



Big Brothers Big Sisters

Big News

Welcoming 2009

By Frank Easton, Board President

As 2008 passes into the history books, it is a time for reflection & a time to be thankful for all that life has blessed each of us with ... whether that be friends or family or great co-workers or interesting work or good health, to name just a few. It is a time to celebrate accomplishments & more importantly, it is a time to think about the future.

As I look back at 2008, I see a lot to celebrate. It marked the end of my 1st year as President of the Board of Directors & the most exciting in my 8+ years of involvement with Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast. It was a year of challenges ... a year of success ... a year of building ... a year of hope & a year of change.

Occasionally change can be viewed as disruptive & may even create more than a little apprehension. 2008 brought a great number of changes to the agency. We welcomed a new Executive Director & a new Director of Programs, both of whom brought a wealth of skills & experience that will serve us well. They in turn have hired some new people to supplement the existing staff. While some faces have changed, I say without reservation, that the level of dedication to serving children at risk in the Greater Seacoast has remained strong here at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast.

2008 began with a weakened economy that got steadily worse as the year progressed. In the face of the increasing challenges, our friends ... supporters ... staff ... volunteers ... & Board all stepped up in greater numbers to help us build for the future.

This groundswell of support is, in fact, the thing that stands out in my mind as one of our biggest successes. So before I let 2008 pass into history, I want to thank each of you. We cannot do what we do without you & your support.

While the challenges seem to get bigger, it is this kind of support that gives me confidence that 2009 will be a successful year for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast. But success will not come easily. We will need your help in a great number of ways. We need the volunteers to keep coming ... in fact, we need more volunteers--many, many more. We need everyone to support us financially. If you have not donated to Big Brothers Big Sisters, I ask you to consider doing so. We are currently conducting our annual appeal during which no donation is either too small or too big. Your money will be put to work changing the lives of children & helping them achieve their full potential. If you have donated, then I thank you & at the same time, I invite you to consider increasing your level of support.

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Winter, 2009

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Special Thanks to the Exeter New Car Dealers' Association for their generous donation to our Annual Appeal!



...Welcoming 2009 from page 1

I believe the greatest compliment that I can pay a person, is to tell them that they made a difference. When I think about our donors ... our volunteers ... our staff ... our Board, I think that each of you have made a difference. And I commend you for that.

In closing, as you look back on 2008, I hope you are as proud of what we've accomplished

together as I am. And when you look to the future, I hope you will do so with enthusiasm for Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast.

To all of you, I say thank you ... & I hope that 2009 will bring us all the best that life has to offer.

Frank Easton



Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As I reflect upon my first four months here at Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast, I am struck again and again at what an amazing organization this is. Not only do we have a fabulous staff, board and group of volunteers but the young people that we serve are talented and smart and so very worthy of the mentoring experience that only Big Brothers Big Sisters can provide. Whether or not they are participating in a group activity experience like one of our super festive holiday parties or going off on their own to the Dover Climbing Gym, Naked Plates, Firefly pottery or a local coffee shop—our youth are growing, learning, becoming more self-confident and better equipped to deal with the world around them. Likewise, our Bigs get the satisfaction of an amazing relationship and the knowledge that they are truly making a difference in a young person's life.

Despite the economic downturn and the stress that that has created, we

are financially sound, we are continuing to see the number of volunteers remain steady and we expect continued growth. Our staff has envisioned a stretch goal for 2009 and our Board is looking forward to helping us reach that goal through their time, talent and fundraising skills.

In the coming months, I look forward to meeting more of you and learning more about this incredible agency. I feel so fortunate to be a part of such a wonderfully run and managed non-profit and to work with such talented people. Should you be interested in learning more about what we do here or if you are interested in finding out how you might be able to help, please do not hesitate to give me a call or email (603.430.1140 x. 301 or tawnee.walling@bbbs.org).

Sincerely,

Tawnee

"Our youth are growing, learning, becoming more self-confident and better equipped to deal with the world around them."



What's Happening with Community-based Matches

By Corianne Woodard, Senior Match Support Specialist

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast currently has 209 Community Based Matches. Recently these matches have been doing some great local activities in which discounts are available upon presentation of agency membership cards. Activities include going to Seacoast Martial Arts in Somersworth where matches can take a lesson at a discounted price, going to the Dover Indoor Climbing Gym where the owner is actually a Big Brother himself, and also painting one of a kind pottery pieces at Naked Plates in Dover, and Firefly Pottery in Portsmouth. Other fun activities include going ice skating in Exeter, the Children's Museum of New Hampshire in Dover, and UNH hockey games in Durham. Match Support Specialists have been able to offer assistance to our volunteers in brainstorming activities that are both fun and inexpensive to help ensure

that visits are not causing a financial burden during these tough economic times. Match Support Specialists have also been working with parents to maintain and to communicate about any specific areas of focus that they would like their children to work on with their Bigs. Some focus areas include confidence, education, and how to prepare for the future.

There are currently 94 children on the BBBSGS wait list. There is a huge need for male mentors across the seacoast as the majority of the children waiting are boys. We would love for **all** of these children to have the opportunity to spend time with a caring adult. Please don't hesitate to call Billy Gaudet at 603-430-1140 x. 307 should you wish to become a Big Brother or Big Sister.

