

Sunbeam marking 25th year

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FAIRMONT — Sunbeam Child Care Center is marking its 25th anniversary with an open house from 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 9, at 1654 Mary Lou Retton Drive.

Family of Sunbeamers are invited to drop in to hear the current class of children sing, tour the multi-roomed facility and meet the teachers.

Former 'beamers are also welcome for a special treat.

"We're going to have old photo albums so they can see what they looked like and remember 'the times when ...,'" said Sunbeam owner/director Helen Post-Brown.

She opened Sunbeam Nursery School 25 years ago in a room off her kitchen with a roster of 12 children. As her own family grew, the center expanded also. Stacey, her oldest of four children, named the center from a favorite song: "Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam."

"We moved in (the present location) the day Mary Lou Retton won the Olympics," Post-Brown remembered. "The kids were so excited. ABC, CBS and NBC news were in our driveway."

Slowly the center grew to its present size, with about 100 families and up to 95 children (ages 3 months to 12 years) attending on a regular basis.

In 1991 it became a fully licensed child care center and was renamed Sunbeam Child Care Center.

In 1998, it was nationally accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, a recognition given to only 7 percent of early childhood programs nationwide, and was reaccredited in 2001.

In 2000, Sunbeam was chosen as one of 10 Exemplary Early Care and Education programs in West Virginia by the Governor's Cabinet on Children & Families for being "over and

