



## President's Message

~ Ginger Loesch

When we ask our members what made them join FOFC or what their favorite thing is to participate in with FOFC, there is resounding agreement: SUGAR PLUM. I think Sugar Plum is so special because it brings together the real spirit of Christmas giving. It continues to warm my heart each year as I sit at the tree and I see families coming to the tree together to pick out their tags. The parents use this as a learning opportunity to teach their children that Christmas isn't about getting, it's about giving. So many people want to help to make a difference with foster children, but they don't know how. Sugar Plum provides the opportunity to make a difference, one tag at a time. Joining FOFC provides more opportunities to give. If someone signs up at the Tree to receive a newsletter, they will see how FOFC is making a difference in foster children and emancipated youths' lives every month of the year. So just in case you are feeling a little bit like a Scrooge, sign up to sit a shift at the tree. You will get to enjoy the real spirit of the holiday season. Not a sitter? More of a doer? Sign up for 1 (or more) shifts at the sorting room. I taught my children about volunteering by having them help me carry/load/unload toys at the closing shift. Have a pick up truck? How about picking up the gifts from one of our many outside groups? Can you see how you don't need to do it all at the holidays, just pick one thing. Each thing you do makes a difference to the foster child and to your enjoyment of the season. See the Sugar Plum article for names and phone numbers in order to volunteer.

Finally, I give my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the Sugar Plum Committee "Elfs" for all their hard work and dedication.

May the joys of Christmas fill your heart this holiday season and throughout the New Year.



Ginger Loesch  
President  
Friends of Foster Children  
[president@fofcsgv.org](mailto:president@fofcsgv.org)



# Sugar Plum is Just Around the Corner !

~ Cynthia Juvinall

It's my 40th year, now realizing more than half my life I have been with FOFC.

Ed (my late husband) discovered the Sugar Plum Trees while we were in the mall, and B.J. Weckerle was staffing the table. The next day it was going to close, so we just took notes on unfilled tag items, went to a swap meet early and came back with a lot of black sports watches and I don't recall what else. Anyway, that was Christmas 1982, we joined by 1983, the start of 4 decades, even before we married, became foster parents, then adopted.

My Nana was very active in her community, especially women's club, and my mother and aunt volunteered, and they all set examples of service. Wasn't long before I was conscripted onto the Board, and by 1988 served 1 year as President.

Over 4 decades there was lots of Sugar Plum involvement; also marched with our banner in Sierra Madre 4th of July parades, followed by BBQ's with some group home residents; attended carnivals at Sycamores, chaired a Walk-a-Thon at Arcadia High, Ed and I worked a weekend-long rummage sales at Hope Fellowship on San Gabriel, plus other yard sales. Then there were MASH - themed and casino night fundraisers at the Arcadia Armory, besides luncheons, Sees Candy sales, etc. Assisted on Layette, Pixie and Tiger, among other functions that no longer exist. Persuaded a lot of friends and co-workers to support and participate.

My longest running jobs were Board Secretary, Sugar Plum Closing Coordinator, and currently, Scholarship Co-Chair, each for many years (some overlapping). Served on committees for strategic planning, fundraising, assembled prize baskets, solicited donations, decorated, set up, cleaned up, organized Scholarship events, gave my all, and occasionally cried. It has been a privilege to know so many good-hearted, generous individuals along this journey. The success of students we have been able to assist, and come to know, has been most gratifying.

Sincerest best wishes to all our donors and members (current and past): that our efforts make a difference.



*My sister Alaine at the Sugar Plum Tree this year.*



# Scholarship/Emancipation Committee

~ Phyllis Nuszer

After Thanksgiving, the FOFC Scholarship Committee gathered to address, sign and send out greeting cards to our students, and supporters. For some of our students, it might be the only holiday card they receive. Members also submit nominations for the annual Ulbrich award, to recognize highly achieving students, named in honor of Peggy and John Ulbrich, in memory of their son.

