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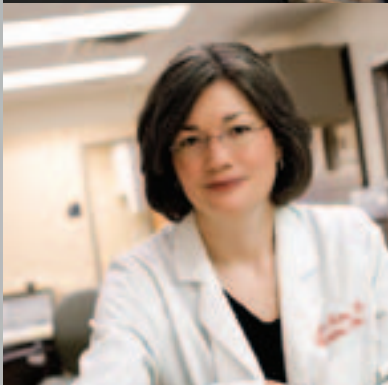
A PUBLICATION OF THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF RALEIGH | MARCH 2011

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The Junior League of Raleigh is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.

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BURNIE BATCHELOR STUDIO

president's message

Bird's Eye View

"I am filled with a sense of admiration and humility for all that our members — Provisionals, Actives and Sustainers — do to effect positive change around us."

Transforming our community. It's a brief phrase with a big meaning. This year I've enjoyed a bird's eye view of this transformation. Through actions large and small, the women who are the Junior League of Raleigh are using their talents to incrementally change the lives of individuals and positively transform our community as a whole. And, hopefully along the way the League is giving you opportunities to transform as well.

It's been an incredible year thus far, and I am looking forward to finishing even stronger than we started. As you read through this spring's magazine, I think you'll be both inspired and touched by the transformations taking place. From a community grant that is literally saving lives to a new SAFEchild Advocacy Center that is helping to transform families, our membership is a part of awe-inspiring work. You'll also read about a member who transformed her life by evolving her volunteer experience into a new nonprofit career.

I am filled with a sense of admiration and humility for all that our members — Provisionals, Actives and Sustainers — do to effect positive change around us. Bringing your intellectual and emotional resources to find shared solutions with community agencies or team members — it's a truly noble gift you give to each other and our community.

Thank you all for the sacrifices you make to ensure successful events and volunteer experiences ... as well as the leadership you so generously give which has built the League's confidence to tackle any challenges that come our way.

Now, let's finish strong!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



BURNIE BATCHELOR STUDIO

Community Placements at Work

Improving lives in Wake County

By Christy Knight, Community Vice President

Standing at more than 200 members strong, the League's community placements are rising up to meet the needs of the underserved in Wake County. These 13 community teams are led by passionate team captains who work with volunteers to improve the lives of children and adults who honorably struggle with some of life's most fundamental issues.

AVENTWEST CHILDREN'S MENTORING:

Ginny Zuleba and Julie Tew organized a League member donation book drive to solicit 30 copies of Dr. Seuss' "Cat in the Hat" and Maurice Sendak's "Where the Wild Things Are." A hearty "thank you" to all those who helped the team fulfill this goal! The books were given to the children of AWCM as part of a new reading program. The program was just one part of the team's weekly fun and educational enrichment activities with the children served by the AventWest community.

BACKPACK BUDDIES: Andrea Fox and Alicia Morris are leading our newest community placement, which was voted on and approved during the September General Membership Meeting. They are working to secure grant funding for the Backpack Buddies program. Everyone is eager to join this freshman team to make sure children on free or reduced lunch programs have backpacks filled with wholesome meals to enjoy each weekend.

BRENTWOOD BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB:

Heather Beiza and Adrienne Bohannon are leading volunteers in tutoring and mentoring elementary and middle school children. Through assistance with homework and educational projects throughout the year, the volunteers are teaching new skills and helping boost the children's confidence by tackling educational challenges. By way of the generosity and donations from League members, Heather and Adrienne gathered school supplies for the children to ensure they are prepared for their school assignments.

CHORUS: Holly Laird and Debbie Pappas are leading Sustainers and Actives for chorus rehearsals at the Center for Community Leadership. This team opened up A Shopping SPREE! with a beautiful vocal performance. During the holiday season they also performed every Wednesday at local community senior centers, assisted living communities, League events and clubs in Wake County. Throughout the year their beautiful voices bring songs of joy and cheer to others.

COMMUNITY CONNECT CAPTAIN:

Sondra Rivers-Kobler, along with her Assistant Captain Anna Wilson and their group of volunteers, are organizing five workshops for our community nonprofits and agency partners. The workshops

are a blend of expert speakers providing individual and panel discussions on topics designed to meet the skills sets needed for nonprofits to be successful and sustainable. Look for a new training session May 13 from 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

COMMUNITY FUNDING: Whitney von Haam and the Funding team organized the Legacy Awards for this League year. This year's recipients – Hospice of Wake County, Haven House and Inter-Faith Food Shuttle – were given a monetary award of \$5,000 along with a plaque at the November General Membership Meeting. Additionally, Whitney and her team partnered with Community Connect for the November panel workshop on grant writing.

GIRLS ON THE RUN: Paige Coltrera and Juliane Kuminski and their team of volunteers are coaching a spirited group of young ladies ages 8 to 12 for the upcoming Spring 5k Fun Run in April. GOTR is a 12-week character development program designed to increase self-esteem, enhance running skills and lead young girls to a more confident sense of self. Our League coaches are enthusiastically leading young girls through a journey of self-improvement and accomplishment.

HELPING HORSE: Morgan Cates is a dedicated League team captain while also serving on the Helping Horse board

of directors. She leads a team of dedicated members who work with children diagnosed with a wide range of childhood developmental disabilities. Helping Horse is a therapeutic riding program that provides a recreational outlet for children whom such opportunities are not readily available.

HERITAGE PARK: Ashley McMillan and Kelsie Johnson, along with League volunteers, are serving as Study Buddies and Teen Career Club helpers – two new programs implemented this League year. These programs help meet the changing needs of the students at Heritage Park. From tutoring and exploration of careers to exposure to world travel and Holiday Spree, this group is providing children with opportunities that are usually limited or unavailable.

KIDS ON THE BLOCK: Led by Nina Argiry, volunteers of this group subscribe to the mantra “practice makes perfect.” This

placement is out and about giving performances to elementary school audiences throughout Wake County. Plus, two new puppets have joined the performances this year, sharing stories about Spina Bifida and bullying.

QUICK IMPACT: Mandy Howard and Leslie Rand-Pickett lead this unique placement that takes care of the community one project at a time. The League year has been filled with Quick Impact projects, including Bargain Box, Interfaith Food Shuttle, American Diabetes Association, SAFEchild, Raleigh Hall of Fame, InterAct, Walk for Hope, United Arts Council, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Capital City Clauses/Jingle Ball, *the Link*, Project Enlightenment, YWCA, Urban Ministries and Autism Society.

SAFECHILD: Kate Watson and Kelly Doggett display compassion and care when leading League members on this team to

volunteer with different SAFEchild programs. With SAFEchild’s vision of eliminating neglect and child abuse in Wake County, these volunteers help educate and teach parents nurturing skills to strengthen their families, provide modeling for positive reading environments and empower children to speak up to trusted adults if something is wrong in their lives.

STEPUP MINISTRY: Tracy Mitchell and Elizebeth Desmond are making sure the StepUP children have League co-partners for weekly organized programs. The League volunteers serve as role models, educators and speakers for the StepUP children. They share lessons on money management, stress, dressing to impress, nutrition, body image, self-esteem and more. These ladies have support the StepUP children and families because everyone deserves a role model willing to give them a second chance.

**JOIN A
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The Junior League of Raleigh helps link our outstanding volunteers to community agencies seeking board members. If you are interested in serving on a community board, submit the Community Board Questionnaire found in the Member Area of the JLR website.

QUESTIONS?
Contact Jenni Kinlaw (jennikinlaw@yahoo.com) or Andrea Fox (andreaoakley@yahoo.com).



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EXPLORATION THROUGH ART

Artspace teams with the Brentwood Boys & Girls Club to explore imagery, heritage and culture

By Rae Marie Czuhai, Artspace Development Director and Courtney Phillips, *the Link*

You've seen Artspace downtown, and now you'll see their work at one of the Junior League of Raleigh's long-standing community partners – The Brentwood Boys & Girls Club.

Georges Le Chevallier and Garrett Scales, both artists-in-residence at Artspace, are working with fourth through seventh graders at the Brentwood Boys & Girls Club to design a large-scale mural that will be a permanent feature at the Club. The creation of the mural is challenging the children to find and create imagery reflective of who they are as individuals and as a group. It is also giving them a medium to pay tribute to and enrich their connection to their Latino heritage.

