

hephzibah heartbeat

NEWS FROM HEPHZIBAH CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION

Providing safety and care to society's most vulnerable children since 1897

WINTER 2011

Dear Friends,

YOUR INCREDIBLE GENEROSITY has reminded me of what a unique and caring community I am proud to be a part of. I am grateful for all that you do for our children and families. And for this reason, the winter edition of the Hephzibah Heartbeat is devoted to **gratitude**: to our partners, donors, volunteers and staff members who have offered Hephzibah the support that allows us the freedom to **embrace change** while continuing to **nurture tradition**.

Twenty-five years ago, the **Group Homes** were founded in response to a disturbing trend in our community that was identified by the Hephzibah Board of Directors who, when they observed this serious unmet need, stepped up to do something about it. Of course this intervention could not have happened without the support, generosity, wisdom and intelligence of our partners: our donors, volunteers, staff and visionary community members. Inside, a short history of the Group homes details this compelling story.

You will also read about some of our **holiday traditions** that are unique to Hephzibah. They say a lot about the goodness of the people who care enough to spend the time and effort to bring happiness to others: events such as the Annual Family Based Holiday Party and the Bring-A-Gift party.

And I am proud to introduce **three extraordinary Spirit of Hephzibah Award winners** who exemplify the **tradition of our employees' excellence**; and a former Hephzibah resident who brought inspiration to the children at the group homes (along with a magician this year!). In our 2010 Fall issue of the *Hephzibah Heartbeat*, an article described how change just made a great program even better when the Reading Academy embraced cooking as an innovative way to teach children about nutrition while improving their reading and language skills over the summer!

Thanks to a century-old heritage of generosity in our community, Hephzibah is able to respond quickly to children in crisis and is nimble enough to support change in order to meet future challenges our children and families must face in a complex world.

I wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year!

Sincerely,



Mary Anne Brown
Executive Director



"Gratitude is the memory of the heart."



hephzibah happenings!

Heart of Gold Ball

SATURDAY MARCH 5, 2011

Hosted by the Oak Park Auxiliary Board
Marriott Magnificent Mile, Downtown Chicago
See page 3 for info!

11th Annual Hoof-it for Hephzibah!

MONDAY, MAY 30, 2011

Hosted by Hephzibah's Western Auxiliary Board
5K Fun Run and Family Walk
Children's 50 Yard Dash and Mini Mile Run
Newton Park, Glen Ellyn

4th Annual Hephzibah Dodgeball Tournament

JULY 2011

Hosted by Hephzibah's Chicago Auxiliary Board
North Avenue Beach, Chicago
Get a team together to raise funds to help
Hephzibah's children.

10th Annual GE Charity Golf Classic

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2011

Cantigny Golf Course
Wheaton, IL

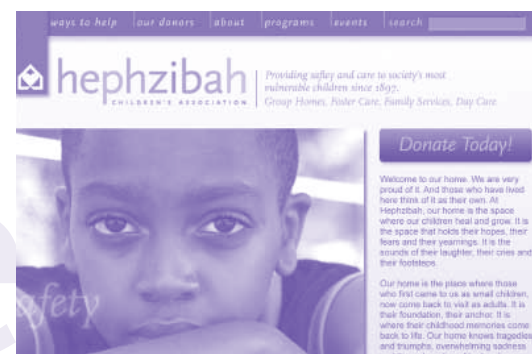
Need more information?

Call (708) 649-7140 or log onto our
website at www.hephzibahhome.org

COMING SOON...

Hephzibah's New and Improved Website

Story on page 2



ways to help | our donors | about | programs | events | search

hephzibah
CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION

Providing safety and care to society's most vulnerable children since 1897.
Group Homes, Foster Care, Family Services, Day Care

Donate Today!

Welcome to our home. We are very proud of it and those who have had home first of all. At Hephzibah, our home is the space where our children heal and grow. It is the space that holds their hopes, their fears and their yearnings. It is the sounds of their laughter, their cries and their footsteps.

Our home is the place where those who first came to us as small children, now come back to visit as adults. It is their foundation, their anchor. It is where their childhood memories come back to life. Our home knows tragedies and triumphs, overwhelming sadness

gratitude



THE GROUP HOMES —

Helping Children Heal for 25 years

THE BEGINNING OF THE GROUP HOMES has its origins in our Day Care program. It was the mid-1980s and the Day Care program served working families in our community who needed quality child care while the parents were at work.

