not least, a chance to **TOAST THE TIGERS** at Countdown To Kickoff.

Countdown To Kickoff IS Countdown to Fun Thursday, August 21st, in the Tiger Lounge at Faurot Field. From 4:30 – 7p.m. Tiger fans can enjoy drinks and hors d'oeuvres, bid on many, many great items during silent and live auctions, talk Tiger football with friends, and hear the latest from MU Head Football Coach, Gary Pinkel.

Just A Sample of Auction Items:

- Tickets & Parking Pass for 4 fans to the MU Homecoming Game vs. Colorado
- A party for 20 at MOJO'S
- A motorcycle ride with Coach Pinkel

Tickets are a bargain at \$40.00 per person, and you can reserve your tickets today at www.bigsofcentralmo.org.



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Audrain County recently celebrated their successes with a pizza party at Coach's Pizza World. The group enjoyed playing pool, video games, hangman and Parcheesi while chatting and eating stacks of pizza.

Sherry Hoover who has been a Big Sister in the program for 3 years commented, "It was nice to meet and interact with the children, their parents and other Bigs. I think we all had a great time and I'm looking forward to other events," added Hoover. She then laughed and added, "I think you could say a good time was had by all!"

Brothers, D'Milo and D'Von Nunnely, said they were very impressed with the pool table. "It was hilarious when our Big Brother, Joe, tried to shoot with the pool stick behind his back and missed," laughed D'Von.

Taryn Alksnis, 10, has been a "little" with BBBS for 2 years. She normally likes to go bowling and do art projects with her big sister. At the pizza party Taryn said, "I think it's good to get together with all the new people and play games with them

"The kids had a great time meeting each other and hanging out," said Lori Pratt, BBBS program coordinator for Audrain County. "It was a **BIG SUCCESS!**"





Lt. Governor Honored by BBBS

Big Brothers Big Sisters Executive Directors/CEO's gathered in St. Louis recently to honor Lt. Governor Peter Kinder with the Amachi Missouri Visionary Award for his tireless effort as an advocate for children of incarcerated parents.

CEO's include (from left) Paula Seamans, Joplin; Georgalu Swoboda, Columbia; Becky James-Hatter, St. Louis; Lt. Gov. Kinder; Michael Lawrence, Kansas City; Lee Knernschild, Jefferson City; Lisa Slavens, Springfield.

Amachi Missouri, in its third year, helps provide mentoring services through BBBS to the children. The word "Amachi" is a West African term meaning "Who knows but what God has brought us through this child?" The Amachi program was launched in 2000 in Philadelphia by the Rev. Dr. Wilson Goode, Sr., whose spoken about the program in this area on several occasions.

Stand by Me

BBBS welcomes the Stand By Me Program located at West Blvd. Elementary and Smithton Middle School as they join as a Partnership Program. The program, led by Zona and Jeff Burke, supports School-Based mentors in grades four through eight.

The partnership will strengthen both Stand By Me and Big Brothers Big Sisters. BBBS had fifty-two matches in K-3 grades at West Blvd. last year. Zona and Jeff have been Big Couple Community-Based mentors for the past two years.

Partnerships enable Big Brothers Big Sisters to work in new ways to support our children. Again, welcome Zona, Jeff, and the mentors and children of West Blvd. and Smithton.

Stand by Me - And Me

As autumn 2007 approached, my wife and I were anxiously awaiting our first extended period of "the empty nest." We raised three sons. One graduated from college and is married. The other two were now in their own places at the University of Missouri. Finally, some peace and quiet. Maybe it was too quiet.

One day my wife showed me an ad in the Columbia Tribune about the Stand By Me program. It caught my interest, so I called Jeff and Zona Burk at West Boulevard Elementary School. They explained to me that my involvement would take only one hour a week. I thought, "That's all, only one hour?" What could be accomplished in one hour? Well, soon I would find out.