"This partnership is taking the students' exposure to art to a whole new level," shared Junior League of Raleigh President Wendy Webster. "It is a fun, creative way for the kids to deepen their understanding of their culture and reflect back what it means to them. I think it is an experience they treasure for years to come."

Artspace's Le Chevallier and Scales are helping the young artists through this creative process and are enriching the students' understanding as they share from their personal and artistic experiences. Le Chevallier has a rich understanding of art history, including the Latin American mural painting tradition. Students are combining traditional techniques with

Scales' use of pop imagery and graffiti techniques along with three-dimensional components, photographic elements, collage, painting and stenciling.

"I really want to expand on the traditional ideas and expectations of a mural by making the work interactive to the viewers," explained Georges Le Chevallier. "By adding small doors to the mural the kids are learning original ways to create a challenging work of art, and the viewers will discover additional things about the art work and their creators by opening them."

The process of creating the mural is also a lesson on how to document and archive the evolution of a work of art. Students are capturing the progress

through video and photography, which will culminate in a documentary showing their journey.

The Brentwood Boys & Girls Club, which serves a primarily Hispanic neighborhood, was founded by the Junior League of Raleigh in 2006 and is under the leadership of Club Director Pepe Caudillo.

"We're honored that Artspace is working with our Club," shared Pepe. "We can quote studies that show what the arts do for our children, but you really 'get it' when you see it in action. To see the kids' faces light up as they have a new idea; it is just amazing."

The Brentwood Boys and Girls Club project is just one of several collaborative partnerships in which Artspace is involved. "Educating the public about art and making the creative process accessible is at the heart of Artspace's mission," commented Mary Poole, Executive Director for Artspace. "We believe that no child's creativity should be hindered or discouraged due to lack of access or high cost of arts education programming."

The project is making quite an impact with participants. "I was a little scared when they told me about the program because I did not know what to expect," shared Boys and Girls member, Cheribel Jiuz. "But, now I can see that being scared is part of the process and that there is always someone to support me. I love the Club and I love that Artspace and Junior League put this thing together for us."

With art accessibility as its guiding vision, Artspace brings free art education to underserved children in our community through these partnerships with organizations that directly serve economically challenged populations. Studies show that participation in visual art education allows children and youth to build self-confidence, develop higher-level thinking skills and problem-solving skills. Art has been shown to motivate reluctant readers, and to help students perform better in science, math and writing. According to Americans for the Arts, arts education can help troubled youth avoid destructive

behavior and may add to their overall academic achievement and school success.

"Our role is to break down boundaries that may prohibit someone from experiencing the creative process," explained Lia Newman, Programming

and Exhibitions Director at Artspace. "We make opportunities accessible and real by bringing free art programming to children where they live and play."

And, the results, well they speak for themselves.

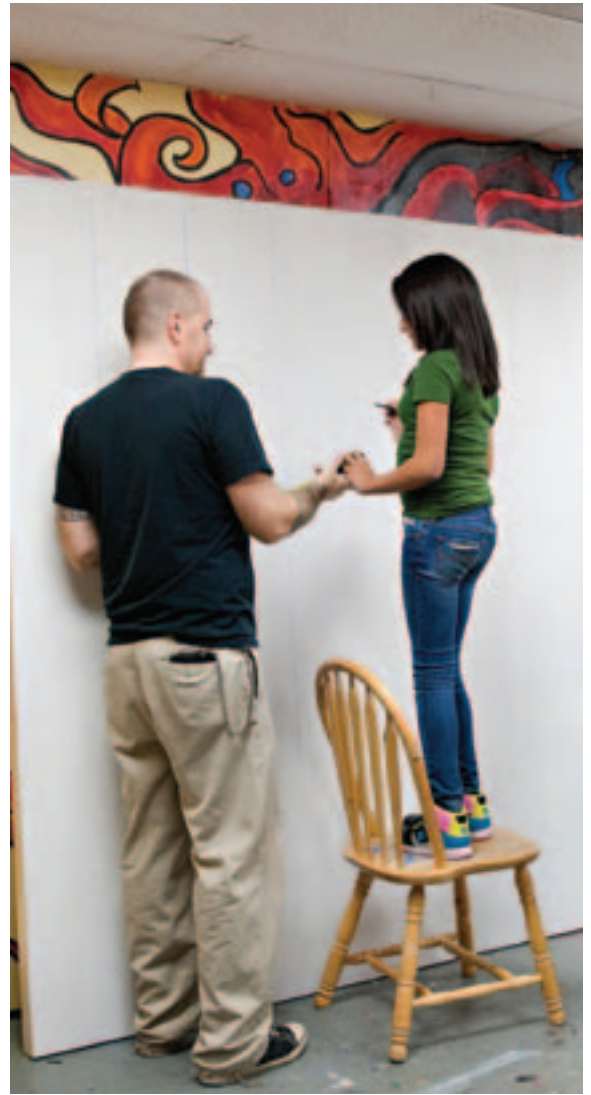
JLR and Brentwood Boys & Girls Club

The League provides a team of volunteers each year to the Brentwood Boys & Girls Club, where they teach students life skills, provide one-on-one homework help and assist with a variety of activities and projects in areas ranging from arts and crafts to technology. Those interested in supporting the program are invited to donate school and art supplies, activity books, healthy snacks and gently used gym equipment at League Headquarters. Contact Co-captains Heather Beiza at carysfinest@aol.com or Adrienne Bohannon at adrienne.bohannon@gmail.com with questions.





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One Student, One Journey

Heritage Park is changing
a community one child at a time

By Jessica Proctor, *the Link*



Ebony Christmas-Nathan is now an 11th grader at Cary Academy.



Ebony Christmas-Nathan receives her certificate during a B.U.G. Club ceremony at Heritage Park Community Learning Center.

Ebony Christmas-Nathan, a Cary Academy 11th grader and long-time Heritage Park participant, says working toward success in the Heritage Park Community Learning Center program takes an open ear and a little patience.

"If you want to excel, listen to the volunteers and counselors," Ebony advises. "Trust me, they really are there to help you. You will miss them when you get older and you're supposed to do things on your own."

Heritage Park, a tutoring and mentoring program she participated in throughout her schooling, bolstered her success as a student personally and academically. "Academically, it helped me strive to have good enough grades because of the B.U.G. [Bringing Up Grades] Club. Personally, I really connected with the adults, so I matured at a faster rate. And because I was so mature, it ultimately helped me academically as well."

The League has provided volunteer and financial support at Heritage Park since 2001, including the B.U.G. Club and other regular programs. Ebony has many fond memories of her time in the program, particularly the special volunteers who helped her. "My best memory of the program was when 'Mamma D', one of the best volunteers, had a contest every week to see who could remember the most empowering quotes that she gave us," Ebony shared. "She constantly added to it every week, and it was fun to see how many we could remember."

With many counselors giving individualized time to students, Ebony says LaToya Jeffery Montague, a site coordinator at the time, was her favorite. "I remember working with Ms. LaToya every day because I considered her to be one of my greatest mentors," Ebony reflected. "If there was something for me to learn, she would make sure to guide me in the right direction. To me, it felt like she took me under her wing, and she hasn't let go."

Ebony she still feels as if LaToya is part of her family. "I owe her a huge thank you for all her help" she exclaimed. "She has been a big part of my life, and hopefully will continue to take this journey with me as I finish high school and college."

As for college, Ebony hopes to study computer engineering with a minor in biology. She is striv-

ing to attend Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), Georgia Institute of Technology or N.C. State University.

As she describes in her poem "A Different Kind of Hero," Ebony shared that Heritage Park can help a student grow, as much as they want to grow. "It's about how badly the person wants to grow and expand academically," she explained. "If a young person, like myself, wants to do well in school, all it takes is talking to a counselor and they will do anything to

A Different Kind of Hero

By Ebony Christmas-Nathan (2005)

A hero to me is someone who cares
Someone who is always there.
Parents will play a big role in your life
Even when they're going through a crisis
My grandma lets me stay at her home
And in return I help her clean.
People that help me with homework are heroes
Always coming to help peers.
Everyone says I'm too smart
But all I did was work my way from the start
The center is where I go
To go and get my homework done.
No one ever says to go away
That's why I just stay, stay, and stay
They never let me leave until my work is finished
But sometimes I may slip out
People may always need guidance
But they always say you will find it
Volunteers don't even get paid
They always come to help out anyways
Everyone who helps out
Is what a hero is all about.