As time went on, it became obvious that even with support of day care, a significant number of families were struggling with a variety of issues, and circumstances forced many to enter the foster care system. This caused further disruption for children in these families when they could not be guaranteed placement with a local foster family. Compounding the disruption and loss experienced in their lives, the children were forced to leave the safety and security of friends and teachers who knew them well, who offered the continuity and support these young children most needed at such a stressful time.

These heartbreaking cases concerned staff at Hephzibah and those in charge immediately addressed the issue by working with other local agencies to ensure these children stayed in the community. Hephzibah staff personally stepped in to foster the children or to locate local families who were willing to do so.



The first family to be embraced in this way included five children whose mother died and who had no relatives available to take them. Not only would they have been separated after this tremendous loss, but they would have been sent away from the community where they were known and loved.

After a short time, those who were fostering many of these children saw they were in need of special services. To address this situation, Hephzibah created the Diagnostic Treatment Center (then called the Shelter) — which was the beginning of what we now know as the Group Homes!

Today, Hephzibah has two group home programs: the **Diagnostic Treatment Center** which is our short-term group home where children undergo a program of stabilization, evaluation, assessment and placement recommendations; and the **Residence** for children who require the consistency and special services of a longer-term group home. Our Group Homes' mission is to provide a safe, supportive, stable, and structured environment, and the intensive therapy traumatized children need to begin to trust and heal. ♥



COMING SOON....

Hephzibah's New and Improved Website

WE'VE UPDATED OUR WEBSITE to better communicate Hephzibah's history, mission and innovative programs and up-to-the-minute news -- to the general public and to members of our community! The new format is great looking and easy to navigate. We will send out inaugural emails on the day the site goes "live"—so check your virtual mailbox for this exciting announcement! *

SOME HIGHLIGHTS:

- ♥ **User friendly content about specific programs**, including information about how to become a foster parent, as well as outlining the support services Hephzibah provides foster parents.
- ♥ **Donor Spotlight** — A page highlighting the good works of our partners, featuring their contribution to the Hephzibah community.
- ♥ A better "surfing" experience!

* If you are not on our email list, send your address to jstix@hephzibahhome.org to be included. Note: our web address will remain the same: www.hephzibahhome.org

Heart of Gold Ball

Hosted by the Oak Park Auxiliary Board

Join us at the Chicago Marriott Downtown, Magnificent Mile on **Saturday, March 5th** at 6:30pm for the 2011 Heart of Gold Ball.

CELEBRITY EMCEE IS **PETER SAGAL**, host of NPR's nationally syndicated show, "Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me!" After **cocktails and dinner, dance to the beat of Tributosaurus**, a tribute band comprised of the finest musicians in Chicago! Get ready for the excitement of **live and silent auctions** featuring an impressive variety of packages and trips.



Best of all, when you attend, you are supporting the Hephzibah Children's Association's programs for abused and neglected children and at-risk families. Purchase tickets while they last! For over 110 years Hephzibah has provided a safe, secure space for over 20,000 traumatized children in the Chicagoland area. ♥

For information, call Director of Development Molly Philosophos at 708.649.7140



FEATURED

Silent Auction

ITEM

Not Just for Oenophiles

You have to attend the Gala if you want to **place a bid** on this EdgeStar 32 bottle Dual Zone Wine Cooler with Stainless Steel Trimmed French Doors... **and the 50 bottles of quality wine that come with it!** Of course, this is just **one of the hundreds of fabulous goodies** that will be offered...from gifts for sports fans, to jewelry, to luxury get-aways and more!



Silent Auction item: EdgeStar 32 bottle wine cooler with 50 bottles of quality wine.

Some of the Wonderful Holiday Events at Hephzibah!

We at Hephzibah are so grateful to our community partners, volunteers and donors who made this a magical holiday season for all of the children and families we serve. We could not do it without you! Thank you!

Family Based Annual Holiday Party

By Julie Dvorsky, Director of Family Based Services

ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2010, the annual **Family Based Holiday Party** took place at the historic Cheney Mansion in Oak Park — our fourth year in a row! The mansion was festooned in cheerful seasonal decorations throughout as MF Global and Blue Plate Catering continued their tradition of co-sponsoring this amazing event.

The MF Global “elves” provided Santa with presents chosen especially for each child. Great care was taken to select and wrap every gift so that it would be extra special. Santa was as jolly as ever, spending extra



time with the children while souvenir photographs were taken to commemorate the visit!

Blue Plate catered the party with a lovely breakfast buffet for our families. Fun activities for the children included face painting and arts and crafts projects. A talented member of Hephzibah’s Western Auxiliary helped the children make cozy scarves from a large selection of colorful, patterned fleece fabric.

