

# NEW VIEW

Fall 2010

THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF THE ORANGES AND SHORT HILLS

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### NOVEMBER

**Fri 11/12, 9am-2pm**

SPAC Human Trafficking  
Workshop  
Kean University

**Wed 11/17, 7-9pm**

GMM at Above,  
South Orange

**Fri 11/22, 9am-4pm**

SPAC "Day at the  
Capitol", State House,  
Trenton

**Sat 11/20, 9:30am-  
12:30pm**

Thanksgiving baskets  
DIAD with  
Salvation Army, East Orange

### DECEMBER

**Tues 12/14, 12-2pm**

SPAC Legislative  
Luncheon, Short Hills  
Hilton

**Wed 12/15, 7pm**

Holiday Party, President's  
home, Short Hills

## JLOSH IN THE COMMUNITY

*Submitted by Robin Grapkowski, President Elect, and the CPD Committee*

This is a year for expanding our community horizons and finding our next community focus. As such, we think it is both important and fun to take a look back at what JLOSH has been doing for the last 98 years. You'll be amazed at how many of our projects turned into established local organizations!

Below are just some highlights – the complete history can be found at [www.jlosh.org](http://www.jlosh.org).

The concept of the Junior League is much the same today as it was a century ago. ***The basic purpose of the Junior League then - "to foster interest among its members in the social, economic, educational, cultural and civic conditions of the community and to make efficient their volunteer service" - is still the essence of what the League is about today.***

Our league, the Junior League of the Oranges and Short Hills (JLOSH), joined the national group in 1913. Locally, we helped further the establishment of the **Red Cross** in 1914-1918. In the 1920's, we helped organize **Girl Scouting** into the Essex County area.



*New Eyes for the Needy Building*

***New Eyes for the Needy***, founded in 1932 by Mrs. Arthur Terry, was the project taken over by the Junior Service League of Short Hills (our name until we joined with the Junior League of the Oranges). This internationally known charity was handed over to the community in 1958, but still has among its board members and volunteers many sustainers from JLOSH.

In the 1930's, during the Depression Era, Leagues organized community volunteer bureaus as the need for social services grew. Our League answered the

challenge locally in 1935 by organizing the **Resource File for the Bureau of Associated Charities**, which developed into the **Family and Children's Service of the Oranges**.

Ever hear of **Meals on Wheels**? In 1958-1959 our League financed a six-month pilot project to get this feeding program for homebound people up and running in East Orange. At that time our

League also helped start an organization that continues to be a vital part of our community today, the **Millburn-Short Hills First Aid Squad**.

The **Cora Hartshorn Arboretum School Extension Program** was launched in 1961 when the League undertook the financial responsibility of renovating the **Stone House** and establishing a nature education program.

One of the first big efforts of our League occurred in 1971, when we allocated \$21,000 as the local share for matching funds under Title IV of the Social Security Act, to coordinate day care services in Essex and West Hudson counties. The result was the **Day Care Coordinating Council**



*Cora Hartshorn Arboretum*

*continued on page 7*

## Point of View



Guest speaker Lenore Skenazy and  
JLOSH President Laura Overdeck

*JLOSH exists precisely to make us stop and notice our local surroundings, and to shift time away from our own lives towards our neighbors who need our help.*

In our fast-paced, high-intensity part of the country, it is so hard to pull out of our frenetic routines, take a breath, and look around at what else needs to be done. But here in our service area, we don't have to look very far. Essex County has some of the wealthiest towns in the state, and yet one-sixth of households live *below the poverty line*. We boast some of the top school districts in New Jersey, but also have countless urban high schools where only 10% of students meet state academic standards.

Because we all have many demands on our time, JLOSH needs to make sure that every minute of our members' time makes as big an impact as possible. That's one of our key goals this year, especially in our Community Council. Many of our projects have had a lasting impact in our community, as shown in the first story of this newsletter. To

continue to make a strong impact, we're surveying local nonprofits to find out exactly what help they need. We're doing Done in a Day events with groups we haven't worked with before, to learn more about their issues and to expose ourselves to potential signature projects. By spring we hope to have several powerful, fulfilling opportunities to consider.

To do great work, to contribute that time, we need people. So we're also working hard to round up a strong provisional class. We had a fabulous event with Lenore Skenazy, famous as "America's Worst Mom." Her speech had the audience rolling, but also made serious points about the downside of overprotecting our kids. It's a compelling and relevant topic, and it brought many new faces to the event - and raised our visibility as a great organization to join.

