

UPDATE!



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SPOTLIGHT: BILLS PLACE

On January 20, the Twin Falls City Council upheld an earlier decision by the Twin Falls Planning and Zoning Commission to grant a special use permit for the transition home project known as BILLS Place. The name is actually an acronym for what the purpose is: Building Independent Life-Long Skills, for young men aged 17—19 years who have successfully completed their programs with the referring agency — either the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections, District 5 Juvenile Justice, or Health and Welfare.

The City Council's decision was in response to an appeal, filed by a part-time resident who owns property in the neighborhood of Martin Street. BILLS Place will be located at 285 Martin. Several people either spoke at the meetings or wrote letters of support for BILLS Place. We would like to publicly thank the Community Committee members who attended one or all of the meetings, and whose support helped so much:

- Bill Brockman, Twin Falls County Commissioner
- Bev Ashton, Department of Juvenile Corrections
- Judge Larry Duff, Magistrate Judge Juvenile Court
- Catherine Haynes, YODP
- Kathy James, Department of Health and Welfare
- Candy McElfresh, South Central Idaho Works!
- Major Eddie Patterson, Salvation Army
- Ken Robinette, South Central Community Action
- Kevin Sandau, Twin Falls Juvenile Probation
- Val Stotts, Magic Valley Safe House
- Linda Wright, 5th Judicial District

In addition, several people not affiliated with BILLS Place also spoke up or wrote in support, and we extend a warm thank-you to:

- Mark Brunelle

- Melody Cameron
- Dave Frick
- Tom Frank
- John Hathaway
- Stan Hays
- Carleen Herring
- Mike Jones
- Kent Mallory
- Rev. Jim Sommer
- Kent Taylor
- Linn Viner
- Marlene Yardley

And a special thank-you to attorney



Anne Pitts, who represented Magic Valley Regional Medical Center as the owner of the property (the hospital 'donated' the land and home to the county for the purpose of establishing this program.)

During the course of the permit process, some interesting facts were shared with the public:

Other than an occasional runaway, similar programs in Southern Idaho such as Emancipation House in Boise and the Bannock program in Pocatello show virtually no negative impact on
(story continued on page 2)



PROJECT PARTNERS:



IDHW



IDJC

**SOUTH
CENTRAL
IDAHO
WORKS!**



YOUTH Aspire Higher!



To date, 48 youth have been enrolled in the Magic Valley Youth and Adult Services (MVYAS) Career Preparation classes known as "ASPIRE HIGHER!" The classes last 12 weeks, and are followed by support and assistance in securing employment and/or successfully staying in school. In January, new sessions were started in Lincoln, Gooding, and Jerome counties. In addition to the classroom structure, some youth have an opportunity to participate in paid work experiences, which is similar to our summer work experience program, where groups of young people work as teams to complete substantial community improvement projects. For more information about MVYAS, call 734-4435.

**SPOTLIGHT
BILLS PLACE**

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neighborhood crime. Idaho Youth Ranch Executive Director Mike Jones wrote that numerous national studies show no impact on property values.

In our case, we expect to enhance the neighborhood with landscaping, upgrading the home, and providing the community with volunteer service opportunities for the youth. The youth are not allowed to have vehicles, so the only regular traffic will be house staff who are supervising and teaching independent living skills. The young men must be employed, and must successfully demonstrate the abilities and skills needed to live as responsible, productive citizens before graduating from the program. Similar programs around the state and nation have proven highly successful, and greatly reduced recidivism and the cycle of welfare dependency over the long term.

What's next? The Community Committee is working with the 'bricks-and-mortar' committee to get the doors open, the programs developed, and welcome the first residents.

**YOUTH RESOURCE
CONNECTIONS**

The Department of Labor's Youth Services office provides a wonderful electronic resource to keep youth service providers informed of grant opportunities, upcoming conferences and youth development training, and other news of note. Here is a sampling of articles in the current issue:

- U.S. Departments of Education and Labor Announce Incentive Awards.
- The Environmental Protection Agency Announces 2003 Brownsfields Job Training Grants.
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Announces New Grant: "Mentor Children of Prisoners Program".
- National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices database. This online database catalogs best practices of state-level programs that provide extra learning opportunities for school-age children.

If you would like to subscribe, go to: www.doleta.gov and on the right-hand column, click on **YOUTH RESOURCE CONNECTIONS**. From there, follow the instructions to subscribe. *Youth Resource Connections* is published bi-weekly and delivered to your email box.