As the party came to a conclusion, each family was sent home with a turkey which they could prepare for their own holiday meal. MF Global and Blue Plate spent a great deal of time and energy creating a truly joyous event for all of the children and families who always look forward to this celebration as the highlight of their holiday!

Thanks **MF Global** and **Blue Plate Catering** for making great memories for our children and families! ♥



PHOTOS: DAVIDA WILLIAMS

Exotic and artful designs delighted the children who participated in the face painting activity!



Group Home Children Given the Gift of Fancy Fingers & Toes, Plus Cake and Juice!

THE AVENUE NAIL SPA ON OAK PARK AVENUE hosted a youth oriented spa party for all of the children at the Group Homes. Husband and wife owners **Paul Gong and Shan Shan** opened their salon an hour and a half early on December 19th for this private event. “We wanted to do something fun for the children while giving back to the community,” notes Shan Shan. In addition to mini manicures and pedicures, the couple and their staff served the children cake and juice to round out the morning of pampering and TLC. ♥



UPS Delivers at the 24th Annual Bring-A-Gift Party 2010

A SPECIAL THANKS TO **UPS EMPLOYEES** who collected hundreds of toys for the children and delivered them in their signature brown trucks (along with a **Forest Park Police** escort)! And thanks to Hephzibah staff Sarah Niederman and the Hephzibah staff volunteers for their energy and hard work in throwing the party! And super kudos to Doc Ryan's for hosting and contributing to Hephzibah's mission! In addition to the wonderful gifts, over \$5,000 was raised to help the children at Hephzibah.



Customers and Employees at Whole Foods Sponsor Children's Holiday Wishes

FOR THE FIFTEENTH YEAR, holiday shoppers embraced the giving spirit of the season by selecting a Hephzibah child's special wish from the Giving Tree located at the Whole Foods Store in River Forest. After taking time to honor each unique request, customers returned to Whole Foods with the gifts — which were delivered to the children. Three-hundred and seventy-two wishes were granted! Thank you to the **generous donors** and to **Whole Foods** for hosting the Giving Tree.

VietNow Vets and their friend Santa hosted their 21st Annual Christmas Party for Children in the Group Homes this year.

PHOTO: HANNAH KRALOVEC



Bruce Lund as Santa and the Lund and Company Team of Elves surprised the Group Home Children with Gifts and Holiday Cheer

By Tara Blue

WITH SLEIGH BELLS RINGING, Santa and the elves burst into the Hephzibah dining room! After a question and answer session with Santa, each child's name was announced when it was their turn to get a gift. The joyful screams, cheers and hugs for Santa were touching and priceless. These 26 children were afraid that Santa did not know where they lived and wouldn't be able to find them. This year he definitely found them — safe and sound at Hephzibah!



A Tall Visitor Greet the Children at Representative Camille Lilly's Holiday Party

ON DECEMBER 24TH, the Group Home children attended a festive gathering in the community room at the **Chicago Police Department's 15th District Station**. In addition to enjoying refreshments and having their pictures taken with Santa, the children met **NCAA National Basketball Player of the Year, Evan Turner**, who is a guard for the Philadelphia 76ers!

Meet the Spirit of Hephzibah Award Winners!

Every year three **Hephzibah Staff members are recognized** for their foresight, dedication and willingness to go **above and beyond** their job descriptions and program goals to ensure Hephzibah fulfills our important mission: to assist children and families in need. Congratulations to **Dianna Thomas**, **Denise Jackson** and **Jaime Marsico** for their generous contributions to our mission! ♥



Jaime Marsico



Dianna Thomas



Denise Jackson

Jaime Marsico

Childcare Supervisor
Diagnostic Treatment Center

How did you first get involved with Hephzibah?

My cousin Emily Schultz worked upstairs in the Residence and she encouraged me to apply for a position in the Diagnostic Treatment Center. I also worked for the Day Care Program one summer while I was in college (I went to Bradley University and majored in Social Work).

How long have you worked here?

I've worked at Hephzibah for seven years, plus that one summer when I worked in the Day Care Camp.

What has inspired you in your work?

I always wanted to work with children. Teaching was an option, and the summers off sounded great, but I wanted my career to focus on an environment where I could have a direct impact on each child individually — especially where I could make their lives better.

How do you feel your work contributes to Hephzibah's mission?

It's rewarding. Just last week I had a child come back to visit — one who I worked with four years ago when she was living in the house. Seeing how great she is doing now — well, it is incredibly gratifying.

What might some of your co-workers be surprised to know about you?

I have no surprises to reveal to my co-workers... I'm an open book!