Finally, we're working hard to spread the word about our work. We've revamped our brochure to drive home key points about the extensive need in our service area. We've also packaged our great community work for our fundraising kits. Great projects need both time and money, and we're planning a spring fundraiser that matches the excitement of our work in the other councils!

All of this momentum has been built by our fabulous active membership, together with wise observations from our advisory actives and sustainers. Thank you all for your time, your thoughts, and your contributions, as we look for new opportunities that earn the right to *your* time given the many other demands in your lives.

Sincerely,

Laura Overdeck, President

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

*by Antoinette Fraser, Membership VP*

Gail Davis and the Trainings and Meetings Committee have been working to make our GMM's more socially enriching and appetizing. Just watch those calories Ladies! Upcoming social events will include family members to enable us to, in Gail's words, "...forge new bonds of friendship and sisterhood."

Our Nominating folks headed by Helen Lynas have been enjoying getting together with active members in the Fall Advisor Meetings. If you haven't yet, please contact your advisor to discuss your future with this great organization. Remember, whatever you tell your advisor is strictly confidential.

Our Provisional leaders Robin Peacock and Loren Balady have to be the hardest working women in the League! Plus, they have a challenge for all of you:

### How many potential members do you know?

*Be the one to add the most women to our upcoming Provisional Class and you will win a fabulous grand prize! All participants who bring in a potential new member will be entered in a raffle for more fun prizes.*

# SUSTAINER SPOTLIGHT: SHELLY OLIVER HOLLIS

*Submitted by Robin Grapkowski, President Elect*



*Shelly with sons Will and Sid*

Born in Orange, **Shelly Oliver Hollis** now lives in East Orange in the house where her father and aunt were raised. She is a Board Member of the Orange Corp of the Salvation Army, which focuses on children and the homeless and includes a soup kitchen and food pantry. She also keeps her finger on the pulse of what's happening in the community, especially through her close ties to the East Orange Public Library and the Elmwood Presbyterian Church.

Her choice of work also reflects her passion for helping others. Shelly is the former Volunteer Programs Coordinator for Essex Superior Court, which involved overseeing

over 550 volunteers for 9 programs, many of which were in the Family Division (e.g. CASA volunteers). These volunteers provide almost 40K hours of service and save the state approximately \$800K, and the courts would be hard-pressed to fulfill their mission without them! Shelly currently works as a mediator in the Civil Division of the State Judiciary. She loves being in community service and helping people resolve issues without litigating!

Much of her time and energy also goes into her three kids, to whom she has tried to pass on her compassion and dedication to helping others less fortunate. This all started 11 years ago, toting around her infant to JLOSH meetings!

In JLOSH, Shelly served primarily in community projects. However, she also dabbled in other councils, including chairing the first Women of Vision Fundraising Luncheon in 2003. Among many fond memories, Tillmes House and the EOPL Library will always hold a special place in her heart.

Shelly's advice: ***"Have fun and do not be afraid to operate outside of the box or to do something outside one's personal comfort level. This is usually the best way to impact a life less fortunate. Remember, you are in a great position to grace a life...you should never miss an opportunity to do so."***

The first Done-in-a-Day (DIAD) of the year was a great success! We volunteered with New Jersey SEEDS, an academic enrichment and independent school access program for high-achieving, low income students from New Jersey's urban centers. JLOSH volunteers ventured out on a rainy night to help conduct mock interviews of SEEDS Young Scholars, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders from Newark Public Schools who hope to get into independent schools. The kids impressed us with their intelligence and maturity, and we wish them the best of luck with their applications.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR OUR NEXT DIAD – THANKSGIVING BASKETS WITH THE SALVATION ARMY OF EAST ORANGE

**Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**2 shifts: 9:30am to 11am**  
**and**  
**11am to 12:30pm**

**Salvation Army**  
**430 Main Street**  
**EAST ORANGE, NJ**

## Meet the Board



Since joining JLOSH in 2004, **President Laura Overdeck** has spent most of her JLOSH years in the Community Council, including serving as Community VP. She is a trustee of Drew University and vice chair of the board for New Jersey Governor's School. Laura grew up in Westfield and graduated from Princeton University, before crossing the border to get her MBA at the Wharton School of Business. She lives in Short Hills with her husband, John, and their three children. Her hobbies include chocolate, astronomy, dogsledding, and Lego. Photo: Greg Leshé