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Swimming with confidence

One community grant is growing confidence and skill for dozens of kids

By Lucy Austin, *the Link*

Countless children across Wake County are feeling the positive impact of the Junior League of Raleigh as the result of efforts led by the Community Funding Team. Among them are at-risk children in the new Swimming with Confidence program offered by Loaves and Fishes Ministry, a K-12 after-school program in Wake County.

Loaves and Fishes was one of eight local agencies that received Community Grants from the League in 2010. And already the grant is working its magic by helping dozens of children learn how to swim.

In 2008 the world opened its eyes to a problem rarely talked about: drowning among African-American children. Cullen Jones, a North Carolina State University graduate and an African-American swimmer who won a gold medal for the United States at the Beijing Olympic Games, took part in a public service campaign that highlighted the alarming problem. Minority children are drowning at a much higher rate than Caucasian children. According to the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly twice as many minority students cannot swim, and, in at least one age group, the fatal drowning rate of African-American children is three times that of Caucasian children.

"For their safety and well-being, it's critical that every child know how to swim," explained Susan Duncan, Director of Loaves and Fishes. "Our program is focused on filling the gaps in communities where there is a void of expertise to teach children this life-saving skill."

When Loaves and Fishes conducted a survey of its participants, less than 5 percent said they knew how to swim.

When Loaves and Fishes conducted a survey of its participants, who range from kindergarten to high school seniors, less than 5 percent of the participants said they knew how to swim. Recognizing the problem, but not having the monetary resources to insti-

tute a swimming program, Loaves and Fishes turned to the League, requesting a grant to begin the Swimming with Confidence program.

After learning they received the grant, the Loaves and Fishes staff literally leapt for joy. "We were jumping up and down," shared Dana Williams, Enrichment Director. "We really celebrated."

The grant has allowed Loaves and Fishes to begin the process of assessing students' skill levels in the water. Partnering with Triangle Aquatics Center, the students will receive lessons at one of three skill levels, depending on their prior experience. Many of these children have had no experience in the water, and one of the goals of the Swimming with Confidence program is to give them a positive experience and encourage empowerment through exposure.

Dana uses the example of squash. The first time she ate squash, it was not prepared well, and the terrible taste stuck with her. For years, she would not eat squash based on that first bad experience. Years later, when she tried



Carolyn Henry, 8, learns to swim at Longview Pool last summer thanks to a Junior League of Raleigh grant to Loaves and Fishes.

say is 'I'm sorry you've had a bad experience, but that's not living,'" Dana shared. "We want to expose them to what living really is."

In addition to the potentially life-saving benefits, swimming is a confidence-builder for children. At summer camps or in other public settings, children are often required to pass a swimming test. When the students visited

without the vest. The goal of the program is to provide this freedom to all of the children and make them proud of their own swimming ability.

Most of all, though, Susan shared, it's about the fun. "Swimming really puts smiles on their faces," she commented. "This is a tremendous gift from the Junior League of Raleigh – it's an opportunity the kids would not have experienced otherwise."

Catherine Rideout, Captain of the 2009-2010 Community Funding Team that voted to give the grant to Loaves and Fishes, explained it's exciting to see the program making a difference in the lives of at-risk youth. "I certainly feel we were good stewards of the League's money, and I am so proud of what our funding has made possible for these children," she said. "It's such a wonderful program and so rewarding to see our dollars at work!"

squash again, it was cooked properly, and she now enjoys it. Similarly, many of the children in Loaves and Fishes have had bad experiences with water or know of family members who have had frightening experiences. "What we try to

the pool with Loaves and Fishes, only one child was able to pass the test and swim without a life vest. As he swam around freely in the deep end, the other kids called out to him, suggesting things he might try, making him feel proud to be able to swim

GIRLS NIGHT OUT

Benefiting the Annual Fund

Scout and Molly's

Thursday, April 14 • 6pm - 8pm

*Enjoy light food and beverage while you shop,
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the evening's sales at
Cantina 18 and Scout and
Molly's will be donated
to the League's
Annual Fund.*

The evening will also kick off the Bargain Box 'Drop and Shop.' Receive a 20% off coupon for select Cameron Village stores when you drop off 5 articles of clothing that evening!

Funding Redefined

The Community Funding Team brings new resources to support nonprofits

By Lucy Austin, *the Link*

This year brought new opportunities for the Community Funding Team, as the group refocused its efforts to support the community. With the change in the economic environment, Community Funding reset its goals with an eye to aiding organizations in reducing costs and seeking monetary support from other sources.

"It's important to show community agencies that we remain committed to them," explained Whitney von Haam, Community Funding Captain. One of the team's three goals is to help nonprofits secure grants from other sources. For instance, last fall Team Community Funding partnered with Team Community Connect to present a grant writing workshop

and restructure the grant process in anticipation of future grant cycles. They have also made sure organizations are aware of the other help the League can give to agencies to increase their bottom line.

Other placements within the Community Council are working to help community agencies by increasing the accessibility of services and training. Team Community Connect has been providing training sessions throughout the year at no cost to organizations to educate community leaders on various issues. In addition to training for organizations, the League also continues to offer board placement services to put trained League members onto boards as requested by community agencies.

Organizations may also request volunteer help from Quick Impact, which provides volunteers for short-term projects. Plus, agencies can now advertise their fundraising events for free in eLink, which reaches League members each week online.

All these services, as well as countless volunteer hours given by members in other capacities, are intended to help community agencies raise more money and save money by receiving services they would otherwise have had to include in their budgets.

"The Community Funding Team is fulfilling the League's mission of training," Whitney said. "In this case we've helped by training agencies."

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communications & strategies

Together, We Can Do So Much

By Beth Lowery, Communications & Strategies Vice President

By now, members of the Junior League of Raleigh are on track to donate more than 50,000 hours to support our mission of improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. There are many reasons members volunteer, from simply wanting to make a difference in the lives of promising youth to being trained in a new skill as part of a professional or personal exploration.

The saying "The more you give, the more you get," holds true, regardless of the reason. Over the years, research shows volunteering and civic engagement provides individual health benefits in addition to social benefits. It is no wonder League members, whether Active, Sustainer or Provisional, are involved in fundraisers, sit on various worth-

while nonprofit boards and lead community efforts that encourage change and improvement. This is what the League does and does well!

Great women accomplish great things, a bragging right lauded throughout this issue of *the Link*. Take the opportunity to learn more about the League's community partners, programs, members and supporters. It is because of their generous support the League makes a huge difference in Wake County year after year.

Helen Keller said it best: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Thank you, members of the Junior League of Raleigh, for the tireless hours spent supporting Wake County's promising youth. It is inspiring and amazing to experience the dedication and to be on the receiving end of the care each volunteer puts into their role!

Michelle Sneed
Portraits in Oil and Pastel

www.michellesneed.com
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a heartfelt mission for a heart-tugging cause

SAFEchild opens a new Child Advocacy Center to serve Wake County



By Beth Green, *the Link*

There is no denying the sweet laughter and smile of a child is an instant dose of love for the heart and soul. Each day, children bring joy and laughter to the hearts of people all around them. Our collective future is defined by the dreams of children, and it is up to the community to shepherd those dreams and keep them safe.

More than 18 years ago, SAFEchild was formed by the League to fill a gap in services in Wake County with the mission of preventing child abuse and neglect. After years of serving families and young children in the area, SAFEchild expanded its role by opening the first Child Advocacy Center in Wake County in November 2010. Through the passion, hard work and dedication of many organizations in our community, along with the thoughtful leadership of SAFEchild Executive Director Marjorie Menestres and SAFEchild Advocacy Center Director Cristin DeRonja, the advocacy center is charting safe territory for the children and families that have fallen victim to sexual and physical abuse in Wake County.

