



FRIENDS to friends

Spring | 2011

A Newsletter of Friends Association for Care and Protection of Children

Friends Prevents Homelessness for a Deserving Family

Mary (not her real name) had always been able to make ends meet and to provide for herself and her three children, until she got breast cancer. With a year's worth of mounting medical bills, Mary fell behind in paying rent and she and her children were about to be evicted from their apartment and become homeless. Mary, who is accustomed to being independent, reluctantly called Friends Association in a desperate attempt to find help.

Regina Horton, Friends Association's Assistant Executive Director, established a working relationship with Mary's landlord, conducted an assessment of the family's situation and worked with Mary on a goal plan. The plan included having Friends Association help the family catch up with back rent and provide rental assistance for several months. The case management services helped Mary make and follow a budget; helped one of the teenage daughters get free dental work and orthodontic braces; helped the oldest teenage daughter apply for college; and helped the whole family survive the stress around Mary's cancer treatments. Mary also entered therapy so she could keep a positive attitude throughout her cancer treatments. Regina Horton, the case manager, said, "We were happy we had the resources to help the family catch up financially, maintain their housing, and survive this stressful period."

Gifts from generous donors to the family included a laptop computer, printer, and school supplies for the daughter going off to college. Donors also provided food market gift cards to help Mary keep food on the table when she was unable to work while going through multiple surgeries and donors gave holiday gifts for the entire family at Christmas.

After a year of support, Mary's cancer is in remission and she is now independent of all financial support. The oldest daughter began college and is doing well. The younger daughter has completed her orthodontic treatments and has the confidence that comes with knowing she has a nice smile. The son continues to be on the school honor roll. Mary recently wrote to thank Friends Association saying, "What you have done for me cannot be put into words...I don't know what I would have done without you...I don't know how to thank you enough. It brings tears to my eyes just to think what you have and always will mean to me." This is a family on the mend that has overcome the barriers they have faced. Through support from our donors, Friends Association was able to help this deserving family survive a difficult period and become independent again. ♥

Friends Holiday Party

The annual Holiday Party for all of our shelter and supportive housing families was held on December 19, 2010 at the Chester County Art Association. Members of the West Chester Sunrise Rotary prepared and served a wonderful meal. Mr. Magic

once again donated his time and skills. He amazed us with his sleight of hand and delighted the children by involving them in the show. ♥

One of our families enjoying our Annual Holiday Party.



Martha Boston, Ph.D.
Executive Director

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

John Braceland, *President*

Val DiGiorgio, *Vice-President*

Rick Macek, *Treasurer*

John Spangler, *Secretary*

Cindy Bortner

Anne Okelo

Leo Gilmore

Serita Spadoni

Rich Hartmann

Valetta

Bill McFalls, Jr.

Dennis Wallace

STAFF

Regina Horton Lewis, *Assistant Exec. Dir.*

Lynn Greenfield, *Shelter Coordinator*

Pat Broadt, *Business Manager*

Glenda Brion, *Development Coordinator*

SAVE THE DATE

23rd Annual
West Chester Charity Ball
To Benefit Friends Association

December 3, 2011
West Chester Country Club

Live Music, Dancing, Great
Food, Open Bar, Auction
and Great Friends



Working to end homelessness.

Meet our Board President

John Braceland says that he became involved with Friends Association, “because I wanted to use my talents to help others. I feel satisfaction from seeing the organization grow, develop and expand the impact that we have in the community.” John has served on Friends’ Board of Trustees for six years and he has been President of the Board for three years. Under John’s leadership, the agency has moved from a group shelter/transitional housing model to a Housing First Model, the type of service provision for homeless families recommended by the National Alliance to End Homelessness. In addition, the agency is now financially sound and ready to create an endowment fund to ensure its services will continue in the future.



John Braceland

studied the research and talked to agencies around the country that had successful housing programs. Based on the findings, Friends Association moved its group family shelter to its new building with six individual apartments. In addition, the Supportive Family Housing Program now houses clients in commercial apartments, providing rental assistance and case management services for 12-18 months. In changing the transitional housing model, the agency has been able to triple the number of families served in a year. John said that his goal “is to see the Supportive Family Housing Program continue to grow and become a key organization in the community preventing family homelessness.”

A true Renaissance man, John has a wide variety of interests. He has a bachelor’s degree from Rochester Institute of Technology in printing. For a number of years John ran Braceland Brothers, a printing company with multiple locations around the country

headquartered in Philadelphia. Around ten years ago, John left the printing business to begin JBSolutions, a purchasing cooperative that serves the printing and confectionary industries. John and his wife, Linda, have four children with two teenagers still at home. John is active in Birmingham Friends Meeting. John plays jazz guitar and has made two CDs of his beautiful music. He stays active running three times a week and skiing whenever he gets a chance. John, a fine wine aficionado, and Linda have developed a wine tasting dinner which has become a high demand auction item at Friends Association’s Charity Ball. John believes that being in the Young Presidents’ Organization and World Presidents’ Organization (organizations for people who are company presidents) has helped him become who he is today.

Being president of a non-profit board is challenging. John attributes part of his success as Board President to the Chester County Leadership Connection training given by United Way to train non-profit board members. Marty Boston, Executive Director of Friends, states, “We are lucky to have John! He is a great person and he continues to be a dedicated board president.” ♥

Women Artists Share Their Work

Local artist, Susan Foley, brought a unique proposal to Valetta, founder and Director of The Regional Center for Women in the Arts (RCWA) and also a Friends Association Board member. Susan suggested that women artists would be willing to donate original framed art to women who were transitioning from area shelters to their own homes or apartments. Valetta collected twenty-eight original pieces of art and made them available at her studio. To date, nine women moving from shelter have selected paintings or prints for their new apartments. Susan Foley and Valetta agree that shared artwork provides interest in a home, but more importantly symbolizes a connection between these two groups of women. ♥

Susan Foley, left, Program Coordinator for “First Art on the Wall” with RCWA director, Valetta.