Before you knew it, they had me paired off with a fourth grade boy named J.K. Perhaps nervously, I walked into the Stand By Me Mentoring Room at West Boulevard for the first time on a Thursday morning at 8:30. There were other mentors and students in the room. We stood for the Pledge of Allegiance and listened to the morning announcements.

"Now what?" I thought.

Well, the Stand By Me program took care of that. J.K. and I got our Stand By Me notebook. The notebook leads us through activities where we get to know each other. We talk. We listen. We communicate. J.K. gets some of me, and I get some of J.K. I think I got the better end of the deal.

It was great to get inside the head of a fourth grader. It took me back to the time we raised our boys. It took me back to when I was a fourth grader. The conversations, the closeness is amazing. I didn't know I could get so close to this fourth grade boy in such a short period of time.

Soon, I looked forward to my weekly hour long visits with J.K. We put a couple of plastic models together, played geography games, played checkers (he's good), read books, listened to a variety of music, and baked muffins, which was a first for J.K. and me!

We had an instant connection -- sports. We love to talk sports, mostly Tiger football and basketball. But, we also talked about J.K.'s exploits on the football field and track. He's quite the runner! We played catch with a baseball and tossed the football around too.

So, what will I be doing this school year at 8:30am on Thursdays? 0AYou'll find me at West Boulevard Elementary School in the Stand By Me Mentoring Room. I'll be with a fifth grade boy named J.K. I forgot what the fifth grade is all about. But, I'll learn. And, it only takes one hour a week.

But, what an hour.

by Todd Donoho

Children's Events at Museum of Art & Archaeology - MU Campus

Museum Kids Series—Museum of Art & Archaeology, Pickard Hall, MU Campus
Art experiences designed for children thru grade 8.
Preregistration required. Call 882-9498

Thursday Events@1:30-3pm
August 7—Archaeology
August 14—Picasso
Sunday @2-3:30pm—August 10—Ode to an Urn

Events at Daniel Boone Regional Library

August 11—Monday—5:30-7:30pm—Reading to Rover--
Children will read for 15 minutes to a certified therapy dog. This is a fun and unique way to help improve children's literacy skills

Save These Dates

August 20—Wednesday—Opening Day for Mexico Public Schools
August 21—Thursday—Opening Day for Columbia Public Schools
August 25—Monday—Classwork begins at MU
September 4—Thursday— 4-9p.m.—BBBS Night at Andy's Frozen Custard

Events Around Columbia

August 16—Saturday—NFL Punt, Pass & Kick Competition.
9:30a.m. Cosmo Park. Free.

Events Around Mexico

Tuesday Concerts—Hardin Park Gazebo
August 12—Bluegrass Music—6:30p.m.
August 22-24—Friday-Sunday—Audrain AgriFest, 4-H Fairgrounds



Slinging Mud

On a cool July Saturday that never topped 80 degrees, 140 Columbia residents slipped, splashed, and slid through four courts of muddy mess at the 2008 Big Brothers Big Sisters Mud Volleyball Tournament aptly referred to as "MudBall". Most of the participants were young businessmen and women who typically donned slacks and dress shoes for work. On this day, holey t-shirts and old tennis shoes strapped with duct tape were the appropriate attire.

16 teams competed for the coveted MudBall trophy. When it was all finished, The Mud Monkeys reigned supreme. According to Tim Knarr, the captain of the team, "this was the most fun we've had in years." The fire department was on hand to spray people down and players could be seen munching on Shakespeare's pizza most of the afternoon.

The event, in its second year, was not a fundraiser. It was an attempt to gain attention. With a typical waiting list of over 200 children, Big Brothers Big Sisters wants the community to be aware of these children. Last year, the goal was to have 10-15% of MudBall participants become mentors – and this has not changed. Mentors, or "BIGS" as they are called in the organization, are still needed and there will always be children who need a friend.

As these adults slung mud at each other on a rainy day in July, you could hear many of them saying "I feel like a kid again." And that's exactly how they were supposed to feel.

by Dave Dietrich