SAFEchild is the designated lead agency to open and manage the children's Advocacy Center. In combination with the current program efforts at SAFEchild, the Advocacy Center anticipates serving an additional 325 children this year. This impressive growth in reach and service will also expand to the non-offending parents and siblings, which are not included in

early service protections. The additional services and capacity brought on by the newly opened Advocacy Center will increase the agency's annual budget by \$300,000 while decreasing community expenses by a minimum of \$1,000 per child. It is a win-win for everyone: the children, their family, the community and the community support systems.

How can a new center be built with state-of-the-art technology, serve more children and families and reduce the community budget per child? DeRonja said the answer is simple: "The SAFEchild Advocacy Center is collaboration at its best! When professionals work together you have the potential to expand the resources, wisdom and knowledge a family would receive."

Collaboration is what breathes life into a collective mission. The collective wisdom of trained professionals, like those facilitating the opening of the Advocacy Center, will more efficiently make thoughtful, intentional and nurturing decisions for the children (and family), which are essential in the healing of a child. The Advocacy Center clients will benefit from better follow-through, buy-in, accountability, thoughtful planning and execution through a multidisciplinary collaboration with Child Protective Services, law enforcement, the district attorneys' offices, other nonprofit agencies and medical professionals.



The new SAFEchild Advocacy Center.



Parents enjoying a pampered parent party.

The Advocacy Center, which began seeing children on November 1, is fully staffed and prepared to advocate for children affected by sexual and severe physical abuse. The scope of services includes medical evaluations, forensic interviews and connecting families to services and resources needed in the community. The Center also will provide professional referrals for additional developmental assessments and mental health therapy when needed.

DeRonja said the center's main focus is preventing children from being re-traumatized through multiple interviews or extensive exposure to the legal proceedings associated with successfully convicting those guilty of harming the child. Overall, the mission is to serve victims and support their recovery and healing with great skill, diligence, efficiency and purpose. The Advocacy Center will maintain a relationship with the child, siblings and non-offending caregivers of the child, regardless of the legal outcome of the case.

"The SAFEchild staff is thankful to the League for the seed that was planted more than 18 years ago through the opening of the agency," shared DeRonja. "Our team is grateful for the opportunity to expand services in Wake County, which is seen as a tremendous tribute to the legacy started with the League."

For more information about SAFEchild and the SAFEchild Advocacy Center, contact Cristin DeRonja at 919-743-6140 or cderonja@safechildnc.org.



Families construct turkeys out of feathers during a family nurturing time activity. Each family member writes what they are thankful for on the feathers, which are then used to create the turkeys' colorful plumage.



SPREADING JOY AROUND THE TRIANGLE, NOTE BY NOTE



THE IMPACT OF THE LEAGUE'S CHORUS
IS AS RICH AND DEEP AS ITS HISTORY

By Melissa Callaway, *the Link*

There's a little-known placement in the Junior League of Raleigh that's so much fun and touches so many people with such joy, some members can't seem to get enough. It's the League's Chorus.

This year the team is 27 members strong, including a few dedicated members who have been singing on the team for decades, including Sandy Page, JLR Past President, who was among those who joined Chorus in its inaugural year, 1977.

At the time when Sandy initially joined, members only were allowed to continue in the same placement for two consecutive years before being required to choose a different placement. Sandy and many others kept coming back to the Chorus – which at the time held practices and performances in the evenings – for two-year stints as often as

the League allowed. After the rules were changed eliminating this limit, Sandy re-joined Chorus and has never left. "I just couldn't stay away," she shared.

The League has always had a flair for music and the arts. Before the creation of A Shopping SPREE!, the League would put on Follies to celebrate anniversaries and serve as the main fundraiser for the League. The League hired entertainment companies to come to Raleigh and train members to dance, sing and act. These semi-professional productions were the talk of the town, and they raised quite a bit of money. As times changed, the cost and time commitment of the Follies became prohibitive, and A Shopping SPREE! soon took over as the League's main fundraiser.

A CHORUS IS BORN

In the mid-1970s a group of League leaders attended an Association of Junior Leagues International conference in Washington, D.C. The D.C. League had a chorus that performed at the conference, which sparked the interest of our

local leaders. After all, the Junior League of Raleigh had been putting on full-scale performances for years, so why not a chorus?

And with that, the leadership returned to Raleigh and started the Chorus placement. In the mid-1980s, Chorus switched to a day chorus, around the same time the two-year placement rule was overturned. Since then, it has become a favorite placement with a number of League members who return year after year to sing simply for the fun of it.

"As a Sustainer transfer, I heard about the Chorus and thought it would be a great way to meet some fun women," said Debbie Pappas, Chorus Co-captain. "I love the group and performing at rehab and retirement places where people enjoy hearing our music."

So what does the League's very talented Chorus do for the community? The answer is simple: They spread joy through music.

The majority of the Chorus' performances are for assisted-living and nursing home facilities, and with the



Chorus members sing for their families at a holiday gathering at team member Winnie Bolton's home. From left: Kathryn Williams, Larry Hines, Deb Bunn, Margaret Douglas, Coco Davis, Jane Worley, Ford Hibbits, Easter Maynard, Team Captain Debbie Pappas, Jennifer Moran and Lydia Aldridge.

growing number of these around Raleigh, the group is overwhelmed with requests to perform. "People remember us, year after year," Sandy said. "It's amazing to see the faces light up when they recognize a song. People who cannot even talk [due to health reasons] know the words to these songs, and they come to life when we sing."

In addition to the community performances, the Chorus also performs annually at A Shopping SPREE!, the Sustainer Tea and several other League functions each year. These singing sisters are so busy, they average about a dozen performances from September through December and then another dozen performances in the spring season.

Of course, they do manage to have a lot of fun along the way. Each year, they gather at a holiday social, where they perform for their husbands and families, and at an end-of-the-year social.

Long-time Chorus member and Sustainer Jane Hunt Worley explained the placement offers the best of both

worlds: a chance to be part of an in-League placement and still have an impact on the community. "We do it for the joy it gives us and the joy we see in others," Jane explained. "After we sing, we go around the room and speak to as many of the folks in the audience as we can."

"The power of music is just amazing! Whatever time I give to Chorus is extremely small compared to what I receive back from it."

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Some of Jane's most memorable Chorus performances have been at places such as the Tammy Lynn Center, where severely disabled children initially looked unresponsive in their chairs. "When we started to sing, they would react in such a joyful manner that many times, we are fighting back our tears," she said. "The power of music is just amazing! What-

ever time I give to Chorus is extremely small compared to what I receive back from it."

Chorus members say they are thankful the League recognizes the impact they have on the community by continuing to fund the placement. Most of the nearly 30 members are Sustainers, but there are a few Actives who just can't get enough of singing. The team's songs are just as versatile as the songs sung during Follies. They perform holiday music during the winter season, but long-time Chorus member Winnie Bolton, who picks the music, always makes it a point to choose some current tunes as well.

The group also performs show tunes and popular hits from the eras of their audiences, which in most cases means songs from the 1940s and 1950s.

"I do believe that we make a difference in lives," Debbie said. "We sing familiar tunes, and people can sing along and enjoy themselves with others and the Chorus."

CELEBRATING A MILESTONE:

Center for Community Leadership Grand Opening

Nearly a decade in the making, the League celebrates the opening of the new Center

By Alesia DiCosola, *the Link*

Last November more than 200 community leaders, League members and nonprofit partners came together to mark a historic occasion and milestone – the Grand Opening of the Center for Community Leadership. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held outside, followed by a reception in the newly renovated facility.

In 2001, the League asked what its community partners needed, and the resounding answer was accessible meeting space. After many years searching for the perfect home, in 2007 the League bought the 28,000 square-foot building at 711 Hillsborough Street. Two years later the League began extensive interior renovations to the building, reconfiguring it to suit the needs of a training facility and headquarters.

The Center provides four times more space than the previous headquarters, and has a 150-person capacity training room, board room, numerous meeting rooms, volunteer workrooms, a living room, catering kitchen, children's playroom, League administrative offices and ample parking.