-Corey, Matt and Jolene



Taking in a Red Sox game at Fenway Park



Apple Picking at Demeritt Hill Farm

Wish List

Male Bigs (but we always need female Bigs too)

Office Supplies

Copy services

Volunteers to serve on our Bowl For Kids' Sake Committee

Bowl For Kids' Sake Teams

If you would like to donate or volunteer, please contact Billy at (603)430-1140 x307 or billy.gaudet@bbbs.org



A BIG thank you to all of our donors and volunteers who helped make our Big Little Soiree 2008 a Huge Success! And a special thanks to our Sponsors!

\$10,000 Sponsor



\$5,000 Sponsors



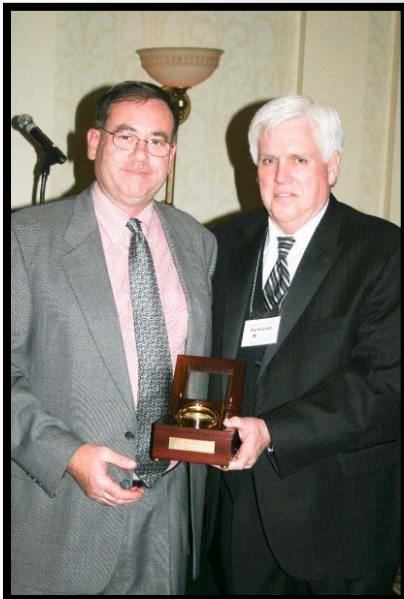
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- Sean & Kirsten Mahoney
- Morse Hill Trust
- Ocean Bank
- Portsmouth Regional Hospital
- Matthew & Anne Sudduth
- Union Specialties



A special thanks to our "Big Wigs" honoree, Scott Holloway (Pictured with Board of Directors President Frank Easton)



Little Moments...Big Magic!

A letter forwarded to our office

Dottie—

So here we are, 10 months into our relationship. And it's still something magical, something bigger than the words used to describe it.

We have gone to the beach, water parks, the mountains, video arcades, parks, mountain biking, etc.

Each time I drive to John's*, the closer I get to his house, the more excited with anticipation I become. Here's my chance to have some "kid fun" again. We all regretfully give up our childhood—well, here's my chance to relive some of it again; My chance to see autumn leaves up close again for the first time; my chance to see images in the clouds while laying on my back in a big sunny field; my chance to see fireflies and constellations at night again for the first time; my chance to show someone else, for the first time, the wonderful gracefulness of nature and to rediscover all that I've forgotten. Wow! John's presence says "forget about work and your bills. Here's a 6

hour vacation each week, let go, do what your heart says."

When I started Big Brothers Big Sisters [sic], I felt after 12 months I'd be done. The time commitment seemed huge. How will I ever find the time every week?? It can't be done, I thought! Now, I want the 4-6 hours to be more, it's so easy to find the time

How can people be running around so absorbed with their 3 hour commutes; their big stock options; and no time to think? Who could possibly care who will win on *Survivor* or *Smackdown*? You will when you become a Big Brother. Let your little look up to you; let your little come running out of his house and jump into your arms when you show up. That's what's important. The best things in life really are free.

- Jack*

*To protect individual privacy, names have been changed.

NOTE: John just turned 18 and has, after almost 10 years, officially aged out. His relationship with Jack will continue for years to come, however! In his words, "Jack changed my life."



"Here's my chance to have some 'kid fun' again...the best things in life really are free"

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast needs **A Few Good Men**

Actually...we need quite a few good men

We have over 60 young boys waiting for a Big Brother like you to come into their lives.

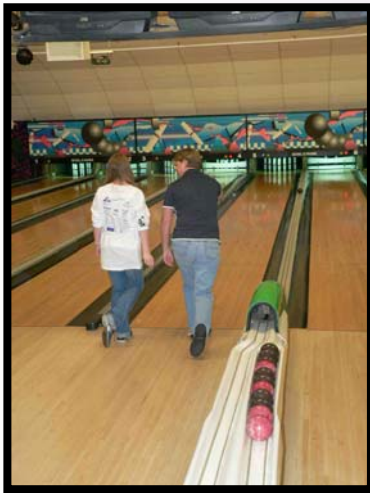
It doesn't take much. 2-4 hours, 2-4 times a month is all it takes to make a difference.

For more information about becoming a volunteer, go to our website or contact Billy at (603)430-1140x307 or billy.gaudet@bbbs.org





Bowl For Kids' Sake set for May 2nd 2009



Help Big Brothers Big Sisters make a lasting, positive impact on children, schools and communities. Support Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl For Kids' Sake today – bowl, donate or both!

Each year over half a million supporters across the country come together to have fun and raise money in support of Big Brothers Big Sisters as we continue changing how our children grow up in America. **Form a bowling team with your co-workers, friends and family. Make a donation! Join us today!**

Research shows that children in our program are:

- 52% less likely to skip school
- 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs
- 27% less likely to begin using alcohol
- 37% less likely to skip a class and are more confident of their performance in schoolwork
- 33% less likely to engage in violent behavior and more likely to get along with their families and peers

Help Big Brothers Big Sisters continue contributing to better schools, brighter futures and stronger communities for all – Support Bowl for Kids' Sake today!

