



Hephzibah

Heartbeat

A Newsletter from Oak Park's Home with a Heart: Hephzibah Children's Association

Hephzibah Happenings!

Heart of Gold Ball
 Saturday, March 7, 2009
 Union Station
 Chicago
 See page 3 for more info!

Applauding Our Youth Volunteers
 April 23, 2009
 6 PM – 9 PM
 Oak Park Village Hall

Hoof-It & Hop-It For Hephzibah
 5K Fun Run & Walk
 Memorial Day
 Monday, May 25, 2009
 Glen Ellyn

Duck, Dodge, Donate
 Dodgeball Tournament
 Saturday, July 25, 2009
 North Avenue Beach
 Chicago

Hephzibah's Day Care & Operations Office has moved!
 1144 Lake Street, 5th Floor
 Oak Park, IL
 708.649.7140

Want more information on the above?

Call 708.649.7100
 Or log onto our website at
www.HephzibahHome.org



HEPHZIBAH AWARDS THE AVIS BUDGET GROUP WITH THE HEART OF THE HOME AWARD

By Jennifer Stix, Development Assistant



The first official act of the Budget Pride Committee was back-to-school backpacks for Hephzibah's neediest children. (Above) The Avis Budget Group brings the Budget Bus to drop off 60 backpacks.

On Saturday evening, March 7th 2009, Hephzibah Children's Association will award Avis Budget Group, Mr. James Van Vliet, and Mr. Michael Flynn with The Heart of the Home Award at the organization's annual Heart of Gold Ball, held at Union Station's Great Hall. The Heart of the Home Award honors a person or group of volunteers dedicated to Hephzibah's mission with a strong commitment to a particular project or program within the organization.

It all began with a box of crayons...

In December 2006, the employees of Budget Rent-A-Car Systems at O'Hare planned to hold a holiday charity drive. While searching for an organization compatible with Budget's mission, Jim's wife, Cathy Van Vliet heard about Hephzibah Children's Association. Cathy learned that Hephzibah needed crayons, coloring books and markers. Budget District Manager Juanita Chaidez and Cathy collected the materials and Jim delivered them to Hephzibah. The seed was planted.

After the December delivery, Jim commented on the warm yet professional reception he received at Hephzibah to fellow Budget bus supervisor, Mike Flynn. Jim thought that Hephzibah might be the answer to their spring community service project. It was then that Mike revealed he had lived at the Home from 1967 through 1971 and that Hephzibah was a truly special place. He wholeheartedly agreed that they should nominate Hephzibah as their project of choice.

Maureen McGoorty, Director of Volunteer Services, hosted their visit to the 2007 Hephzibah Home Rodeo Day, an end of the school year celebration. After meeting Executive Director, Mary Anne Brown, touring the home and spending time with the children, Jim and Mike knew their co-workers would be touched by Hephzibah's mission. During the visit, they identified areas of opportunity for their volunteer group to show its Budget Pride.

Things progressed rapidly after that initial contact. Jim and Mike won immediate



For the past two years, the Budget team has turned out in force to help with the Sunday morning pancake breakfast during Homecoming weekend. Michael Flynn (left) and Avis Budget Group Regional Manager, Bob Jarrett (right) volunteered at the Hephzibah Homecoming 2008.

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Hephzibah Heartbeat...

HEPHZIBAH'S HOMECOMING WEEKEND



Twenty-five former residents of Hephzibah Home, from the 1930's to the 2000's, returned for Homecoming weekend.

Hephzibah Children's Association held its second homecoming celebration for former residents of Hephzibah Home the weekend of October 17th -19th, 2008. Twenty-five former residents participated in the weekend's festivities that began with an open house on Friday and concluded with a pancake breakfast on Sunday. The highlight of the weekend was the scrapbooking event on Saturday afternoon where alumni assembled their own memory book from Hephzibah's photo archives and ended the evening with a formal dinner at Holley Court Terrace. It was a wonderful, emotional weekend for all alumni, staff, and volunteers who participated.