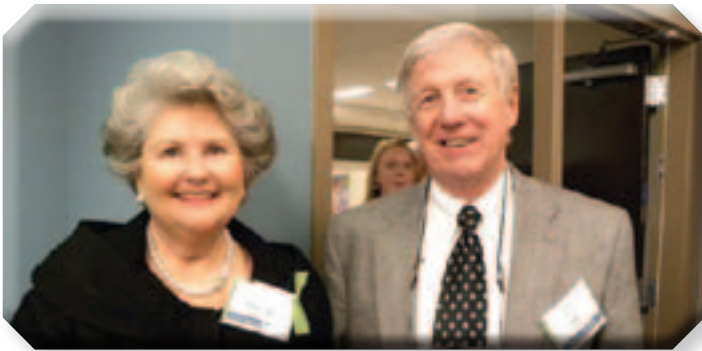
Now that renovations are complete and the doors are open, the Center has become a vibrant community crossroads – a new home for the League and a place where community members and leaders can come together to address issues, collaborate, share ideas and initiate change.



League President Wendy Webster welcomed more than 200 guests to the League's new home at 711 Hillsborough Street, which she called a "gift to the community." Centrally located on the bus line and in the heart of an ever-changing downtown Raleigh, the new location is close to the community partners and agencies that need training and meeting facilities the most.



Diane Davidian, Chuck Lysaght and Greer Lysaght



Past President Marion Church and Ralph Capps, CEO/President of Wake Boys and Girls Clubs



Britt Hopkins, Past President and former Capital Campaign Chair Susan Bowers, and Mark Bowers



The glass Legacy Wall located in the Center's foyer honors gifts of \$1,050 and more to the Capital Campaign. Currently more than 350 individuals and organizations are honored on the wall. The League is more than half way to its Building without Boundaries capital campaign goal of raising \$4.2 million to pay for the renovations to 711 Hillsborough Street. The League hasn't undertaken a fundraising campaign of this size in more than 20 years.



For more than eight years, the leadership of many dedicated women has turned a vision into reality. Current and former Capital Campaign Chairs along with several former League Presidents cut the ribbon on the new Center for Community Leadership. From the left: Jennie Hayman (former President), Susan Bowers (CCL Building Project Captain, former President), Helen Miller (former Capital Campaign Chair), Virginia Yopp (former President), Melissa Matton (former President) and Graham Satsky (former Capital Campaign Chair)

HILARY ALLEN

Funding & Development Vice President



BURRIE BATCHELOR STUDIO

funding & development

Giving From Your Heart

"If you have much, give of your wealth; if you have little, give of your heart."

—Arabian proverb

By Hilary Allen, Funding & Development Vice President

Growing up, my great-grandmother would always remind me to give with my heart. Along those same lines, I quickly learned that a giving heart is a happy heart. From these words and lessons, I learned the significance of gratitude, philanthropy and community. I continue to try to live by these words and lessons, but I also believe they hold true to the work and voluntarism that is the Junior League of Raleigh.

Throughout my six years in the League, I have felt community existed

in a number of ways. Most notably in the time and funds the League contributes to the greater Raleigh area each year. From A Shopping SPREE! to StepUP Ministry, League volunteers contribute countless hours for the betterment of the people who live in our community.

In addition to the greater community we support, I always have felt a strong sense of community within each of my League placements. My League friends have played a role in significant life events. And likewise, I have been a part of some of their

significant life events, from weddings to births and so much more. They've also been a part of daily life – lunches, dinners and glasses of wine! These interactions have fostered a real bond within my League community.

As you continue your League year, I hope you will foster a sense of community within your placement as well as our greater Wake County community. My hope is you will see the benefits you are bringing to both Wake County and the League as a gift from your heart and in return your heart will be happy.



Your spring cleaning solution: The Bargain Box

Ready to tackle what's lurking in your garage and the back of your closet? By donating your clutter to the Bargain Box, you not only simplify your life, you make someone else's even better.

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A colorful graphic for 'A Shopping SPREE!' featuring the word 'SPREE!' in large, stylized, blue and pink letters. The background is light blue with decorative patterns and colorful circles. Below the main text, it says 'PRESENTED BY THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF RALEIGH'. At the bottom, it says 'Save the Date!' in a pink script font, followed by 'A Shopping SPREE!' in blue, 'November 2-6' in blue, and 'Raleigh Convention Center' in blue.

And the Winner is ...

The League's new cookbook, "You're Invited Back," can now add award-winning to its list of attributes! "You're Invited Back" was named an award winner in the general cookbook category of the national "Best Books 2010" Awards, sponsored by USA Book News. More than 500 winners and finalists were announced in over 140 categories covering print and audio books for titles published in 2010 and late 2009. "Winning an award like this takes our book to the next level, and the benefits are substantial," shared an excited Meg Ergenzinger, Nominating Team member and prior Cookbook Team Co-captain.



"It's great publicity for the book and is a testament to its quality. The award gives our cookbook visibility in the world of independent publishing and gives us a third-party endorsement to tout as we solicit stores to sell the book." A complete list of winners and finalists in each category can be found online at <http://usabooknews.com/bestbooks2010.html>.

Be sure to pick up your copy of our award winner (and perhaps a copy or two for your friends) at the Center for Community Leadership or the March General Membership meeting.



Find Your Copy of "You're Invited Back"

The League's signature cookbook publication, "You're Invited Back" is focused on the city of Raleigh and is full of the best recipes from members' kitchens. Complementing the recipes are beautiful photographs by Sustainer Tammy Wingo, menu suggestions for every occasion and culinary tips. The cookbook is sold in stores throughout the Old North State and as far away as Mississippi! Dozens of stores and distributors carry copies for purchase, including:

Charlotte's
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A Southern Season
Angus Barn
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Bedford Blooms
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Addressing a Need

Bargain Box 'Bucks' provide clothes to those in need

By Alesia DiCosola, *the Link*



Interviewing for a job. A night out to celebrate a birthday. Going for a run. Imagine not being able to afford the clothes to do any of these things. For many people in Wake County, this is an all too familiar reality.

That is where the Bargain Box, the League's oldest fundraiser, steps in to help. Aside from providing high-quality, low-cost clothing and household goods for the local community, the Bargain Box also donates \$25,000 annually in merchandise vouchers, known as Bargain Bucks, to Wake County nonprofit agencies serving those in need.

"I think a lot of League members may not realize where many of their donations go," reflected Brooke Schmidt, Bargain Box Co-captain.

Through the Bargain Bucks program, a barely worn blouse or an outgrown pair of shorts can find their way to homeless families, adults suffering from a debilitating mental illness or at-risk children in Wake County – all at no cost to the recipient.

Every summer, vouchers are sent to more than 70 local agencies such as Habitat for Humanity of Wake County, Wake County Public Schools, Women's Center of Wake County, Neighbor2-Neighbor, SAFEchild and Urban Ministries of Raleigh, which then distribute the vouchers to the people they serve. The Bargain Bucks are then accepted at the Bargain Box in lieu of cash to purchase clothing and shoes.

Bargain Bucks are simple slips of paper printed on card stock, but for many of the area's neediest, these vouchers mean clothes and shoes they wouldn't otherwise have. The vouchers are more than pants and shoes. They're confidence – the confidence to get through tough times, to become self-sufficient and to strive for a better future.

"The Bargain Box is far more than just a store to bring in revenue for the League. With the League's outreach to community agencies, we are helping individuals and families in need of clothing and house hold items all through donations given by League members and the community."

"Many of our clients wouldn't otherwise be able to afford clothes without the Bargain Bucks," explained Lindsay Bohm, a qualified mental health professional for Easter Seals.

The Easter Seals Assertive Community Treatment Team distributes vouchers to adults with mental illness who cannot maintain work and are often surviving on disability income, some living off of a mere \$600 a month. ACTT is a community mental health service that offers

treatment and support to adults who are homeless or at risk for homelessness and have a history of incarceration or hospitalization.

"We love the Bargain Box," Lindsay said. "I've found that it provides nicer items and a better selection than most thrift stores, and at good prices."

Vouchers are also given to those who have been evicted and are left without any of their belongings. They're also used to buy clothes for clients who are ready to hold a job and need appropriate attire for job interviews.

One of Lindsay's clients recently was able to take a trip to Florida to visit her mother, but "she had nothing to pack for Florida weather." Lindsay accompanied the woman to the Bargain Box, where she helped her client find shorts and other warm-weather items.

"I called my client to check in on her while she was in Florida. She said that the clothes gave her the confidence she needed to travel to Florida on her own," Lindsay recalled.