Ways to get involved

Become a Sponsor

- \$5,000 Corporate
- \$1,000 Team
- \$500 Friend
- \$250 Little to Bowl
- \$100 Lane

In Kind Donations

Create or Join a team

And/or

Join the planning committee

Make a Positive and Lasting Impact!

By participating in Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl For Kids' Sake, you can help make a positive, lasting impact on children, schools and neighborhoods. Our communities face huge challenges – youth violence, drop out rates, poverty, drug and alcohol abuse – Big Brothers Big Sisters is a solution that works to solve these societal problems. Our impact is proven.

WHEN:

May 2nd, 2009

WHERE:

**Bowl-A-Rama
599 Lafayette Road
Portsmouth, NH 03801**

For more information about getting involved, contact Billy at (603) 430-1140 x307 or billy.gaudet@bbbs.org

Visit Our New Website

www.nhseacoastbigbrothersbigsisters.org

- Find out about upcoming events!
- Learn how to become a Big!
- Learn how to enroll a child!
- Find out how to get involved with Bowl For Kids' Sake!
- Meet the staff!
- Meet the Board of Directors!
- See our sponsors!
- Donate Online!





What's Happening with School/Site-Based Matches

By Joan Barretto, Director of Programs

The school programs in both Strafford and Rockingham Counties are recovering from a rough start due to funding cuts affecting bussing, and after-school programs. We are always striving to grow the programs we have while still providing quality support to the schools and the matches involved. We are grateful to the schools, teachers, guidance counselors, and of course, the volunteers, without whom these programs would not be possible.

Rockingham County

We have large, long-established, peer-to-peer programs in both Hampton and Kingston which are doing very well. These programs match high school students with middle and elementary school students. Some, like Hampton Academy's program are homework clubs and strive not only to provide one to one help with homework, but also encourage friendship and social development. Others, like that at Bakie School in Kingston, are focused more on the social element of the match, and the students involved do everything from crafts and games to shooting hoops and tossing Frisbees in the gym (or in the field, weather permitting).

We also have a peer-to-peer program in Epping which was just started last Spring and is still in its infancy. We have high hopes for this program, as all the schools are on one campus, making it very convenient for everyone involved.

Smaller programs are running in the Exeter and Portsmouth elementary schools, and these schools host not only peer-to-peer matches, but our "Bigs in

School" matches, where adult Bigs go in the schools during the child's lunch/recess to meet with their Littles.

Strafford County

We have also begun peer-to-peer programs in both Dover and Rochester Middle Schools. Again, these programs are very new and we are working on growing them and having larger programs emerge, such as those established in Rockingham.

Strafford County has numerous Bigs in Schools programs, as we are fortunate to be able to draw from the UNH population, and match college students, as well as working adults, with children in either elementary, middle school, or high school. These programs are up and running at Garrison Elementary, Woodman park School, Dover Middle School, Dover High School Rochester Middle School, Spaulding High School Lee Mastway School, Farmington Middle school, New Durham Elementary, and East Rochester. We are working on a partnership with the Somersworth after school program to set up a new program there, as well.

We also have a partnership with the Seymour Osman center at the Dover Housing Authority and these matches meet either at the center itself or at Woodman Park School in the Osman program there.

If you are interested in becoming a Big within the Rockingham county schools please call Abby Clifford at 603-430-1140 x. 308 or in Strafford County schools please call Jolene Felix at 604-430-1140 x. 306.



Contact Us:

Tawnee R. Walling
Executive Director
tawnee.walling@bbbs.org

Joan Barretto
Director of Programs
joan.barretto@bbbs.org

Lauren Bradshaw
Enrollment & Matching Specialist
lauren.bradshaw@bbbs.org

Corianne Woodard
Senior Match Support Specialist
corianne.woodard@bbbs.org

Matthew Wadlinger
Match Support Specialist
matt.wadlinger@bbbs.org

Liz Frangione
Match Support Specialist
liz.frangione@bbbs.org

Jolene Felix
Strafford County School/Site Specialist
Match Support Specialist
jolene.felix@bbbs.org

Abby Clifford
Rockingham County
School/Site Specialist
abby.clifford@bbbs.org

Billy Gaudet
Administrative Assistant
billy.gaudet@bbbs.org



Big Brothers Big Sisters

**A Special Thank
You to Apple
Painting &
Restoration for
their generous
donation**

Contact Us:

Phone: (603) 430-1140

Fax: (603) 430-7760

www.nhseacoastbigbrothersbigsisters.org

**Get out your BOWLING Shoes!
Bowl For Kids' Sake
May 2nd, 2009**
More information inside on Page 6

Thank you to everyone who has helped us
raise \$12,000 from our Annual Appeal.
Help us reach our goal of \$15,000 by
sending in your donation today!

or

Donate Online!



Big Brothers Big Sisters
of the Greater Seacoast

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