During the dinner on Saturday night, former residents had the chance to get up and say a few words about their former home. Here are some quotes from Hephzibah's Alumni.



On Saturday afternoon of Homecoming weekend, Alumni shared their lifebooks from their time at Hephzibah and created new lifebooks from Hephzibah's photo archives.

"I'm proud to be a Hephzibah kid. We're Hephzibah kids no matter what."

"It was a difficult time for me coming into the Shelter [Diagnostic Group Home], but it was a building block and it was home for me. You are all like family to me and I love you and want to say 'Thanks.'"

"I don't know if I would have turned out as normal as I did without the start I had at Hephzibah."

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Davida Willams (left) was Brian Fruits' (right) caseworker when he lived at Hephzibah. Brian remembers, "I wanted to be a social worker, just like Davida."



Murial (England) Anderson (left) and Charlotte (England) Foy (right) lived at Hephzibah after World War II with their three sisters.

...from the home with a heart

Hephzibah Children's Association cordially invites you to join us for an evening of dinner, dancing and auction at the

Heart of Gold Ball

Saturday, March 7, 2009

**Union Station, Chicago
225 S. Canal Street
Entrance on Jackson**

*Validated Parking Available At Self-Park Garage
on Jackson & Canal*

**Sponsor VIP 6:00 p.m
Cocktails at 6:30 p.m.
Dinner at 8:00 p.m.**

**\$200 per person
Black Tie Optional**

**For more information call
708-649-7158**

**Or go to
www.HephzibahHome.org**



The Heart of Gold Ball is an elegant dinner and auction honoring individuals who have exhibited outstanding personal or professional achievement affecting disadvantaged children.

We invite you to celebrate with us to honor the people who strive to make a profound difference in our community and in the world by committing to help Hephzibah save the lives of, and build successful futures for, Hephzibah's extraordinary children.

Heart of Gold Award ♥ Mr. John Buck &
The John Buck Company

Heart of the Home Award ♥ Budget Rent-A-Car O'Hare of
the Avis Budget Group, Mr. James Van Vliet, and
Mr. Michael Flynn

Budget's signature project is the teddy bear project. Awaiting each new arrival to the Group Homes is a teddy bear, dressed in a shirt personalized with the child's name, accompanied by the message: "I've been waiting here just for you."



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support from Budget coworkers through the Budget Pride Committee and soon they were hosting a dinner at the Home for the children. Avis Budget Group managers Bill Rogers, Bob Jarrett, and John Butzke also embraced the projects, partnering with the group to provide backpacks filled with back-to-school supplies for each child at the home. It was only a matter of time before Avis Budget Group corporate offices in Parsippany, New Jersey became aware of the group's good works, featuring their activities in the company's quarterly publication, The Budget News.

The dedicated employees from Budget, O'Hare continue to offer essential support. They provide volunteers for the Hephzibah Alumni Homecoming, the end of school year Rodeo, they sponsor dinners and "private showings" of current children's movies, and conduct clothing, toy and book drives. Budget also partners with Red Robin Restaurants, Bearly Friends, Jimmy John's, Great American Bagel, K & S Carr Care and the Lake Theatre to provide services for the children living at Hephzibah Home.

Budget's signature project is a heartfelt gesture that is meant to welcome and comfort each new child who first comes to Hephzibah. Ready at the door, awaiting the new arrival, is a gift-wrapped teddy bear, dressed in a shirt personalized with the child's name, accompanied by the message: "I've been waiting here just for you."

A group of creative and dedicated people took a simple box of crayons and grew an idea – an idea of generosity, commitment and creativity that has made a profound impact on lives of our neediest children... children who will one day influence future generations.

Hephzibah is proud to award the Heart of the Home of the Award to James Van Vliet, Michael Flynn, and Avis Budget Group's location at Budget Rent A Car-O'Hare for their stewardship and devotion to the well-being of our children.

Hephzibah Heartbeat...

