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Fergus Falls, Minnesota

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

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[Opinion](#)  
[Lifestyles](#)  
[Food](#)  
[Discussion Board](#) [Deaths](#)  
[Classifieds](#)  
[Letters to Editor](#)  
[2002 Resorter](#)  
[2003 Profile Ads](#)

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[Fergus Fun](#)  
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[Forms for](#)  
[Announcements](#)  
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[USA Weekend](#)  
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## Bernard is a contributor to all her communities

By Forrest Adams

Cristi Bernard is a volunteer from Fergus Falls who has spent much of her young life assisting the communities in which she lives. She dreams of one day working as a professional interpreter and translator and said community involvement is a catalyst in reaching her goals.

"Along with realizing one's dreams, being active in the community is very important," she said.

True to her word, this Winona State University Spanish major has been involved in both Fergus Falls, her hometown, and Winona, her college town. In Fergus Falls, she has volunteered with disabled children, taught Sunday school, provided nursery care and lead a group of confirmation students at First Lutheran Church. In Winona, she has provided babysitting services for preschool-aged children, while the children's parents attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

"The objective was to bring books (in English and their native languages), crayons and other educational tools to help them realize that learning is fun," she said.

Bernard said she plans to continue volunteering when she begins an educational adventure at the University of Granada, Spain on May 30, she said.

"I do hope to get involved in the community while I'm in Spain," she said. "After I get settled, I will see what my options are."

In Spain, she will study the Spanish language intensively for three months, while living with a host family.

Bernard is seeking community assistance to help fund approximately \$2,000 of uncovered expenses of her trip and can be reached at cabernar1829@webmail.winona.edu, 218-736-3960 or 507-313-3514.

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