Friends Association for Care and Protection of Children

The West Chester Charity Ball

A Friends Celebration

On December 4, 2010, Friends Association held the Twenty-Second Annual West Chester Charity Ball to benefit homeless families. Sponsors, donors and guests made this event our most successful fundraiser ever, the proceeds reaching a total of \$100,000. We sincerely thank our Presenting Sponsor: Buckley, Brion, McGuire, Morris & Sommer LLP, thirty-nine other sponsors listed below, and 100 local businesses and artisans who donated items to our Live and Silent Auctions.



More than 260 people attended the Ball, starting their holiday season in style and celebration at the West Chester Golf and Country Club. The evening featured gourmet fare prepared by the club, the music of Jim Fogarty and Tonebenders, and a surprise visit and performance by "Neil Diamond." Glenda Brion, Charity Ball Chair, presented the first annual Friend of the Community

Award to Nancy Thompson in recognition of her many years of volunteer service in Chester County.

Friends Association is very grateful to everyone who shared our commitment to helping homeless children and their families. Thank you to Pamela Hale from Passion for Petals who arranged and donated the extraordinary floral arrangements displayed throughout the club. Special thanks go to members of the Charity Ball Committee who devoted their talent and many months of their time to plan and produce the Ball.

Charity Ball Committee: Kelly Houston, Claudia Hutter, Valerie Jester, Jennifer Jester, Lisa Kaplan, Pat Kimmel, Rose Marinelli, Sandy Retzlaff, Michelle Tigue and Sonya Weigle. ♥

Leave a Legacy Donation

We invite you to leave a legacy by naming Friends Association in your will. You can make a significant difference in the life of a child. Your future gifts through a charitable trust, a gift annuity or gifts by life insurance will help secure our children's future.

There are many ways to give to Friends Association. Your support will provide homes and establish hope for our children far into the future.

- ♥ Gifts by Bequest or Will
- ♥ Gift Stocks
- ♥ Gift Annuity
- ♥ Gifts of Life Insurance

Please contact Glenda Brion for more detailed information: g.brion@friendsassoc.org or 610-431-3598 ext. 219. ♥



THANK YOU TO OUR CHARITY BALL SPONSORS!

Presenting Sponsor

Buckley, Brion, McGuire, Morris & Sommer LLP

Platinum Sponsors

Lamb McErlane
TD Bank
Wells Fargo

Gold Sponsors

DNB First

Silver Sponsors

Cozen O'Connor
Meridian Bank
Obermayer, Rebmann, Maxwell & Hippel LLP
Philadelphia Trust Company
Valley Forge Investments
Stradley Ronan

Bronze Sponsors

A. Marinelli & Sons
Aqua Pennsylvania
Asher's Chocolates
Bancorp Bank
Brandywine Capital Associates
Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC
Calhoun Baker
Cephalon
DFT, Inc.
Eagles Home Assn.
EDIS Company
Emerald Advisors
Rob & Marcy Fenza
First National Wealth Management
Franklin Homeowners Group
The Hankin Group
Krapf Bus Companies
Mr. & Mrs. Dallas Krapf
Mallie, Falconiero & Co.
Manito Title
PECO
PNC Financial Services Group
RBCV Capital Markets Corp.
Seifert Family Trust
Standard Medical Supply, Inc.
Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.
Unruh Turner Burke & Frees
Wawa
West Chester Cardiology



Working to End Homelessness

Wish List

We are always in need of gift cards for our children and families.

We use gift cards to purchase NEW clothing, household supplies and food items tailored to our families' specific needs. We are wishing for gift cards to **Target, Walmart, Kmart, Giant** and **Acme Markets**.

THANKS SO MUCH!

HAVE YOU JOINED OUR S.O.S. NETWORK?

Would you like to receive emails regarding special needs for our shelter families? Please call **Glenda Brion**, Development Coordinator, at **610-431-3598 ext. 219** or email her at **g.brion@friendsassoc.org**.

Who We Are

Friends Association strengthens our community by providing programs and services that prevent homelessness and promote the independence of families with children. Friends Association has been serving homeless children since 1822 and is the oldest child welfare agency in Pennsylvania. The agency runs two programs: the Emergency Family Shelter and the Homeless Prevention Program.

EMERGENCY FAMILY SHELTER

Friends Association provides shelter to families with children for 60-90 days while helping them connect to community resources and get back on their feet financially and emotionally. The program's goal is to move families to stable housing when they leave the shelter. Friends Association provides 35% of the general emergency shelter spaces in Chester County for families with children.

HOMELESS PREVENTION PROGRAM

We provide rental assistance and case management services for families who are coming from the Emergency Family Shelter or have been evicted from their homes. In addition, this program works to prevent families from ever entering the shelter. Families and landlords reach out to us when eviction is imminent and we help to prevent the eviction whenever feasible. The cost of preventing homelessness is 65% less than housing the families in



the shelter. The program's goal is to have families independent (free of rental assistance and case management services) when they leave the program. To date, we have a 90% success rate.

NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN

Children are the unintended victims of family homelessness. Studies indicate that homeless children get sick and go hungry twice as often as other children do. They suffer from clinical depression or anxiety disorders, are more likely to repeat a grade and are four times as likely to have developmental delays. Friends' programs help prevent these issues, strengthening not only the family but the community as well. ♥