At Wrenn House, a crisis shelter and safe haven in the Triangle for vulnerable youth ages 10 to 17, Bargain Bucks provides much-needed athletic clothes for kids staying at the shelter. Playing basketball, working out and going on outings to the park are an important part of the program at Wrenn House, providing children with structure to stay out of trouble and make them feel like normal kids.



SAMANTHA HATEM

The Bargain Box, located at 401 Woodburn Road in Cameron Village, provides high-quality-low cost clothing and household goods for the local community.

"Many of our children don't have work-out clothes or sneakers for after-school activities," said Kelsey Mosley, Mentoring Program Coordinator. "The vouchers have been a big help. Most of these kids show up with nothing because they've run away from home, or their parents don't have the means to buy appropriate clothing for them."

When managing clothing donations exceeded the resources at Wake Interfaith Hospitality Network, Bargain Bucks vouchers filled the gap for homeless families.

"We used to accept clothing donations, but it became too much of a burden so now we tell people who want to donate clothes to go to Bargain Box, and with the vouchers we receive from the Junior League we can still provide clothes for our families for free," said Lisa Williams, Executive Director.

Wake Interfaith Hospitality Network provides temporary stability to homeless families as they work toward

permanent independence. There the Bargain Bucks vouchers support the entire family, from clothing for children to providing professional attire to help adults gain employment.

"It's a fabulous resource," Lisa said. "The demand on our organization has increased this past year, and the Junior League was there to help us meet our needs. When we asked for more vouchers, the League responded generously."

Bargain Bucks also help the very children the League serves directly. When the Girl Scouts at Heritage Park raised enough money through cookie sales to send their troop to camp, the Bargain Box stepped in with vouchers to outfit the girls with shorts, jeans and T-shirts.

"It was a great way to be sure that the girls who had worked so hard would be able to go to camp and have a great time without adding a financial burden to their families," said Melissa Matton, Past President of the League.

While the Bargain Box program generally works through local nonprofits, Bargain Bucks also are distributed directly to individuals with immediate needs. In recent years, a League members' brother received Bargain Bucks when he lost everything in a fire. Working through the local Red Cross, the Bargain Box also gave vouchers to several individuals when the Pine Knoll Townhouses burned down.

Bargain Bucks are increasingly more important as the recent recession and increased unemployment strain local families. Last July, \$1,775 in vouchers was redeemed for clothing at the Bargain Box, one of the highest amount in the League's recent history.

"The Bargain Box is far more than just a store to bring in revenue for the League," Brooke said. "With the League's outreach to community agencies, we are helping individuals and families in need of clothing and household items all through donations given by League members and the community."





5TH ANNUAL SHOWCASE OF KITCHENS

Spring is a time for renewal and renovation! Shake off the winter blues and join us at the fifth annual Showcase of Kitchens. After four successful years of bringing beautiful private kitchens to the general public, the League will kick off the 2011 event with a toast to the community, Kids in the Kitchen, and a Toast to the Tour.

Join the fun!

Tickets are available at www.jlraleigh.org or by calling (919) 787-7480. Proceeds from Showcase of Kitchens benefit the Junior League of Raleigh's Center for Community Leadership.



LAUREN MANN PHOTOGRAPHY



LAUREN MANN PHOTOGRAPHY

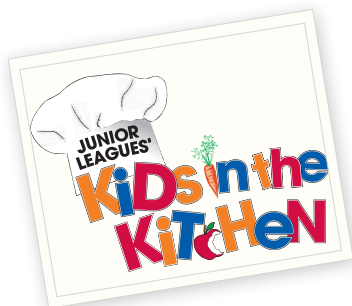


Events

KIDS IN THE KITCHEN

Tuesday, March 29
StepUP Ministry, Raleigh
Invitation only

Children from StepUP Ministry will be invited to a fun-filled, educational event focusing on healthy eating habits and an active lifestyle. This invitation-only event is an exciting new spring project for Provisional members.



TOAST TO THE TOUR

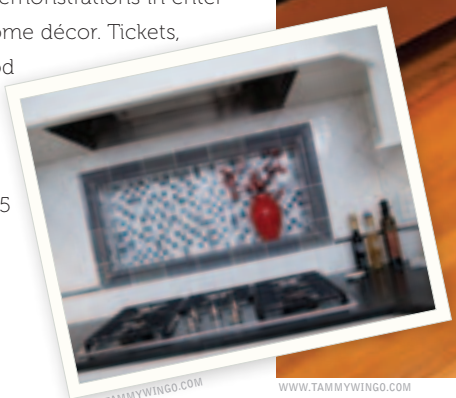
Thursday, March 31
7 p.m. – 10 p.m.
Ferguson Enterprises,
2700-A Yonkers Road, Raleigh

Bring your friends, spouse or significant other for a Girls Night Out and enjoy delicious food and live music from the Band of Oz. Place a bid during the silent auction. See what's new in kitchen appliances and décor inside the beautiful showrooms of Ferguson. Tickets are \$60 per person or \$100 per couple. Cost includes heavy hors d'oeuvres and two beverage tickets per person.

KITCHEN TOUR

Friday, April 1 & Saturday, April 2
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Spend the day (or two days!) touring eight exquisite kitchens in private homes. Kitchen docents will direct you to special features in each kitchen and highlight unique design elements. Various homes will feature special displays and demonstrations in entertaining and home décor. Tickets, which are good for both days of the tour, are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door.



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List includes sponsors as of January.
For a complete listing, please visit
www.jlraleigh.org/kitchensponsors.shtml.

A Decade of Support:

A Look at First Citizens Bank

Long-time sponsor shares why they invest in the community through the League

By Alesia DiCosola, *the Link*



Each shopper receives a complimentary A Shopping SPREE! shopping bag, a special perk sponsored by First Citizens.

The great work done by the League is done on the shoulders of the donors and sponsors who fund our projects, events, programs and the Center for Community Leadership. Many of these donors and sponsors have supported the years for many years, even decades.

First Citizens Bank is a long-time sponsor of the Junior League's annual A Shopping SPREE! For more than 15 years their annual contributions have under-

written many of the costs associated with the League's largest fundraiser. First Citizens is one of the SPREE! Grand Benefactor Sponsors and specifically underwrites the SPREE! shopping bags.

"Everyone loves the bags, and we couldn't offer such a nice quality bag (which people use over and over again) if not for

First Citizens Bank's support," explained Melanie Rankin, Development Director for the League.

"Without the support of businesses like First Citizens, we would not have events like SPREE!," shared League President Wendy Webster. "We believe we

exponentially increase every dollar they donate to the League by matching it with volunteer support."

Headquartered in Raleigh, First Citizens Bank, a full-service financial services institution, believes in "supporting philanthropic efforts that make our community better," explained Carol Yochem, Executive Vice President of Wealth Management and a Junior League of Raleigh Sustainer. Yochem also previously served with the Junior League of Memphis and Nashville.

"With our corporate headquarters in Raleigh, it's important to invest in the local community, and through the Junior League of Raleigh we know the dollars are used to make our community a better place," shared Yochem.

According to Yochem, First Citizens also supports the Junior League because it counts many League members among its associates. "We like to contribute to organizations that our associates are personally engaged with," she said. "Furthermore, many of the organizations we do business with also are closely affiliated with the League, and it's important to support our customers and clients."

When asked why First Citizens underwrites A Shopping SPREE! specifically, Yochem explained, "SPREE! is such a fun event, and we like to support fun events that also give back. Plus, as a sponsor we get SPREE! tickets to share and our clients love them, so it's a great value for us."



BURRIE BATCHELOR STUDIO

Touching Lives in the Community

Year after year, the League continues to make Wake County a better place to live, work and play

By Shayla Bradshaw, Membership Vice President

As a member of the Junior League of Raleigh, your support is making a direct change in our community by impacting the lives of youth. The motivation behind the League has always been to make a difference in our community, and more than 80 years later, we are continuing the tradition.

Since it began in 1930, the League has generated much-needed revenue to fund our sponsored youth programs and projects in the area. Members donate approximately 50,000 hours per year of volunteer time to the community, and the League has given more than \$4.8 million to the community over the years – what an amazing impact!

