



# 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

2505 Cedarwood Ave. • Suite 2, Bellingham, WA 98225 • Phone 360.756.6710 • www.blueskiesforchildren.org • 501(c)3 Tax ID# 91-2061794

## 2012 In Retrospect

The year 2012 was very exciting for Blue Skies for Children. Following a few very tough recessionary years, the organization made some very difficult decisions in an effort to manage costs to a lesser donation base and rebuild organizational reserves. Through 2011 and 2012 Blue Skies has regained strength and reserves for a stronger base going forward. Each year brings new challenges and surprises.

Blue Skies continues to focus on its signature programs - Little Wishes Enrichment Program, One-Time Little Wishes, and its Instrument Loaner Program, The Shoe Give Program and Winter Warm-Up Program. The organization is proud of continued growth in its ability to serve the children of Whatcom County. Our distribution of shoes increased from 98 children in 2011, to 156 children in 2012. Our Winter Warm Up Program distributed 2,239 items to 358 children, up from 292 children in 2011. In addition to our five primary programs, Blue Skies also continues to administer the Josh Fueston Swim to Live Fund providing support for children interested in swim lessons, swim team, or in need of swim therapy.

In 2012, we significantly strengthened our connections within the foster community through greater relationships with DSHS, Fostering Together and individual foster families. We continued to expand our community partnerships and provider relationships. Blue Skies, again, acted as a community partner for WWU as well as provided supervision for three senior high school projects.

### Did you know?

- Blue Skies was honored to have been voted 2012 Non-Profit of the Year by the Whatcom/Bellingham Chamber of Commerce.
- Blue Skies continues to be the only local non-profit to hold the BBB's Charity Seal Accreditation in Whatcom County.
- Blue Skies is Sleep Country USA's Whatcom County Partner and distribution location for foster families.
- Blue Skies offers volunteer opportunities to teens in need of completing court appointed community service.

### In 2012, Blue Skies Programs

- Sponsored (3,270) Enrichment Sessions
- Granted One-Time Little Wishes for (122) children.
- Loaned (17) instruments to children.
- Distributed (2,239) coats, hats, gloves, scarves, blankets and other items to (358) children through Winter Warm-Up Program.
- Provided (156) children with a pair of brand new shoes.
- Supported (9) children through the Josh Fueston Swim to Live Fund
- Responded to (8) Warm up requests (informal/emergent care program).

### Mission

To raise hope and self esteem by sponsoring enrichment activities and other essentials for homeless, low-income and foster children.

### Vision

To grant a Little Wish for each and every eligible child. To increase the capacity to grant Little Wishes for children in need through grants, donations, fundraisers and our signature Sponsor-a-Child Program.



### Financial Highlights

For Year Ended December 31, 2012

Cash Donations	\$
Inkind Donations	\$
Program Expenses:	\$
Management & General Expenses:	\$
Fundraising Expenses:	\$
<u>Total Expenses:</u>	\$
Total Assets:	\$
Total Liabilities:	\$
<u>Net Asset Balance:</u>	\$

Blue Skies is actively working to reduce its administrative expense ratio:

2008 - 34% 2009 - 30% 2010 - 24%  
2011 - 22% 2012 - 18%

## Our Programs & Services

Our **Little Wishes Enrichment Program** grants Little Wishes for ongoing support of lessons and activities including, but not limited to, martial arts, team sports such as baseball, ice hockey, soccer, swim team, or football, and individual activities such as swim lessons, dance, ballet, gymnastics, ice skating, or horseback riding, as well as, art lessons, or music lessons such as piano, violin or guitar.

Our **One-Time Little Wishes Program** grants Little Wishes in support of school trip fees, summer camp enrollment fees, bicycle and helmet, special needs equipment, tutoring, computers, school related supplies such as a scientific calculator, or an ASB card (required to participate in school sports), sports fees and/or uniforms, cleats, and other items. The Little Wish requests we receive are unique to the needs of each child.

Our **Little Wishes Instrument Loaner Program** loans musical instruments to children who wish to participate in their school band or orchestra, but find they are unable to afford the monthly rental cost of an instrument.

Our **Shoe Give Program** provides children in need with brand new shoes and socks. Item availability and sizes are dependent on donations received. *(Program offered each April.)*

Our **Winter Warm Up Program** provides children in need with coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and blankets. Item availability and sizes are dependent on donations received. *(Program offered Nov 1 – Dec 31.)*

**Josh Fueston Memorial Swim to Live Fund** - In memory of 19yo Josh Fueston, this fund has been established to support children in need who love to swim and wish to participate on the Bellingham Bay Swim Team. The fund also offers help with swim meet fees, swim lessons, developmental delay swim therapy and supplies, and pool passes.

### 2012 Donor Highlight

A huge thank you to Hugh Diehl, Teresa Taylor-Oliver and Mark Waslohn who kindly coordinated a coat drive in support of Blue Skies for Children with ALCOA Employees and IAMAW Local Lodge 2379.

Alcoa donated \$200 to Blue Skies for Children as well as collected over (135) coats, hats, gloves, scarves and blankets for Blue Skies Winter Warm-Up Program.