FAMILY-BASED ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

By Jennifer Stix, Development Assistant and Julie Dvorsky, Director of Family Based Services

On Saturday, December 13, 2008, Hephzibah's annual Family-Based Holiday party took place at the beautiful Cheney Mansion in Oak Park. For the second year in a row, MF Global and Blue Plate Catering, both located in Chicago, co-sponsored the party.

Festivities included a delicious breakfast buffet donated by Blue Plate Catering which offered both adult and child-friendly selections. Craft and face painting were provided by members of the Western Auxiliary who also helped the children make cozy fleece scarves each with a jingle bell sewn on.

Santa paid a special visit and gave each child a present (courtesy of the "elves" from MF Global) along with a souvenir photo of their exchange! As the Holiday Party came to a conclusion, each family was sent home with a turkey which they could prepare at home for their own holiday meal.

"The Annual Holiday Party is a wonderful occasion which allows the children to experience and share the holidays with both their biological and foster families," said Julie Dvorsky, Director of Family Based Services. Mary Anne Brown, Executive Director of Hephzibah Children's Association notes, "This event speaks to the mission and spirit of our Family Based Services, which is to provide a wide range of support and intervention to families in need."



MF Global and Blue Plate generously sponsored this year's Family Based Services holiday party. (Left to Right) Jim Ward – MF Global, Kathleen Ward, Jim Horan – President of Blue Plate, and Maureen McGoorty – Hephzibah's Director of Volunteers.

THE PAJAMA PROGRAM AND THE TAUBMAN COMPANY SEND HEPHZIBAH ON THE POLAR EXPRESS

By Julie Dvorsky, Director of Family Based Services

The Pajama Program Illinois Chapter President, Shirlee Yeary and the Taubman Company, owner of several malls throughout the United States including the Woodfield Mall in Schaumburg, invited Hephzibah's Group Homes and Family Based Services to participate in a special holiday event held on November 7, 2008.

The Pajama Program is a not-for-profit organization that provides new, warm pajamas and books to children in need in the United States and around the world. The Taubman Company asked the Pajama Program to choose a charity to participate in this first-ever holiday event that Taubman sponsored in their malls throughout the country. Hephzibah was thrilled to be invited by the Pajama Program to attend.

Prior to the event, the children received new pajamas donated by the Taubman Company. Chaperoned by staff and parents, thirty-six children arrived at the Woodfield Mall in their comfy new pajamas. The children were thrilled to be at the mall before their doors opened to the public. They eagerly awaited the surprises their very own private event held.

The "Conductor" from the Polar Express greeted the children and led them to the Rain Forest Café for a wonderful buffet breakfast. The Rain Forest Café staff and members of the Taubman marketing team ensured that each child and adult had whatever they needed. The restaurant also gave each child a goody bag and a Rain Forest Café backpack.

The children were then escorted to the main area of the mall that had been decorated with the Polar Express theme. A large walk-through snow globe sprinkled snow on the children as they entered the Polar Express area. The children then enjoyed a special reading of the Polar Express by the Conductor.

An arts and crafts table provided entertainment for the children to color and make ornaments while they took turns visiting Santa. At the end of this eventful day, each child was given the Polar Express book to take home with them. Hephzibah greatly appreciates the invitation and all of the planning and efforts made by the Pajama Program and the Taubman Company on behalf of our children. It was a magical day that the children will cherish for years to come.

...from the home with a heart

SPRIT OF HEPHZIBAH AWARDS

By Rudi Vanderburg, Director of Operations

Congratulations to Ken Clayborne, Shelter Child Care Worker; Barbara Krause, Development Database Manager; and Damon Rafiei, Day Care Child Worker, for being awarded this year's Spirit of Hephzibah



Awards. This annual award recognizes individuals for their many contributions to Hephzibah children and families, their loyalty and dedication, and willingness to go above and beyond their job descriptions in achieving program goals. Nominations for this award are submitted to Mary Anne Brown by Directors each year, but only three are chosen.

Hephzibah is fortunate to have such a wonderful and caring staff. We thank each of you for your dedication to Hephzibah's mission, and for the quality and consistency of your work in making Hephzibah an outstanding program for so many children and families.

