

## BEST FRIENDS MENTORING PROGRAM



# The Best News

[www.westernwellness.org](http://www.westernwellness.org)

### Inside this issue:

Friend Profiles	2
Mentors of the Quarter	3
Calendar	4

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Jill Gregoire  
*Program Assistant*  
AmeriCorps

135 W. Villard St.  
P.O. Box 542



Dickinson, N.D. 58602-0542

(701) 483-8615  
1-877-877-8685

[friends@ndsupernet.com](mailto:friends@ndsupernet.com)

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## Tony, Kyle become lifelong friends

Nearly a year ago the Best Friends Mentoring Program matched Kyle Witt, then a fifth grader, with Tony Kessel, a Belfield native and student at Dickinson State University. Tony wanted to give his time to a younger boy; Kyle's parents wanted a friend for their son.

"Kyle is more happy with himself," says Kyle's father, Larry. "Tony's good for Kyle and Kyle's more patient and understanding with his family."

Kyle, 12, and Tony get together each Thursday afternoon. They play guitars and listen to music together, take long walks and talk, play football, use the com-

puter, watch movies and sometimes visit Tony's dorm at DSU.

"He helps me with my homework and my grades are getting better," Kyle says.

Tony says being a mentor has made him much more aware of his actions. He strives to be a positive role model.

"We have both benefited," Tony says. "I feel I have learned just as much as Kyle."

Tony spent last summer in basic training for the National Guard; this summer



Senior Friend Tony Kessel, left, and Junior Friend Kyle Witt, enjoy guitars, music, getting together for pizza and talking.

he will be gone for more training. That doesn't bother Kyle, because he knows Tony will be back.

"And I'd still want to be friends with Tony, no matter how old I get," he said.

## Recycle those old, used cell phones

More than 160 old cell phones have been given a new lease on life through "Phones for Friends," a new fundraising program benefiting the Best Friends Mentoring Program.

The program began collecting cell phones in April to raise funds for program activities. The throw-aways are refurbished by recycling companies and given to charities or to those living or serving in

developing countries.

Americans will soon be discarding about 130 million cell phones each year. That's about 65,000 tons of cell phones with substances such as arsenic, lead and zinc ending up in landfills.

Call phones may be dropped off at any Dickinson public school, ESP Computers, SRB Cellular, Kohler Communications, Cellular One and the Best Friends office.



MDU manager Rick Backes, right, dropped off a box of nearly 30 cell phones to Jill Gregoire, AmeriCorps member,, who is in charge of the project.

Newsletter funded by Westwind Consulting Center & Michael Parke, CPA,



## **Junior Friend Profile: *Energetic boy seeks friend***

A first grade boy needs your help to find male companionship.

This Dickinson youngster is very active and sports oriented.

Danny enjoys coloring, reading books, ice skating, bowling, and any outdoor activities.

His mother says he's

generally a happy child but has no male role model in his life. He is

looking for a younger energetic male, age 18-35, who can spend quality time one night a week or on the weekends.

He really enjoys male companionship and can offer his lively personality and excellent social

skills to someone willing to provide friendship.

Could you be that special person who brings a male perspective to Danny's life?

Call the Best Friends Mentoring Program today to find out how you can help a child: 483-8615 or toll free 1-877-877-8685.

**'If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it . . .'**

**-Rachel Carson,  
Writer &  
Environmentalist**

## **Saluting Our Volunteers: *Giving the gift of your time!***

During 2004, more than ?? volunteers with the Best Friends Mentoring Program tutored and mentored our youth, served the community by working at special events and helped at activities and special events.

As a group, our volunteers logged XX hours, or an average of XX hours per person. Their time represented

the equivalent of \$XX in donations!

Without our volunteers, we would not be able to serve the youth of our community. Our volunteers give of their time to attend training sessions, to help plan and carry out special events, and to help make our community's future better by being positive

role models. Our youth are our community's future leaders; investing time in them now will pay dividends of a lifetime.

The Best Friends Mentoring Program extends its heartfelt gratitude and thanks to our volunteers;

**YOU make a difference!**

**Thank You!**  
**Thank You!**

## **Contributors' Corner**

### **Easter Carnival**

A-1 Welding  
Coca-Cola Bottling Co.  
Wells Fargo Bank  
Pepsi Cola  
Prairie Hills Mall  
White Drug

*Dickinson Lion's Club*

*Have you considered a bequest to the Best Friends Program?*

## Equipment ready for check-out.

Spring is on its way and it's time to get outside and get active.

The Best Friends Mentoring Program has sports equipment for check-out by Senior Friends who are meeting with their Junior Friend.

A rotating tee gives kids great practice before it's time for the Parks & Recreation Department's

summer baseball program. We also have a variety of balls, including soccer, baseball, softball, football — and outdoor games such as bocce ball, croquet and badminton.



