

Good, Better, Best

Avoiding Parent Burn Out and Overscheduled Kids

As parents we want what’s best for our children. Thus, we seek to involve them in a variety of wonderful opportunities. A partial list of activities in the Carbon Valley area includes youth soccer, football, basketball, volleyball, swimming, gymnastics, dance, art, and the list goes on. A typical week-end may find mom and dad frantically running back and forth from one activity to another to make sure their child (or children) doesn’t miss out. And this list does not include weekend activities sponsored by the local school, scout program, 4 H Club, or private lessons. Everyone of these activities, by itself, is a wonderful opportunity for growth and learning sportsmanship and interaction. But at what cost?

A senior citizen friend of mine offered some sage counsel. He was raised on a farm and rarely was able to go into town. If his family wanted to purchase something they would pull out the trusty old Sears and Roebuck Catalog .1 This important tool was their shopping mall and internet.

He noticed that each item was categorized into three columns: Good, Better, Best. Each category carried its own price, “good” being less expensive than “better,” and “better” being less expensive than “best.” Of course, the quality of each item corresponded to the advertised cost.

My friend soon learned that “good” was not always the “best” way to go. A good pair of shoes may cost less than a better pair, but they didn’t last as long and were not as comfortable.

Maybe in an effort to control the frantic life parents lead in trying to provide many “good” opportunities for their children, it is time to take stock of the pressure that both parents and children are under just to keep pace. Maybe it is time to separate out the “good,” from the “better,” from the “best.” This is called “prioritizing.”

Research psychologists have warned against what they call “the overscheduling of children.” Children today are far busier and families spend less time together than in previous generations. The data show that structured sports time has doubled, but children’s free time has declined by 12 hours per week. And unstructured outdoor activities have fallen by 50.2

When asked if the “entire family usually eats dinner together” family researchers find that this important indicator of family togetherness has declined by 33 percent. This finding is important as it is one of the strongest predictors of a child’s academic achievement and psychological adjustment. 3 Family mealtimes have also been shown to be a strong defense against children’s smoking, drinking, or using drugs.” Interestingly, the hit television program Blue Bloods always ends with this intergenerational Irish American family sitting down to family dinner together. And they all participate in a vigorous exchange of ideas and experiences. For once Hollywood gets it right!

Finally, I am reminded of the family that saved up its money for a fabulous summer vacation. They mapped out visits to many historical sites in the nation. When the multi-week vacation ended, they asked their 10 year old son what he liked best? He said: “I liked the time dad and I laid on the lawn and discussed the stars in the sky.” Interestingly, that experience happened at home before they even went on the trip. And it didn’t cost a cent!

Maybe what our kids want most is to slow down and leave time for some one on one with their parents. I have never known a retiree who lamented, “I wish I had spent more time at the office.”

- 1 Sears, Roebuck and Co. catalog, Fall and Winter, 1944-45
- 2 Jared R. Anderson and William J. Doherty, “Democratic Community Initiatives: The Case of Overscheduled Children,” Family Relations, vol. 54 (Dec. 2005): 655
- 3 Anderson and Doherty, Family Relations, 54:655
- 4 Nancy Gibbs, “The Magic of the Family Meal,” Time, June 12, 2006, 51-52
- 5 Blue Bloods, a Television Series, CBS
- Howard M. Hamilton, PhD, MFT (Marriage, Family Therapist), is a retired Superintendent of Schools from Southern California. He holds a Bachelor’s Degree from Brigham Young University in Spanish and Psychology. His Master’s Degree is also from BYU in Public Administration. His PhD is from the University of Southern California. For eight years he directed a counseling firm specializing in marital issues and dysfunctional families. He is available for workshops on Parenting Skills and 12 Steps to Greater Success in School. His workshops are complimentary but require a guaranteed number of participants. He can be reached at: 720-340-9882.

Super Tutor+Miracle Work=Marian Hobbs

By Jan Sciacca

If you or your student has been, or is currently struggling with a subject/subjects and it appears unlikely for you, him or her to maintain or improve without specific intervention, it’s time to call Learning Unlimited Tutoring.

Marian Hobbs, an area resident and owner of Learning Unlimited Tutoring, has been tutoring for 30+ years in Carbon Valley and the I-25 Corridor. She works with ages pre-K through adult.

Students in Grades 1-3 have a special place in Marian’s heart. She says, “Reading is a crucial skill for understanding and producing cohesive writing and communication. Without good reading skills, comprehension and writing skills can suffer in the ensuing grades.”

Sam Stott adds sixteen years of experience as an educator to the repertoire at Learning Unlimited Tutoring. He has a B. S. in Geology and Geophysics from Yale University and is the go-to man for tutoring 6-12 grade Math and Science, as well as tutoring for ACT and SAT preparation.

