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Latham Letter

VOLUME XXXII, NUMBER 2

SPRING 2011

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

SINGLE ISSUE PRICE: \$5.00

Klamath Falls, Oregon's

HANDS & WORDS ARE NOT FOR HURTING®

P R O J E C T



By Michael L. Kaibel

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Students from Henley Middle School, Cinco De Mayo Parade

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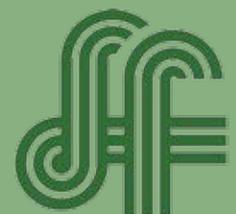
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Part Two:

HANDS & WORDS ARE NOT FOR HURTING®

P R O J E C T

By Michael Kaibel

(Continued from the Winter, 2011 *Latham Letter*, pages 16-19
“Animal Abuse is Everybody’s Business”)

Before we enter part two, a brief introduction of our organization and a quick visit to Part One may be beneficial. We are Klamath CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION and home to the Klamath Chapter HANDS & WORDS ARE NOT FOR HURTING® project. If you haven’t guessed yet, we are located in Klamath County just east of the Cascade Mountains and not far from the California-Oregon border.

Klamath CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION (CAP) is an all volunteer organization made up of child and family advocates dedicated to ending child abuse and family violence through education and awareness campaigns. CAP has been serving the community since 1997 and our vision is a Violence-Free

Klamath County. Our philosophy is that a holistic approach works best when addressing violence; one that addresses the whole “family violence system” (child abuse, domestic and sexual violence, elder abuse, and animal abuse). To that end CAP has been forming alliances with key agencies and organizations to provide a coordinated effort in ending all forms of violence that harm children and families.

In *Part One* we focused mainly on domestic and sexual violence prevention. CAP is taking an innovative approach in protecting domestic violence victims by protecting their pets. Batterers who have access to family pets use them to extract revenge, control their victims, and hold families hostage. Twelve independent studies have reported that between 18% and 48% of battered women delay leaving abusive situations out of fear for the safety of their animals (Ascione, 2007).



Because CAP was blending family abuse prevention with preventing cruelty to animals we needed a strong yet

flexible program that could bridge both components and serve as the cornerstone for all of our anti-violence programs. We were already experiencing phenomenal success in our community and schools with an award winning program called Hands & Words Are Not For Hurting® Project (HandsProject.org).

The Hands Project reduces violence of all types and is proven to save lives. Its success is based on simplicity, repetition, and visibility. Following the wisdom that “all you need to change the world is one simple, powerful idea” makes these words the fourteen most important words you will need to remember all your life: “I Will Not Use My Hands Or My Words For Hurting Myself Or Others®.”



Purple Hands Pledge:
*"I Will Not Use My Hands
Or My Words For Hurting
Myself Or Others®"*

The Hands Project was founded in 1997 by Ann S. Kelly and operates out of Salem, Oregon. Since its conception it has spread from Oregon to all 50 States and 12 foreign countries. Its rapid expansion and popularity is due to its singular message that hands and words are not for hurting. Each year Oregon State Officials take the Purple Hands Pledge and it has been taken by many members of the U. S. Congress.

The Hands Project has been easy to implement, effective, and inexpensive to bring into our school programs. It has been shown to increase the development of healthy relationships among students based on respect, equality, and personal responsibility. Schools across the nation that embrace the Hands Project curriculum and take it seriously, find that students and others will too. Embracing the program includes having staff, teachers, and students recite the Purple Hands Pledge daily as a way to set the tone for the day. In Klamath County we have a large Hispanic population and we are encouraging all our schools to say the pledge in English and Spanish, so the message is carried home in a way that all parents and family members can best receive it.

The Hands Project has both a Preschool-2nd Grade Curriculum and a K-12 School Curriculum. We currently have the Hands K-12 Curriculum in every City and County school in Klamath County. Klamath County Commissioners recently received a letter from the national

headquarters for the Hands Project stating that Klamath County was the first county in the nation to have the Hands Curriculum in 100% of its public schools. Included in the K-12 Curriculum is the 10-minute film called the Power of One which is recommended for middle school, high school, and adults. It is a very powerful film and all the students who participated in the film received certificates of recognition from Harvard University. When we presented the film to our city school district, all the principals voted to have the Hands Project curriculum in their respective school.