**President-Elect Robin Grapkowski** joined JLOSH in 2006 and served in community committees and in fundraising. Robin grew up near Tampa, FL, but went to school in Virginia, earning a BBA from William & Mary and MBA from Darden at UVA. She previously worked in management consulting for pharmaceutical clients. She lives in Short Hills with her husband, Andrew, and their two children. She is on the Christ Church Nursery School Board, and her interests include tennis, golf, and relaxing with family and friends. Photo: Greg Leshé



**Community VP Ridie Markenson** joined JLOSH in 2007, realizing it was a great way to meet people and become more involved in the community. She has been active on the Women of Vision Committee and the Children's Theater Committee, and previously served as the Community Project Development Chair. Ridie, who is Upper School Dean of Student Life at The Pingry School, lives with her husband Zev in South Orange. When not working or volunteering, Ridie likes to go biking. Photo: Greg Leshé



**Membership VP Antoinette Fraser** joined JLOSH in 2004. After several community placements, including Safe Haven Women's Shelter and Children's Best Interest, she joined the Nominating Committee. Antoinette is an interior designer and owns a kitchen design showroom, St. Clair Kitchen & Home, in South Orange, where she lives with her husband Earl. She has two grown children. Antoinette also serves on the South Orange Design Committee and is a member of the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners. She volunteers for various family-focused organizations in Newark.



**Treasurer Joi Koenig** has been a Junior League member since 2005. She has previously worked on the Women of Vision, Children's Theater Event, and Provisional Class committees. She lives in Short Hills with her husband and nine-year-old twins. Joi works part time as a program management consultant. In her spare time she likes to cook, go for long walks, and hang out with a good book. Photo: Greg Leshé



**Recording Secretary Sara Thom Agress** has been with JLOSH for 6 years. She is currently the SPAC "B" delegate as well as Recording Secretary, and has held a variety of positions within the Community Council, including serving as co-Chair of the Children's Best Interest committee for two years. Sara is a grant writer for Jewish Vocational Service in East Orange, and previously ran a food pantry in Park Slope, Brooklyn. She has an AB from Brown University in Political Science and a Masters in Health Policy from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Sara has two children and enjoys reading, cooking and camping.



During her six years with the Junior League, **Fundraising Council Chair Sheila McClure** has worked on fundraising and community project committees. Before becoming a stay-at-home mom and professional volunteer, Sheila worked for Oracle Corporation, selling financial solutions software. She lives in Short Hills with husband Rob and their daughter. She enjoys reading, tennis, and football, spending time with family, and sharing a great meal and a good bottle of wine with friends.

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## Meet the Board



Since joining JLOSH in 2007, **Assistant Fundraising Council Chair Jamy Kokinda** has been very active in the Fundraising Council. Outside of JLOSH, Jamy has counseled homeless women and their children through the process of qualifying for housing placement, and she currently rolls up her sleeves at a local soup kitchen. Jamy balances her volunteer efforts with a full-time career in online retail. She grew up in Northeastern Pennsylvania, graduated from the University of Delaware, has lived in Minneapolis MN, and now resides in Short Hills.



**Communications Council Chair Katherine Eklund** joined JLOSH in 2008 and lives in Short Hills with her husband, John Gerbino, and their two children. Kat previously worked in brand management and international marketing for consumer products companies. She received her undergraduate degree from the College of William and Mary and her MBA in marketing from The Wharton School. Kat is a former president of the Newcomers Club of Short Hills and Millburn and is also active at Community Congregational Church and Kent Place School. She enjoys photography and travel.



**Sustainer Council Chair Amy Richardson** has been a member of the Junior League since 1993 when she joined the Junior League of the City of New York. She transferred to JLOSH after she moved into the area with her husband, Michael, and their three children. She has a Master's Degree in Elementary teaching and taught over ten years before becoming a stay-at-home mom. Currently, she is a substitute teacher and a private tutor while she juggles the schedules of three teenagers! She enjoys playing tennis, cooking, and watching her kids play sports.

### Step-up to Executive Committee



**Asst. Community Council Chair Margaret Santana** joined JLOSH in 2007, leading her provisional project with First and Orange, an after-school program for local teenagers. She spent two years doing fundraising, and she spearheaded a successful used book drive for the East Orange Public Library. This year Margaret and her committee will be developing a community focus for our League. Margaret graduated from Amherst College and has an advertising and marketing background. She lives in Short Hills with her husband Chris and their two children.