We extend our sincerest gratitude to the Renken family, for their on-going support in memory of their, and our, beloved Joan, who mentored us by her gracious example.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge all the members for their selfless time and energy, year after year, to help support students on their academic journey. Currently, our committee is made up of Steve, Celeste, Daphne, Debbie, Elaine, Heather, Jim, Julie, Mary, Pam, Phyllis, Susan and Bill, and myself, who each mentor from 1 to 4 students. Steve is co-chairman, as well as our historian, procedural and financial whiz; Elaine is chair for PCC program, Debbie has headed up our annual summer student event for years, and Phyllis contributes the newsletter. I am currently concluding my 40th year with FOFC, and am approaching a decade on Scholarship; however Mary, Jim, and Steve all exceed my committee tenure. Everyone works hard, this is a dedicated, compassionate group that I'm happily fortunate to be a part of. Next year will be upon us very quickly, when new applicants, and renewing ones, will be reviewed for the 2024/25 academic term.

For more information about the committee, contact [scholarships@fofcsgv.org](mailto:scholarships@fofcsgv.org)

Cynthia Juvinall, co-chair

Steve Wittmer, co-chair

PCC program: Elaine Palmer at [palmerelaine7@gmail.com](mailto:palmerelaine7@gmail.com)

Newsletter: Phyllis Nuszer



## Ink Cartridges-A Great Way to Support FOFC

One of the key components of our School Supply project success is continued funding that we receive from recycling ink cartridges. After a short break that both Office Depot and Staples took at the beginning of COVID on accepting cartridges for recycling, both have started back up their programs. Keep saving those ink/toner cartridges. You can drop them off to Kathy Stokes or Cynthia Juvinall. You can also take them directly to Staples for recycling using Kathy's cell phone number 626-993-5629 for up to 20 cartridges per month. When recycling them directly at Staples, please choose the option to have the receipt that cartridges emailed so that we can track when we reach our monthly limit. Thank you to everyone who continues to fund school supplies through this program.

# Fill the Envelope

~ Ginger Loesch

So many of you take time at the end of the year to think about the good things in your life; your home, your job, your health, the people in your life and how their love and support has encouraged you. Please take a moment to think about paying it forward by supporting FOFC. Your donation has the ability to enrich and enhance the lives of foster children and emancipated youth.

We have made it easy for you – There are so many ways to give. Place a check in the mail or visit our website <https://www.fofcsgv.org/donate>.

These donations provide two opportunities to give. First, the children are out of school and Sugar Plum donations are used to provide special holiday activities during this time. Second, donations to the General Fund provides funding for activities all year long, like Easter baskets, summer camping trips or setting up a first apartment. We hope that your giving brings you joy, peace and love.



## Save the Date - August 18, 2024

~ Debbie Fairman & Debi Mistretta

Since the fund raiser luncheon that was scheduled for September 24th, 2023 had to be postponed and we had all the table decorations and table cloths for a fall luncheon we have decided to make the luncheon a fall luncheon again in 2024. The new date for the luncheon will be Sunday, August 18, 2024 at 1:30 PM. It will be held at the Woman's Club in Temple City. Please save this date and come with friends and family to hear from our President about the exciting things we did last year and are doing in the upcoming year.

Learn about the Christmas Sugar Plum event. More information to come. It seems like so far away but the date will come up before you know it. We are looking for baskets and/or items to put into baskets for the raffle. If you have either of these items please contact either Debi Mistretta at (562) 209-7195 or Debbie Fairman at (626) 602-4769 to arrange delivery or pick up of items you would like to donate. Hope to see you all at the luncheon.



## **Kudos Korner**

Sugar Plum Committee,  
FOFC Members  
& Volunteers who  
participated in the  
2023 Sugar Plum Tree

## **Looking for More Ways to Support Friends of Foster Children?**

- Designate Friends of Foster Children in your estate plan or will.
- Contact Treasurer Kathy Stokes at [Treasurer@fofcsgv.org](mailto:Treasurer@fofcsgv.org) or Director Sherrill Levitt at [Contact@fofcsgv.org](mailto:Contact@fofcsgv.org).

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Friends of Foster Children is a  
non-profit, all volunteer  
organization founded in 1976  
to enhance the quality of life  
for abused, abandoned, and  
neglected children in the San  
Gabriel Valley.

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