An important aspect of the Hands Project is the recognition that the community, schools, and parents are all equal and vital to the full success of the program. Highlighted below are a few of our successes with the Hands Project in Klamath County:

Community

- More than 100 agencies, organizations, and public officials have viewed the film Power of One and endorsed the Hands Project.
- When our judicial system viewed Power of One they voted right then to make the film mandatory viewing by all parents seeking child custody through the Klamath County courts; it has been mandatory since April 2009.
- Upon completion of the new Klamath Falls Police Department building they are planning to have a permanent display in their lobby incorporating the Hands Project Logo sign-set.
- One hundred and sixty-eight businesses have placed the Hands Project 5" Round Window Decal in their entryway to show their support for the Hands Project.
- During our Purple Hands Pledge drive in 2009, over 10% of our county's population took the pledge with us by tracing their hand and signing their name on the pledge form stating "I Will Not Use My Hands Or My Words For Hurting Myself Or Others®." Forty percent of those were adults, which is something we encourage since parents and adults are the role models for our youth. Over 50 businesses on Main Street helped by gathering pledges from their customers and employees. County Commissioners allowed us to display 1,000 Purple Hands Pledges in the windows of our Government Center building during the pledge drive event.
- The third week of each October, our County Commissioners proclaim "National Hands & Words Are Not For Hurting Week" in Klamath County.

Schools

- Thanks to funding from the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative and help from CARES (Child Abuse Response & Evaluation Services), every City and County public school has the Hands Project K-12 Curriculum. The Hands Curriculum is starting to be picked up by private organizations, such as daycare centers and faith-based organizations as

well. Two elementary schools in a neighboring county have also integrated the Hands Curriculum and the Hands Preschool-2nd Grade Curriculum into their school programs.

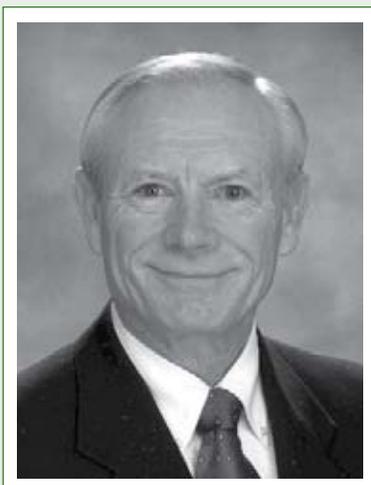
- Linkville Kiwanis Club purchased and donated the Hands Project K-12 Curriculum to Ponderosa Jr. High School.
- Students from Mazama High School started a mentoring program for students at Shasta Elementary using the Hands Project Curriculum.
- Henley Middle School student, Amanda Gatz, sold candy suckers and raised enough money to purchase the Hands Project K-12 Curriculum for her school and to provide administration with Hands Project T-shirts. She also raised enough money to fund Hands Project materials for the Hope Community Center's after school program. Amanda collected 5,000 cans and donated the money to the Klamath Chapter Hands & Words Are Not For Hurting® Project. In recognition for both her accomplishments and her high level of character, she was awarded the first Purple Hands Pledge Ambassador certificate in the nation.

Parents

- Parents are encouraging other parents and family members to learn and practice the Hands Project philosophy of respect and dignity for all living things. A local group, Grandparents as Parents, is actively promoting the Hands Project among its

members and in its community trainings.

During our journey in the prevention of family violence we have learned that when animals are at risk, people are at risk. We also discovered that violence is violence, no matter what form it takes, making it important to collaborate with other agencies and different disciplines to come up with new solutions to old problems. Most importantly we learned that animal abuse is everybody's business and the key to early identification of children and families at risk. Thinking outside the box and seeking new perspectives for preventing violence is helping to make our Klamath County a family friendly place to live and play.



Michael L. Kaibel is the Violence Prevention Coordinator for Klamath Child Abuse Prevention in Klamath County, Oregon. He is the recipient of the Klamath County Volunteer of the Year 2010 Award and the Camp Fire USA Centennial Spirit Award. Contact Michael for information on their programs to reduce all forms of family violence, including animal abuse, at michaelkaibel@centurytel.net or call 541-798-5498.



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