In addition to tutoring, Marian has a myriad of interests. She makes repurposed dog coats from cast-off human wool sweaters. She raises and rides APHA horses. She enjoys collecting vintage classic children’s books and Aesop Fables and likes collecting notable quotes about reading and learning. She also likes sewing, gardening and traveling.

Marian has two experiences that are especially memorable to her:

She was working with a 4th grader who was having a challenging time with subtraction, and when Marian showed him how to check his answer to confirm it was correct, he looked at her and said, “You have just made my life easier.”

In another instance, Marian had recommended a Newbury Award winning title for a 5th grader to read and use for a book report. When he was writing his book report, he turned to Marian and said he loved the story, it was the best book he had ever read and he could hardly wait to read the sequel.

It’s rewarding for Marian, parents and students to see the progress made from a student’s lack of understanding and confidence to success and an enthusiasm for learning and knowledge.



Morgan” and Fiona, the Jack Russell dog that is LUT’s therapy dog

Testimonies from students and parents alike speak of success and hope. Just a few are:

- “You helped me with my handwriting. It got my writing from a D to an A. It helped me in school a lot.” Peyton, 4th grader
- “Marian is referred to around our house, as Super Tutor.” Laura, parent
- “We came to Marian Hobbs with our son who had been asked to leave three elementary schools. He was deemed a distraction to other kids and he couldn’t turn the corner academically his confidence was broken and he felt as though he could do nothing right. Mrs. Hobbs worked with him once a week for several months and, now, he is excelling in school both socially and academically. He loves school and he receives achievement awards in a weekly basis. Mrs. Hobbs is nothing less than a miracle worker. She is the best thing that happened to our son and we are forever in her debt.” Todd, dad

Marian shares, “So many students have untapped potential; it is what is done with that potential that will shape their future.” Learning Unlimited Tutoring is available by appointment Monday – Thursday. Early enrollment, targeting two-week summer sessions will be starting soon. Contact information is 303.550.5280, learningunlimitedco.com and marian@learningunlimitedco.com.

What a Great Night!

Article & Photos by Romaine Lucero-Lowe

The Frederick High School Booster Club’s Super Saturday Casino Night was a huge hit. The big event was held at the Carbon Valley Recreation Center On Saturday February 4th. The decorated gym was packed with Casino Style Gaming Tables, a Silent Auction, A Buffet Table, a Cash bar, and a DJ.

The evening was full of fun, DJ Mass (of Longmont) kept the music going for the 100+ attendees who enjoyed a food buffet which included appetizers like - parmesan cheese straws, zucchini tomato bites, turkey and bacon pin wheels, and delicate garlic bruschetta on toasted french bread, all donated from Scorching Brick Catering. Georgia Boys BBQ donated a spread of Pulled Pork StreetTacos and Sliders. The Buffet also include fresh fruit, cheese and homemade desserts. The fabulous bartenders kept everybody hydrated thanks to the generosity of Dacono Liquors and Cimarron Liquors of Firestone.

For a donation of \$50 the nights guests enjoyed all the amenities and received \$500 in gaming chips to play with on the Casino Style tables. There were professional dealers for craps, black jack poker and roulette. At the end of the night prizes were given out, chip holders were given tickets for the raffle. The big winner took home a 49” Ultra HD TV, Four lucky people went home with a \$500 gift certificate to Longmont Ford for Service and Maintenance, and thanks to Connections Training and Staffing another winner took home the latest Xbox 1 gaming system. And the local community stepped up with gift certificates and cards galore for the Balloon Pop.

The silent auction was lined up with baskets ranging from cooking supplies, to wine baskets. A huge selection with over 27 baskets all from the generosity of the wonderful parents here at FHS! Three seriously lucky families get front row reserved seating and parking at Graduation!



The evening was a huge success and we could not have done it with out the support of our sponsors: Mark Young Construction, Carbon Valley Park and Rec District, Post Net of Longmont, Scorching Brick Catering, Georgia Boys, Connections Training and Staffing, Longmont Ford, Dacono Liquors, Cimarron Liquors, King Soopers, Nail Care First, Home



Depot, Santiagos, Pepper’s Fireside Grill, Chic Fil A, Silver Print Photography, PMJ Clasic Creations,Bath and Body Works, Monty Nuss Photography, The Denver Broncos, Laura Faulkner with Norwex, and Christine Entrekin with LuLaRoe.

The FHS Booster Club’s Super Saturday Casino Night is an annual event



held on the evening before the Super Bowl. If you missed it... don’t let it happen again, mark your calendars for next year! Early bird ticket sales will start in November.