### Outstanding Mentors:

#### **Bobbi & Leif named 'Mentors of the Quarter'**

Looking for experience working with children and with a sincere desire to



**Bobbi**

help, Bobbi Gannaway joined the Best Friends Mentoring Program in December 2003. She became a school mentor in February 2004, then wanted to do more. She

joined the AmeriCorps program in September, tutoring two girls in reading. She also became a community mentor. She tirelessly volunteers her time with many of the Best Friends' projects.

Leif Henning enthusiastically volunteered as a mentor when he was a senior at Dickinson High School. Being matched with the same boy for a

year, he spends about 4 hours each month with his Junior Friend. He's a Dickinson State University student who plays drums and enjoys athletics, video games, concerts and eating out with his Junior Friend.



**Leif**

**'If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.'**

**-Booker T.**

**Washington,**

**American Educator**

### **Match count: 141** matched Junior Friends sets record

During the first quarter of 2005, the Best Friends Mentoring Program counted a record number of youth matched with a positive and caring mentor: 140 children were matched one-to-one or in small groups with 105 trained caring mentors in the program. That's 80 more children than last year and a

great success story.

Nearly half of those matches occurred in the school mentoring program, where mentors acted as friends, academic tutors and homework helpers.

Many of these mentors are high school juniors and seniors, and students at Dickinson State University.

The waiting list contin-

ues to grow and includes:

- 7 boys & 2 girls in the community program.
- 6 boys & 6 girls in the school program.

Can you give the gift of your time to a child in southwest North Dakota?

Mentors commit to four to six hours per month and receive training and support.

#### **Match Barometer**

**March 2005: 140**

**March 2002: 76**



**'Making a positive difference in children and families, one at a time.'**

**BEST FRIENDS  
MENTORING PROGRAM**

P.O. Box 542  
135 W. Villard St.  
Dickinson, ND 58602-0542

Phone: 701-483-8615  
Fax: 701-225-6225  
Email: friends@ndsupernet.com

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.westernwellness.org](http://www.westernwellness.org)

**Inside:  
Recycling Update,  
Outstanding Mentors!**

*Address correction  
requested*

**Saluting The Best Volunteers: YOU make a difference!**



Western Wellness Foundation, Inc./Best Friends Mentoring Program is a United Way agency.



**Upcoming Activities & Events:**

- **May 6, noon**—**Family Fun Day** planning committee meeting.
- **May 7, 8 a.m.**—Be a prairie botanist performing a plant survey, Little Missouri National Grasslands. Meet at Belfield Super Pumper at 8 a.m. Info: U.S. Forest Service 225-5151.
- **May 17** — **Western Wellness Foundation** board of directors meeting.
- **May 21, 10 a.m.**— Armed Forces Day Parade, downtown Dickinson, program following at the Dickinson State University outdoor pavilion.
- **May 21, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.**—**Best Friends Mentoring Program bowling party** at the Paragon Bowl. Free to Senior Friends, Junior Friends, program supporters and family members.
- **May 21, 10 a.m.**—Wildflower hike along the Maah Daah Hey trail. Info: U.S. Forest Service at 225-5151 or log on to [www.fs.fed.us/rl/dakotaprairie](http://www.fs.fed.us/rl/dakotaprairie).
- **June 3** — ND Studebaker Car Show, Prairie Hills Mall.
- **June 11, 9 a.m.**—Mountain biking on the Maah Daah Hey Trail. Info: U.S. Forest Service at 225-5115 or log on to [www.fs.fed.us/rl/dakotaprairie](http://www.fs.fed.us/rl/dakotaprairie)
- **June 25, 8 a.m.** — Badlands Hiking. Info: U.S. Forest Service at 225-5115.
- **July 2, noon-7 p.m.** — **Best Friends Family Fun Day, Hot Car Show & Battle of the Bands** at Jaycee Park. Family Fun Day is the Best Friends Program's main fundraising activity and includes kids carnival games, a dunk tank, horse rides, petting zoo, giant slide, bouncer, jumper castle and food concessions, noon - 4 p.m.; Hot Car Show, noon-6 pm; Battle of the Bands, 4-7 pm, register at [www.dickinsonbands.com](http://www.dickinsonbands.com). Call the office at 483-8615 or toll free at 877-877-8685 to find out how you can help or for more information.
- **July 9, 9 a.m.**— Ethno-Botany hiking adventure at Little Missouri National Grasslands. Info: U.S. Forest Service, 225-5151 or log on to [www.fs.fed.us/rl/dakotaprairie](http://www.fs.fed.us/rl/dakotaprairie).
- **July 16, 8 a.m.**— "Fire in the Pines" hiking adventure. Info: U.S. Forest Service. 483-8615.
- **Sept. 16, 5-8 p.m.** — **FREE Family Fair**, Dickinson Recreation Center. Kids activities, door prizes, raffle and a low-cost meal; prizes for all kids. Information: 483-8615 or 456-0007.



**Best Friends  
Mentoring Program**