

Capturing the Moment

Since the third grade, Casey foster youth Luke D. has been fascinated by scenes that some of us might overlook. A sailboat bobbing on the water, a deer standing still, a rainbow in the horizon – they're all scenes that Luke says were so beautiful he needed to share them with other people.

"Capturing an image is nice ... not everyone can be in one place at one time and some of these images are too good to be true that you have to capture them and share them with other people. Like the sailboat scene, it seemed special to me because not everyone could see it and I wanted to share it," says the 15-year-old from New Hampshire.

"When I was around 9, I starting taking pictures with a little point and shoot camera," he says. Luke's first exposure to photography occurred when he went whale watching on a school field trip. The pictures, he says, were never developed because he switched foster families and forgot about them. "But I kept wondering what they would have looked like."

For several years, Luke has been taking photographs, mostly landscape shots. Then, two years ago, Casey Family Services helped Luke purchase a more professional camera, a Nikon 65. He seized the opportunity to capture images and make a business for himself.

He named his business Highland Press, created a brochure and catalog containing different pictures, and designed selections of greeting cards that contain original photographs as the opening cover. The photographs are available in various sizes and range between \$3 and \$40. But the greeting cards seem to be his hottest sellers, he says.

While Luke's friends primarily have been helping him promote his business, he now has local metaphysical shops and bookstores selling his photography on consignment. And he's hoping to expand his skills into action photography by getting involved in shooting high school sporting events.

"I'd never seen the color purple in a rainbow. But when I looked at the picture, I could see all these colors that I hadn't in that quick moment."

Luke also enjoys a unique hobby – beekeeping. He is president of his school's beekeeping club and tends beehives in his family's backyard and sells the honey. Last year was a tough bee season, with only about 20 lbs. of honey being produced, he says. But this spring he hopes his hives will generate as much as 1,200 lbs.

For more information on how to order a catalog or set of photographs, email Peter Proulx at pproulx@caseyfamilyservices.org.