As you think about your League career, the lives you have touched in our community or someone who has touched your life, keep in mind there are more than 800 Active League members out there who have been touched the same way. The

League could not do all that it does without every one of our members. All of you volunteer your time in addition to other everyday commitments, and we cannot thank you enough! Our members are not doing this because they have a lot of free time on their hands. They do it because they believe in what we are doing for this community.

Yes, the work is great, but the support behind the Junior League is even stronger. The League proudly stands tall because of this very generous community and our members. To each member who has fulfilled her requirements year after year, we cannot thank you enough. To each company that has sponsored one of our fundraisers and to each community member who has purchased a ticket to one of those events, we thank you for choosing to support the Junior League of Raleigh. Your commitment and investment in the community is to be celebrated!

Meet the 2011-2012 Board of Directors

In late January the League announced the proposed 2011-2012 Board of Directors. The slate will be voted on at the March General Membership Meeting. Join us in welcoming the incoming Board!



From the left: Catherine Rideout, Nominating Captain; Rebecca Ayers, Treasurer; Kathleen Brown, Secretary; Julie Ploscyca, Membership Vice President; Lori Edwards, Funding Vice President; Heather Beiza, Community Vice President; Whitney von Haam, Training Vice President; Leslie Rand-Pickett, Communications & Strategies Vice President; Pat Wilkins, President-Elect; Lisa Marie Ferrell, President.

Rising Star Nominee Shines

Elizabeth Merritt is selected as this year's nominee

By Katie Little, *the Link*

If ever there was a League member whose commitment to volunteerism should be modeled, it's Elizabeth Merritt. Elizabeth is a busy mother of two young children, holds a demanding job, was this year's Co-captain of the successful A Shopping SPREE!, and yet she still manages to find time to give back to her church, her son's pre-school and Meals on Wheels.

It's no wonder she is the Junior League of Raleigh's nominee for the Association of Junior Leagues International's Rising Star Award for 2011. Elizabeth's commitment to volunteering and her creative leadership are increasingly valuable to the League and community.

"Elizabeth is the Junior League of Raleigh personified," shared Wendy Webster, League President. "Her commitment to voluntarism, personal excellence and community service is an example to all who know her. The leadership Elizabeth evidenced through her financial talents and skilled strategic execution built our confidence to tackle any challenges that came our way!"

Elizabeth is humble when talking about her nomination, insisting there are so many women in the League who do so much. "I've just somehow been lucky to get nominated," she said. "There are so many deserving women."

The Rising Star Award, which is granted annually by AJLI, is designed to recognize women who in their earliest years of Junior League membership have demonstrated significant leadership promise consistent with the vision and values of the Junior League mission.

Elizabeth's Rising Star nomination is unique in that the entire Junior League of Raleigh was involved in selecting her. Typically the Nominating Team does this internally, but this time they sought the help of membership, asking members for their recommendations.

"As the Nominating Team, what we talked about when we made the decision was 'What is going to be the most compelling story for AJLI?'" explained Nominating Captain Ashley HuffstetlerCampbell. "We had to look for the person we felt was best suited for the types of things they were looking for."



Elizabeth with her husband John, and their two sons, Jack and George.

"We believe Elizabeth has the potential to achieve great things for our League and therefore she is truly a 'Rising Star' in our League and community," Ashley shared.

Another big reason she was chosen was because of her financial savvy and the leadership she brought as Co-captain of this year's A Shopping SPREE! Along with SPREE! Co-captain Lori Edwards and the support of a strong team, the fundraiser was a resounding success. As the League's largest fundraiser, profits from A Shopping SPREE! help fund the League's operating budget and all of its community teams.

Elizabeth approaches her League work largely from a financial perspective. She believes when the profitable side is maximized so, too, is the impact on the community and the expansive reach of the direct volunteer opportunities. "We think Elizabeth's approach to leadership is a very modern take on the way the Junior Leagues and nonprofits operate," Ashley explained.

Elizabeth chose A Shopping SPREE! as her placement four years ago as a First-year Active. But her ties to the fundraiser go back much further than that. Her mother, Sustainer Frances Fontaine, coined the term "A Shopping SPREE!" for the League more than 20 years ago. Her mother also served as captain of the League's second A Shopping SPREE!

"I originally chose SPREE! because of how important it had been to my mom," Elizabeth shared. "But I continued with it because I loved it and felt like it was a great way for me to use my skills to have a bigger impact within the League."

In 2009, Elizabeth served as an Assistant Co-captain for the event. Because of her attention to detail and focus on maximizing revenues and reducing costs in this role, she was asked to Co-captain SPREE! in 2010 with Lori.

"Elizabeth's willingness to step up and lead the League's largest fundraiser was an ambitious move for a young member of the League," Ashley said. "Typically, women who serve are active for many years before serving as captain. But, Elizabeth's positive, can-do attitude and relentless focus on the bottom line made her an incredible asset to the team and the League when she moved into her leadership role."

Despite the challenges in the retail world and the economic situation in general, Elizabeth helped to lead a SPREE! team that achieved substantial financial success. "I think A Shopping SPREE! has been done really well for a really long time," Elizabeth commented. "What's been different in the past couple of years is that the economy has been in a much different situation. We've had to be more creative about how to grow the profit without some of the revenue sources we might have had in the past."

She said she and Lori took a team approach to leading the event. "Lori and I both have strengths that we brought to the team," she said. "Lori is amazing with the details and with motivating a large team. My core strengths are largely financial. We both dove into the budgeting process. The other thing we did was to really engage our team to own their budgets. A lot of the fun of the team dynamic was watching people really stretch to reach those goals."

"It's a really neat feeling. At the end of A Shopping SPREE! Lori and I were sitting around talking about it. Rarely will you have an opportunity to work on something that will bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars in just a few days. It's an amazing chance to be able to directly contribute to the League and its community programs in such a substantial way."

A native of Raleigh, Merritt attended Broughton High School and graduated as valedictorian of her high school class in 1996. She attended the University of North

Carolina at Chapel Hill on a full academic scholarship, where she graduated in 2000 Phi Beta Kappa. After graduating, she worked as an investment banker at Goldman, Sachs & Co. in New York, where she first honed her financial skills.

Elizabeth's true love is her family. She met John Merritt while attending college at UNC-Chapel Hill and they became good friends. The couple did not begin dating until several years after college, while Elizabeth was still living in New York. After their engagement, she returned to Raleigh in 2004 to work for Cherokee Investment Partners. Married for nearly seven years now, the couple has two beautiful children: Jack, who is almost 4 years old, and George, who is nearly 1½ years old.

"Cherokee taught me the idea of managing a business with values is more important than any profit or dollar amount," Elizabeth shared. "I think these same principles are very applicable to both the League and SPREE! in particular," she said. "I feel that in order to make the largest impact in our League and in the community, it's important to match your skills and experience to your chosen [League] placement. You are more likely to succeed and make a bigger impact if you select a placement that you enjoy and best matches your talents and abilities."

Elizabeth has been involved as a leader in the community outside of the League as well. She serves on the finance committee of her church, St. Michael's Episcopal in Raleigh, and has chaired a fundraiser for her son's preschool. For several years before having her own children, she served as a high school Sunday school teacher and youth group leader. Elizabeth also coordinated Meals on Wheels routes for her church for a number of years and she still continues to drive a route for Meals on Wheels on a monthly basis.

"One purpose of the Rising Star Award is to encourage the development of future leaders in the Junior League, and to recognize new members who show promise for leadership," Ashley said. "We hope by nominating Elizabeth for this award, it will also help encourage other young members to become more involved and assume leadership roles within the League."

"It is an honor to be nominated, although it wouldn't have been possible without an amazing Co-captain and A Shopping SPREE! team," Elizabeth shared.

Winners of the 2011 Rising Star award will be announced at the annual AJLI conference in May.



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League Veteran Puts Her Experience to Work

Nancy Bromhal takes the reigns as SAFEchild's new Development Director

By Jessica Proctor, *the Link*

It was Nancy Bromhal's mother, a member of the Junior League of Greensboro, that inspired this long-time Junior League of Raleigh member to join. Fifteen years later Bromhal, now the Development Director with SAFEchild in Raleigh, brings a wealth of experience, insight and dedication to the nonprofit long supported, loved and staffed by JLR members.