Thank you OPUS North and the OPUS Foundation!

Thank you to the OPUS Foundation for their generous grant of \$50,000 to support the Educational Enrichment program for children in Hephzibah's Foster Care program. The OPUS Foundation gives to programs that promote healthy social and academic development of school-aged youth, with an emphasis on fostering their aspirations to stay in school and pursue higher education. Hephzibah's Educational Enrichment program was designed to improve our children's school performance by increasing their self-esteem and courage in the classroom while instilling a passion for learning.

The Opus North Corporation, a member of The Opus Group, is a full-service design-build development firm serving the north central portion of the United States with headquarters in Chicago. With in-house expertise in office, industrial, retail, multifamily, government, and institutional projects, Opus North has developed more than 47.1 million square feet of space since starting operations in 1972.

We greatly appreciate the OPUS Foundation's generous partnership to ensure success for Hephzibah's foster children.

CLARA PROUTY RUNS FOR HEPHZIBAH!



Congratulations to Clara Prouty for completing the Bank of America 2008 Marathon. Clara raised approximately \$2,000 to benefit Hephzibah. Hephzibah staff waited for Clara at the 18 mile marker to cheer her on. We thank Clara for choosing Hephzibah as the beneficiary of her effort and training. Congratulations!



Photo by Paula Petek

Thank you to Whole Foods for hosting Hephzibah for a community day in their River Forest store. Hephzibah staff and volunteers shared our mission with Whole Foods customers in addition to raising dollars for Hephzibah's holiday drive. Over \$2,000 was donated in one day! A very special thank you to John Hall, Whole Foods Marketing/PR Manager (pictured above with Maureen McGoorty)

Hephzibah Heartbeat...

Cheers to Hephzibah's Auxiliary Boards!!!



Back Row:
Kim Lutz, First President, Jessica Gottsman,
Current President, Alix Darrow, Katie Vogt

Front Row:
Kelly Swartz, Kathy Malpede, Tina Hutchinson

Hephzibah's Western Auxiliary Board held a very special meeting with all of the past presidents of the Board. All past presidents attended except Noreen Marando who now resides in Seattle, Washington. The Western Auxiliary Board looks forward to a very busy spring season as they plan for Hoof-It and Hop-It for Hephzibah, an annual 5k family fun run benefitting Hephzibah held on Memorial Day.

DODGEBALL 2008!

On a beautiful summer day in July along Lake Michigan at North Avenue Beach, Hephzibah's Chicago Auxiliary Board hosted its first annual DUCK, DODGE, DONATE Dodgeball Tournament. Over 160 participants joined in this fun event that raised over \$15,000 for abused and neglected children in our community. Thanks to our teams, volunteers, players, spectators, and donors - it was great fun, a beautiful day and wonderful event. A special thank you to our sponsors especially Goose Island, Vienna Beef and Glaceau Vitamin Water.

**Save the Date for
DUCK, DODGE, DONATE 2009!
Saturday, July 25, 2009**



OAK PARK AUXILIARY HAPPENINGS

By: Barbara Krause, Oak Park Auxiliary Liaison

Fall Harvest Festival

A beautiful and colorful late October morning was host to the Oak Park Auxiliary and the Group Homes Program children as they celebrated the harvest season in grandiose style. As the fragrant smell of homemade Apple Crisp dessert filled Hephzibah Home, the children participated in a variety of activities including pumpkin decorating, Halloween games, crafts, and learning the fine art of apple tasting.

Holiday Gift Tag Sale

The Auxiliary Board sends a special thanks to all of the artistic participants from Hephzibah's Day Care program who submitted an entry in the 2nd Annual Holiday Gift Card project. It was a hard decision as every entry was filled with the joy of the season. After a very difficult judging, the following student artwork was chosen to be printed on the gift tags: Kai Daley, Kierra Gaddis, Haley Huckstep, Emma Rodriguez, Jonathan Rosen and Sophie Shaw. Special Thanks to all of the local Oak Park and River Forest businesses who sold the cards during the Holiday season.