What do you do when you are not working at Hephzibah?

When I'm not working at Hephzibah I like to run, hang out with friends, and love to shop — shoes are my downfall! Of course I'm a Cubs fan because I live in Wrigleyville!

Dianna Thomas

Accounting Clerk

How did you hear about Hephzibah?

When I moved to Chicago from Iowa, I wanted a part time position that would allow me to stay at home with my children. For a time I worked at Parenthesis where I learned about Hephzibah because the Day Care Program was so well known in the area. When a position became available, I applied. I knew I would enjoy working for a nonprofit. It's similar to academia in that you are working on other people's behalf.

How long have you worked at Hephzibah?

Just over five years.

What has inspired you in your work?

Whether I am working on accounts payable assignments or Medicaid issues, the pictures of the children on the walls are always a reminder of why I am here — to help the children who are in need.

How do you feel your work contributes to Hephzibah's mission?

Helping to keep the financial side of our organization in good working order allows Hephzibah to bring important programs to children and families we serve. And my work with Medicaid directly helps the children continue to receive critical services they need.

What might some of your co-workers be surprised to know about you?

Many of my co-workers already know this, but that I have a Bachelor of Science Degree in biology and PhD in physiology.

What do you do when you are not at Hephzibah?

I enjoy reading murder mysteries and camping. I do have a fascination with vintage cookbooks — especially ones that contain unusual recipes!

Denise Jackson

Administrative Assistant

How did you first get involved with Hephzibah?

I was a teller at Community Bank and was interested in finding a more fulfilling job. I answered an ad in the *Tribune* for the position at Hephzibah, researched the history of the organization and immediately had a good feeling about it. After interviewing with Rudi I knew the job would be rewarding and a good fit!

How long have you worked here?

Four and a half years. It will be 5 years in September. It's gone fast!

What has inspired you in your work?

To me, staff at Day Care sites, and the staff at the Group Homes, the Family Based social workers — they are the spirit of Hephzibah through the work that they do with children who come from difficult backgrounds and face all sorts of challenges. It inspires me. I commend them.

How do you feel your work contributes to Hephzibah's mission?

I handle the mandatory paperwork that is required by DCFS for licensing and audits. It is my mission to make sure everything in our files is in place so our social workers, day care workers, and Residence and Diagnostic Shelter staff can continue to provide important services to our clients uninterrupted — to help children and families. Without the licensing we can't go forward.

What might some of your co-workers be surprised to know about you?

I am a grandmother of four children ages eleven, ten, eight and seven...three granddaughters and a grandson who all live in the Oak Park area. I love being a grandma and having my grandchildren nearby!

What do you do when you are not working at Hephzibah?

I love taking care of my family. I'm the oldest of eight — all live in the Chicago area. I'm family oriented — always have been that way.



Wish list

FOR THE GROUP HOMES

We are always need these basics:

- ♥ Washcloths
- ♥ Socks for boys and girls
- ♥ Plastic mattress covers for twin beds
- ♥ Hair supplies: barrettes, ponytail holders, brushes and detangler
- ♥ Bath tub toys
- ♥ Classic DVD's especially: Walt Disney – vintage and new Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles movies! (Yup, they're baack!)

FOR FAMILY BASED SERVICES

For our families who are struggling to improve their children's lives, these essentials go a long way to relieve some of the stress of economic hardship.

- ♥ Jewel Gift Cards for food (or similar grocery cards)
- ♥ CTA Monthly Passes or pre-filled transit cards (both student and adult)
- ♥ Target or Walmart Gift Cards
- ♥ Towels



Magician Jake Prosek, assisted by Peter Murphy, captivated the audience with his sleight of hand!

Former Hephzibah Resident Visits! Doesn't Pull a Rabbit Out of His Hat... But Surprises the Kids with a Magical Guest!



HEPHZIBAH ALUM **BRIAN FRUITS**, along with enthusiastic members of his church, brought donations plus a magic show to the children at the home. The magician, **Jake Prosek**, a former student of Brian's, charmed and amazed the most discerning crowd — our kids!



Hephzibah Alum Brian Fruits and members of his church group.