Alcoa actively supports the efforts of community organizations to improve the quality of life in our region as a source of lasting and positive impact. Josh Wilund of Alcoa's Government Affairs stated "The partnership Alcoa and the employees of Intalco Works have with Blue Skies for Children helps fill a vital need in the community and the real proof is in the smiles of each child they serve who, because of these programs, has warm winter clothes and raised hope and self-esteem. We are a proud partner and supporter of Blue Skies."



These pictures are just a few of the kids that spent the past few months waiting for the school bus or playing at recess a whole lot warmer because of the generosity of our local Alcoa employees and IAMAW Local Lodge 2379 employees.



### Just A Word or Two

One of the great movements in my lifetime among educated people is the need to commit themselves to action. Most people are not satisfied with (just) giving money; we also feel we need to work. Peter Drucker

## Major Grants, Sponsors & Donors (\$1,000 +)

<p>Anonymous Donor Banner Bank Barron Smith Daughert, PLLC Bellingham Bay Rotary Club Thomas &amp; Martina Horn Foundation Eleanor &amp; Henry Jansen Foundation June Leonard Foundation Norcliffe Foundation NorthCoast Electric Company Pacific International Grout Tulalip Tribe - Raising Hands Ticket to Dream Foundation Saturna Capital Tim Chandonnet Photography</p>	<p>VECA Electric Whatcom Community Fdn Whidbey Island Bank Chuck &amp; Rayanne Benjamin Jan Bowman Laurie Fueston Steve &amp; Julie Guay Kit Hardan Lynne &amp; Jaime Henifin Joel Hittner Gladys Hyatt, CPA Bob Kieper</p>	<p>Frank Manchester Scott Manier Kelly Monroe Rich Pelo Bonnie Rice Silver Reef Hotel, Casino &amp; Spa Janice Keller &amp; Bruce Smith Pat Stephens Toni Taft Karen &amp; Daryl Trezise Rhonda &amp; Bart VanNus Chris &amp; Debi Vasquez</p>
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### Have you heard.....

You make a living by what you get, you make a life by what you give. - Winston Churchill  
The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service to others. - Gandhi  
To have made one person's life a little better - that is to succeed. - Thoreau  
No one has ever become poor by giving. - Anne Frank

## History of Blue Skies for Children

Established in 1997, Blue Skies was created out of a need in our local community to help the children of Whatcom County raise hope and self-esteem.

In 2002, Blue Skies became a 501(c)(3), hired its first executive director. The organization was initially modeled after Treehouse for Kids in King County and offered a Little Wishes Program as well as a clothing outlet where children in need could "shop" for clothing for free twice a year. The program was offered to homeless, low-income and foster children.

In 2004, the organization re-focused its programs targeting children ages 6 to 15.

In 2007, the organization had grown significantly and the board of directors made the difficult decision to close the clothing outlet and focus on its well established **Little Wishes Enrichment Program**, keeping children healthy and active by sponsoring ongoing enrichment activities such as sports, dance, swimming, martial arts, music and art lessons. In September, the organization moved its office to a new location and hired its current Executive Director.

In 2008, Blue Skies established its **Sponsor-A-Child Donor Program**. That same year the **One-Time Little Wishes Program** was formalized, offering children an opportunity to receive support for school trips, summer camp, ASB cards, sports cleats, bicycle & helmet, and other individual needs.

In 2009, Blue Skies established a unique **Driver's Education Scholarship Program** for 15 to 17 year olds. Additionally, it formalized the **Instrument Loaner Program** for children wishing to participate in their school band or orchestra but could not otherwise afford the instrument rental fee. The same year, Blue Skies became the first non-profit in Whatcom County to receive the Charity Seal Accreditation from the Better Business Bureau.

In 2010, Blue Skies formalized its **Winter Warm-Up Program** to provide a warm coat, hat, gloves, scarf and blanket to our children who need it most. Blue Skies partnered for the first time with Sole4Souls to distribute brand new shoes and socks, establishing an annual **Shoe Give Program**. That same year, **The Josh Fueston Swim to Live Fund** was established by Laurie Fueston, in memory of 19yo Josh Fueston, an avid swimmer, to provide enrichment support to children who wish for swimming lessons, help with swim team fees, or are in need of swim therapy. Blue Skies is the administrator of this fund.

In 2012, Blue Skies for Children received the coveted Chamber of Commerce **2012 Non-Profit of the Year Award**.

In 2013, Blue Skies is honored to have received the **BBJ Readers' Choice Non-Profit Award**. Blue Skies for Children is an active member of the Whatcom/Bellingham Chamber of Commerce, and continues to be the **ONLY** organization in Whatcom County to hold the State of Washington **Better Business Bureau Charity Seal Accreditation**.

### 2012 Board of Directors

**President:**  
Cecelia Carson  
WordCrafters NW  
Owner

**Vice President:**  
Giang Ha  
Haskell Corporation  
Accountant

**Treasurer:**  
Gladys Hyatt, CPA  
Moss Adams LLP

**Secretary:**  
Lisa Recht

**Directors:**  
Seth Carson  
American Family  
Mutual Insurance Agent

Charlie Cabe  
Moss Adams  
CPA

Tony Criscuola  
VECA Electric  
Project Manager



### We Need You!

We are in need of three new board members to replace outgoing board members. If you are interested in becoming a board member Please call Julie Guay at 360.756.6710 for a board member information packet.

Thank you for your Board service:

Gloria Kallio  
Kevin Zvilna  
Seth Woolson  
Beth Klein  
Megan Pen