Angel Shopping

While most families are busy shopping for their own friends and families, fourteen giving Auxiliary women became Angel Shoppers for 20 single-parent Day Care families this Holiday season. After almost two decades of handling this project with her family and a group of dedicated Hephzibah donors, past Hephzibah Board of Director's President, Anneke Taglia, passed the shopping torch to Auxiliary Board member Karin Bianucci who along with Auxiliary Board President Pamela Dombrowski, organized the new group of enthusiastic shoppers. Armed with a list of the sizes, favorite colors and gender of each child, and a donation of \$4,300 from generous supporters, the women purchased a new winter coat, mittens/gloves, scarves and clothing for each child. Coordinating their efforts with toy donations made to the Whole Foods Giving Tree, Annette Anderson (Day Care Administrative Assistant) distributed the packages to each well deserving family.

To Mrs. Erickson

By Trish (Saunders) Dugger, April 1999
Former Hephzibah Resident (1937 to 1943)

What do kids know?
Kids know everything.

They know who to trust
and who will give them away.
They know when to keep their
mouths shut and when to run.

Kids know how to disappear
behind their eyeballs and
they know how to keep from
crying even when they hurt.

I knew right away my
life was changing when

Mrs. E
came to be the new
superintendent of the
children's home.

Splendid and tall as a
Christmas tree, she walked
among the tables of kids
at supper, smiling, loaf of
bread under her arm,
passing out slices
to anyone still hungry.

and Mrs. E paid attention.
Paid attention to me, to me.
I became the star of my own life.
I tiptoed out from the side wings
into center stage spotlight,
and her applause for me was like
cold lemonade and ginger snaps
on a sultry summer afternoon.

Hot chocolate in the middle of
a stormy night when some
of us couldn't sleep: Mrs. E
silently beckoned and we,
rising like ghosts from our
dormitory beds, followed her
downstairs to the kitchen,
a warning finger to her lips:
ssh ssh

And I knew this was like
being in your own family,
with your own mother.
And I knew I was safe.

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"I could tell you so many stories about Hephzibah. The giant stuffed panda is my most vivid memory. I didn't need parents – I had Mary Anne [Hephzibah's Executive Director]. She was my mom. I had more brothers and sisters than you could shake a stick at! The people that I met shaped me into who I am today. The holidays were spectacular – a bag filled with presents. I am so thankful for everyone, especially Mary Anne."

"This was the happiest five years of my childhood. It was a safe haven. It felt so normal."

"Hephzibah changed me, and the way I am now is because of where I was. I now live in Wisconsin and have a great life. I want to be a writer. I think back and I'm glad that I got to experience what I experienced. Mary Anne is one of my role models."



Wishlist

- ♥ Easels
- ♥ Video Camera
- ♥ Bed Linens, Comforters
- ♥ New Pillows
- ♥ New Socks and Underwear
- ♥ Batteries (particularly AA and AAA)
- ♥ Memberships to Museums and Zoos
- ♥ Subscriptions to children's magazines
- ♥ Gift Certificates to local restaurants

Thank you  for you support

UPS DELIVERS AT THE BRING A GIFT PARTY 2008



Hephzibah and friends celebrated at the Annual Bring-A-Gift Party 2008. Hundreds of gifts were donated and almost \$4,000 was raised. A special thanks to UPS (above) for their continued commitment to Hephzibah's children. UPS employees collected over 300 toys and delivered them in their signature brown trucks. Thanks to Bring-A-Gift Chair, Janet Sullivan and the committee for their energy and hard work in throwing the party.

Hephzibah Children's Association

Since 1897, Hephzibah Children's Association has focused on the prosperity of children. Hephzibah is a community-based agency which provides a range of high quality services to children and their families, including:

- group homes and foster care
- child abuse prevention
- child welfare assessments
- after-school day care

Hephzibah's "home with a heart" provides much needed resources to help children & families cope in today's world.



Hephzibah Children's Association

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