Board of Directors

Sarah Arnett
Jackie Barlow
Terry Brown
Sherry Carbery
Joe Dahir
Francesca DeBiase
Leslie Jones
Barbara Kahn
Kenna MacKinnon
John McIlwain
Beth Pecenka
Eric Sorensen
Maureen Stratton
Byron Taylor
Cheryl ter Horst
Mark Trinko
Audrey Williams-Lee
Tom Yates

Executive Director

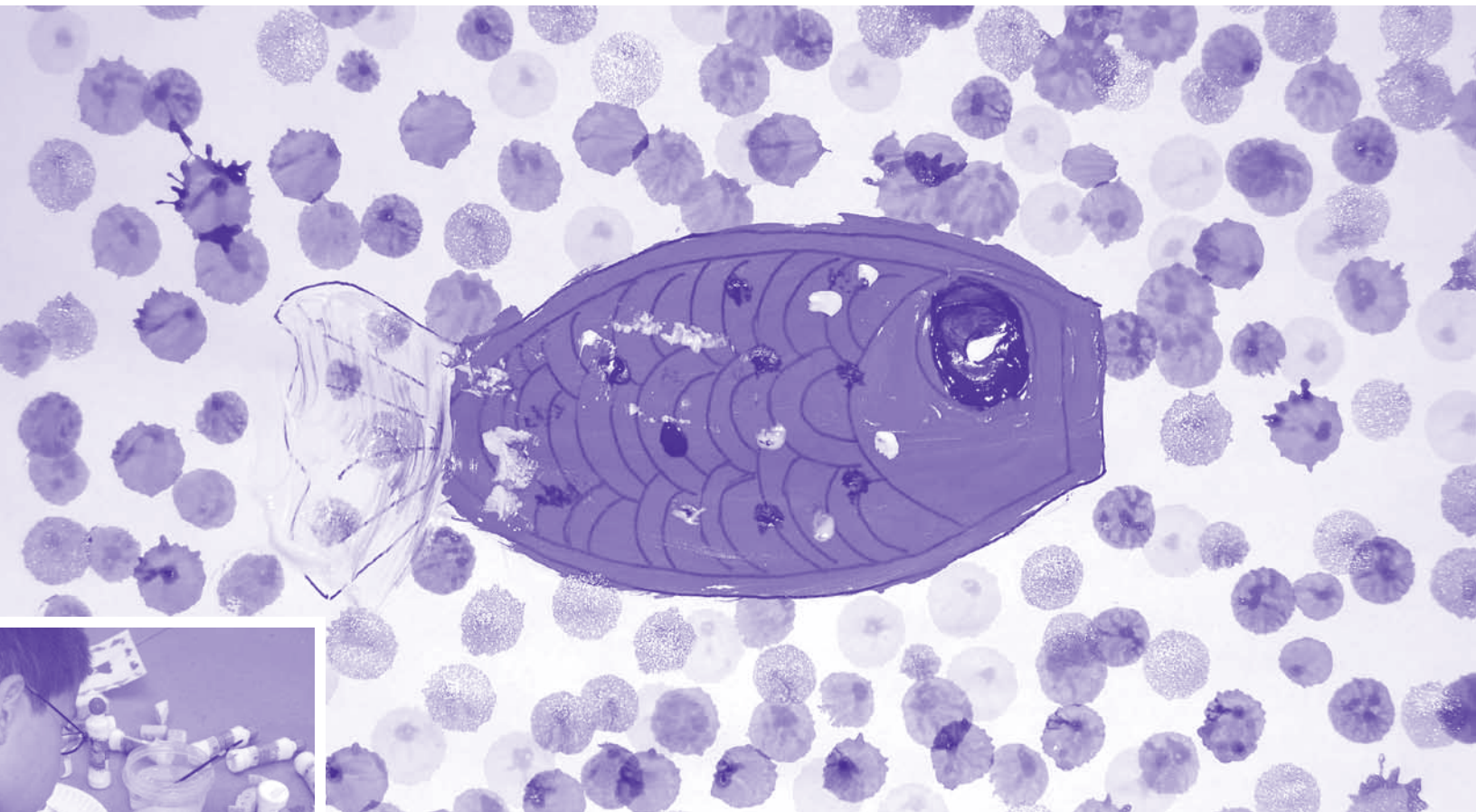
Mary Anne Brown

Newsletter Contributors

Boyle Design
Jennifer Stix, contributing writer
Molly Philosophos
Tara Blue
Julie Dvorsky
Susan Reich
Rudi Vanderburg

Winter 2011

To make a correction to your mailing address or if you are receiving duplicates of this newsletter, please send an e-mail to bkrause@hephzibahhome.org or call Barbara Krause at 708.649.7140. *Thank you!*



Created by a Hephzibah "Artist in Residence." Thank you to the 19th Century Club for their generous grant to our Colorful Days arts enrichment program. To see this and other works by our children from the 2010 Colorful Days sessions, visit our updated website at www.hephzibahhome.org.