**YODP STEERING COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**

- Joe Herring, *Region IV Development Association*
- Judge John Varin, *Magistrate Judge Juvenile Court*
- Judge Larry Duff, *Magistrate Judge Juvenile Court*
- Bill Brockman, *Twin Falls County Commissioner*
- Veronica Lierman, *Jerome County Commissioner*
- Dan Stapelman, *Minidoka County Commissioner*
- Bev Ashton, *Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections, District 5*
- Candy McElfresh, *South Central Idaho Works!*
- Alejandro Castañeda, *Youth Council*
- Kathy James, *Idaho Department of Health and Welfare*

**TRANSITIONAL HOUSE
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- Bill Brockman, *TF County Comm.*
- Judge John Varin, *Magistrate Judge*
- Jim Fields, *CSI Office on Aging*
- Sylvia Ann Bradshaw, *Magic Valley Youth and Adult Services*
- Linda Wright, *Fifth Judicial District, Trial Court Administrator*
- Bev Ashton, *Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections, District 5*
- Kathy James, *Idaho Department of Health and Welfare*
- Ken Robinette, *South Central Community Action Partnership*
- Ray Strolberg, *Covenant Insurance*
- La Deane Brown, *U.S.D.A.*
- Judge Larry Duff, *Magistrate Judge*
- Diana Lincoln Haye, *Idaho Diagnostic Sleep Lab*
- Ken Loosle, *Magic Valley Regional Medical Center*
- Tom Mikesell, *Twin Falls County Commissioner*
- Candy McElfresh, *South Central Idaho Works!*
- Maj. Eddie Patterson, *Salvation Army*
- Val Stotts, *MV Safe House*
- Kevin Sandau, *TF Co. Juvenile Probation*
- Sharon Block, *State Representative*

THE VISION



BUILD ON EXISTING COMMUNITY EFFORTS AND PROGRAMS
BUILD STRONGER RESOURCE CONNECTIONS AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS BETWEEN YOUTH PROVIDERS
DEVELOP TWO OPTIONS: ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING AND AFTERCARE PROGRAMS, INCORPORATING CAREER PREPARATION AND EDUCATION

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program
 Auxiliary Aids and Services Are Available Upon request to Individuals With Disabilities
 TTY Through Idaho Relay Service 1-800-337-3579

NOTE: Preparation of this item was funded by the United States Department of Labor under Grant Agreement No. AF-12396-02-60

GANG BOARD AWARDS GRANTS!

The Gang Prevention Advisory Board (GPAB) announces the recipients of community "mini-grant" awards. The awards total \$10,000.00, set aside by the Young Offender Demonstration Project for local projects or programs that focus on gang prevention, awareness, education, or intervention. The Board invited applications in both October and December via this UPDATE list, the Region IV Development website, and the media. Board members with any direct interest in an application withdrew from participating in the determinations, which were awarded as follows:

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF MAGIC VALLEY — This funding will build on an existing program that connects youth with U.S.A. Boxing regulated and sanctioned training and events. The funded addition will expand the program to youth in the Mini-Cassia area, and provide proven opportunities for experiencing appropriate conflict resolution, teamwork, and increased self-esteem. The program is directed by Jason Samargis. The amount awarded is \$5,254.

JEROME SCHOOL DISTRICT — The District will collaborate with Jerome Juvenile Probation and high school students to develop and distribute an informational pamphlet to parents of elementary school children, then follow-up with a new teen mentoring program that matches high school youth with younger children who are at risk of gang-involvement. The district also plans to hold small community-parent meetings to discuss gang prevention programs and activities, and help parents address concerns. The amount awarded is \$2,595.

MINI-CASSIA OPPORTUNITY CENTER — The center will send their principal, a middle-school teacher/counselor and a high school teacher to a regional gang prevention and intervention training to be held in Reno, Nevada. The training is based on the nationally recognized G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education And Training) model. On their return, the three plan to collaborate with local law enforcement and juvenile probation gang experts to develop a district-wide program that will assist school personnel to successfully intervene with gang presence and activity. They have agreed to share their training with other area school districts, law enforcement, or other interested youth providers. The amount awarded is \$2,151.

All of the grantees must have the funded portion of their projects completed no later than October 30, 2004, and will make regular progress reports to the Board.

Gang Prevention Advisory Board

- Chairman Mario Umaña, Jerome Juvenile Probation
- Co-Chair Sherri Molina, Magic Valley Safe and Drug Free Schools
- Kelly Bangerter, Hazelton Police Chief
- Sylvia Ann Bradshaw, Magic Valley Youth and Adult Services
- Donna Draper, Gooding Walker Center
- Theresa Espedal, Blaine County Juvenile Probation
- Kyle Fisher, Jerome Juvenile Probation
- Pete Flores, gang expert, Mini-Cassia
- Irma Garza, parent, Buhl
- Randy Givens, Community Partnerships, Twin Falls
- Don Hall, Boys and Girls Club of Magic Valley
- Linda Mann, Snake River Detention Center
- Jaime Nava, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
- Fritz Peters, Blaine County School District
- Jason Samargis, gang expert, Twin Falls
- Jim Sommer, Agape 4Square Church, Twin Falls
- Adam Williams, School Resource Officer, Twin Falls

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Lincoln: Cheryl Adams
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Twin Falls: Kevin Sandau
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