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Heart Gallery of Oregon comes to Medford

Exhibit focuses on children waiting for forever families

Medford - The Heart Gallery of Oregon is an exhibit featuring professional photographs of Oregon children in the state's custody who are waiting for families.

The gallery will be on display at the Rogue Valley Mall from Oct. 13 to Nov. 7. The public is invited to attend an opening event for the exhibit on Monday, Oct. 13, from 6 to 7 p.m. on the lower level in front of Kohls.

Pam Bergreen, Supervisor of the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) child welfare program in Medford, will discuss the vital mission of finding loving, safe homes for children in the state's care. Parents who have adopted children will share personal stories of how their lives have been touched by adoption. Information about adoption and foster care also will be available. Refreshments will be served.

"Every child needs and deserves a permanent and loving family," said Deborah Collins, an adoptions certifier for DHS in Jackson County and co-founder of the Heart Gallery. "We hope that the Heart Gallery display will help find those families. It's based on the simple fact that a picture is worth a thousand words."

The Heart Gallery of Oregon has successfully raised awareness of the need for permanent and foster families. Inquiries on foster care and adoption opportunities increase significantly following Heart Gallery exhibits around the state. After the first year of Heart Gallery displays in Oregon, nearly three-fourths of the children featured in the exhibit were either placed in permanent homes or paired up with prospective families.

Dozens of professional photographers donated their time and talent to the Heart Gallery Project. The Medford exhibit is supported and sponsored by the Rogue Valley Mall, Options for Southern Oregon, Starbucks Coffee, The Cookie Connection, and community volunteers.

The gallery can also be viewed online at www.heartgalleryoregon.org. For more information, call Deborah Collins at 541-864-8710.

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