"I am honored to join the SAFEchild professional team and learn about the different programs SAFEchild offers to serve and strengthen fragile families in our community," Nancy commented.

SAFEchild is one of many stops on Nancy's journey as a League member. In her years with the League, her placements have included the Membership Development Committee, A Shopping SPREE! Co-captain, Nominating Captain, Provisional Captain and Inaugural Ball committee member.

She has had such a vibrant career with the League that it's tough for Nancy to pick one favorite placement. "I adored being Co-captain of A Shopping SPREE! in 2003 with Anne Allen after serving on the committee for four years," she said. "I know it sounds corny, but I feel a bond

with other SPREE! chairs, even if we didn't serve on the same committee. I love the camaraderie of working on a special event and have fond memories of the old Raleigh Civic and Convention Center."

Other placements, such as the 2009 Governor's Inaugural Ball and a one-year stint on the League board as Nominating Captain also hold special memories for Nancy. "I am quite indebted for what I've received through the League," she shared. "I want to continue to give back to members who are still pursuing active leadership positions."

A mother of two daughters, Mary Margaret, 9, and Kate, 5, and married for 14 years, Nancy is a native of Greensboro and a self-described "Carolina girl." A graduate from the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Journalism, she worked for both the Red Cross and The News and Observer before leaving the workforce when she became a mom.

In addition to her service in the League, Nancy also is active at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Raleigh, where she and her husband, Bo, teach first-grade Sunday school. She also has served at the parish's Episcopal Churchwomen chapter president.



Her experiences in the League, as well as her experience as a mom, a wife and parishioner, have paved her journey to re-enter the workforce and use her many talents with SAFEchild, an organization Nancy has long felt passionate about.

"I began the job with a strong emotional connection because of SAFEchild's origins as a League project," she said. "The League absolutely opened the door for me at SAFEchild. I have previous experience with nonprofit communications and local media sites, but my experiences with A Shopping SPREE!, the Inaugural Ball and as Nominating Captain, and the relationships I have due to those roles, gave me the confidence to pursue the position."

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MEET A SUSTAINER: LOU GARRABRANT

By Lucy Austin, *the Link*



Sustaining members play a vital role in our League – perhaps a role best described by Sustainer Lou Garrabrant as “support with enthusiasm!” And Lou does just that. She has called Raleigh home for most of her adult life and has made an

impact in the community both through and beyond her League placements.

Over the years, Lou has taken the reins in several leadership roles within the League, including serving on the Board as Treasurer as well as chairing a variety of committees. Lou’s dedication to improving the local community through volunteerism expands beyond the League. She has served as a board member for Raleigh Fine Arts Inc. and Hilltop Home, an organization benefitting severely challenged children, as well as the NC Museum of History Associates. She has also served as a Trustee for the NC Symphony.

“I try to fill each day with worthwhile and helpful opportunities for myself and others,” Lou said.

The League also played a role in shaping Lou’s career. She used the skills

she learned in the League to create an 18-year career as a real estate broker, most recently as an associate with Prudential York Simpson Underwood, selling homes throughout the Triangle.

“The League trains you to be a professional,” Lou explained. “It’s energizing to help families find their perfect home or sell one their most valuable asset.”

Lou remains engaged with all of the League happenings and has particularly enjoyed watching the League grow and expand into the new Center for Community Leadership.

“Who would have thought when we were meeting on Williamson Drive in [Past President] Melissa Peden’s living room that we would end up with such a fabulous building,” she said.



Charlene Askew, Charlotte Banks, Amelia Harrison and Margaret Herring at the Sustainer Holiday Social.



Arrangements team member Marie Duncan greets President Wendy Webster.

Upcoming Sustainer Events

LUNCH AT NORTH HILLS CLUB



Join your Sustainer friends for a delicious lunch at the beautiful North Hills Club at 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 22. Cash or Credit card is accepted. The event will be hosted by Sustainers Graham Satsky and Caroline Russell. Please RSVP to bernadette@jlraleigh.org at 919-787-7480 by Friday, March 18

COOKING DEMONSTRATION AND LUNCH AT 18 SEABOARD



Come watch 18 Seaboard and Cantina 18 Chef Jason Smith demonstrate his amazing culinary skills and then feast on a wonderful lunch at 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, April 5 at the 18 Seaboard Art Gallery. Cost is \$20

per person. Reserve a space by e-mailing bernadette@jlraleigh.org, calling 919-787-7480 or by sending a check by Friday, April 1.

ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON AT THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION

Don't miss this annual luncheon at our Governor's mansion. A must-attend event at 11:30 a.m., Tuesday, April 26. Look for your invitations to arrive in the mail by mid-March.



Anne deRossett, Linda Blount and Sustainer Captain Laura Munster at the Sustainer Holiday Social.

COME CELEBRATE CINCO DE MAYO WITH YOUR SUSTAINER FRIENDS AND SPOUSES

Sustainer Marla Turlington is hosting a Cinco de Mayo fiesta 6-9 p.m., Thursday, May 5 at her home at 1212 Westmoreland Drive in Raleigh. Cost is \$25 per couple. Please RSVP by e-mailing bernadette@jlraleigh.org, calling 919-787-7480 or by sending check by Friday, April 29.

EXPLORE YOUR ARTISTIC SIDE AT A WINE & DESIGN EVENT!



Tap into your inner artist with other Sustainers at Wine and Design at 7 p.m., Wednesday, May 18 at 231 Bickett Blvd. in Raleigh. Everyone will leave with their own artistic creation! Cost is \$35 per person. Visit the website at www.wineanddesignnc.com. RSVP to bernadette@jlraleigh.org, by calling 919-787-7480 or sending a check by Friday, May 13.



Sustainer Captain Laura Munster strives to organize more events and activities for Sustainers of all ages. Contact Laura with questions, ideas or concerns at 919-788-7836 or lcmunster@nc.rr.com.

NATASHA BEN-KAMARA
Training Vice President

training



BURNIE BATCHELOR STUDIO

Taking Training to New Heights

By Natasha Ben-Kamara, Training Vice President

It's been a busy, training-filled year as the League continues to serve the needs of our community through providing impactful programs, volunteers and training.

One of the many ways we do this is through the **Center for Community Leadership (CCL)**. More than just a building, the CCL is a collaboration center where people are working together to solve problems and make lasting changes in our community.

Team Arrangements is another resource supporting the League's ability to fill our mission. Members of Team Arrangements are the behind-the-scenes force that successfully coordinates critical League functions such as the Small Group Meetings at Sustainers' homes. The Arrangements team plans every detail, including picking the homes, securing leaders and recorders, and coordinating with other League teams on announcements.

The **Membership Development Committee** has experienced a wonderful increase of interest from the community. A large number of women attended the information session and expressed interest in becoming new members. MDC quickly identified and rectified this welcomed challenge by engaging in dual Provisional classes starting in the 2011-2012 year. MDC works tirelessly on developing our Provisionals into trained volunteers ready to rally around our community causes.

To spur coordination between League members, **Team Training** has launched the Virtual Training Center on the member page on the League website. It is filled with extraordinary and meaningful materials which are important for the work we are doing in our community. It complements successful League social media initiatives on Facebook and *eLink* and underscores the conviction that the Web is the most comprehensive and economical way for the League to communicate with members and the community.

Team Leadership Support is grateful for volunteers and those within the community who are able to read *eLink* articles summarizing the Capital Leadership Initiative sessions. The participants are gaining skills, insight and tools that can be used to impact the community.

As League members work in the community, they are touching people and making a difference.

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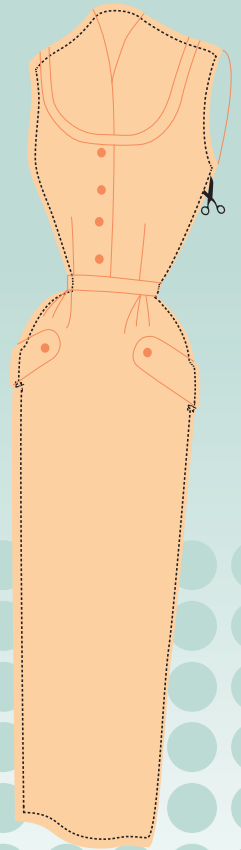


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