**Asst. Membership Council Chair Helen Lynas** joined JLOSH soon after moving from Britain in 2007. She has used her background in journalism and public relations as the league's PR chair and as the Communications Council Chair, positions that allowed her to get involved in so many JLOSH activities and meet the wonderful women who drive them. Helen lives in South Orange with husband, Steve, and they have three children attending school in th UK. She enjoys travel, walking, a good book and a glass of wine. Photo: Greg Leshé



**Asst. Treasurer Christina Connant** joined the New York Junior League in 2003 and transferred into JLOSH in 2008, when she started working with the TLV committee. Christina was in a service fraternity, Alpha Phi Omega, while at Gettysburg College, and she is now a volunteer at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Before having two daughters with husband Charles, she managed Lipper Analytical's Offshore Funds Database in New York. Christina is also an active volunteer at her children's schools and a Sunday School teacher.

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# JLOSH AND PARTNERS INSPIRE TEENS IN FOSTER CARE

*By Sara Agress, SPAC "B" Delegate*

For the third consecutive year, JLOSH volunteers partnered with the Rutgers University Child Advocacy Clinic (CAC), the Essex County Family Court, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and the Junior League of Montclair-Newark (JLMN) to host an information fair for teens aging out of the foster care system. The event was held in May, prior to a CAC training for youth entitled "Aging Out: Don't Miss Out." Almost 150 teens and their foster parents, CASA advocates and DYFS case workers attended the fair designed to ensure that every youth in New Jersey leaving foster care is aware of and receives necessary services from the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) and other community organizations.

The program that followed the information fair featured Christine Carter-Davis, a former foster youth who is a current JLMN member and the Founder of the Against All Odds Foundation, which is dedicated to providing tutoring and other support services to underserved children. She spoke from the heart to a mesmerized crowd about her own life experience, and by the end of her inspiring talk, there was not a dry eye in the room.

Judge Sallyanne Floria, Presiding Judge for the Essex County Court, Family Division, praised the organizers, saying "I want to thank everyone for their efforts in arranging yesterday's Aging Out Program. This was the best workshop to date. Everything ran smoothly and the young adults appeared to be having a good time, as well as learning valuable information."

Thanks to Judge Floria and Judge Glenn Grant, the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, the format begun three years ago in Essex County has now become a model for other CAC trainings throughout the state of NJ. Since then, over 1,000 foster youth have attended CAC aging out trainings across the state now accompanied by an information fair.

Nana Wilson, CAC Clinical Law Fellow, recently complimented the Junior League for its efforts, saying, "***know what a great contribution the Junior League has made, not only to the youth in Essex...the idea has grown and spread to benefit youth all over NJ... this project has touched and continues to assist hundreds of youth in the state.***"

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## JOIN US: SPAC HUMAN TRAFFICKING WORKSHOP

*Submitted by Myriam Scicolone, JLOSH SPAC "A" Delegate*



SPAC, the State Public Affairs Committee, has a five-year history of working on the issue of human trafficking. Human trafficking involves force, fraud or coercion to compel someone to work, usually for no money, in places like brothels, nail salons, or on farms. In 2009 SPAC ran a conference to raise awareness of how modern-day slavery occurs in New Jersey and what people can do to recognize and report it. Recently, SPAC gave testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee on a bill that emerged from the conference.

**Now SPAC and Junior League members are participating in a workshop on human trafficking on November 12<sup>th</sup> at Kean University.** We will be interacting with specialists in victim services and law enforcement to come up with new legislation that could help bring an end to the crime of human trafficking in our state and nation. Please speak to your SPAC delegate about contributing to this important work. For more information on human trafficking in New Jersey, please go to SPAC's website: [www.jlnjspac.org](http://www.jlnjspac.org)

## JLOSH IN THE COMMUNITY

of **Essex County**, a true example of a more sophisticated volunteer activity. Also in the 1970s, the League became involved in obtaining a section of the **East Orange Water Reserve** as a site for the **Essex County Environmental Education Center**.

As the League entered the **1980's**, many projects flourished, but none quite as successful as the **ISAIAH HOUSE**, an emergency family shelter in our service area. In 1986, JLOSH formed a coalition with the United Way of Essex and West Hudson to gather support for such a shelter. Volunteers found, secured and renovated a site and provided relocation services for families. As a result of these efforts, JLOSH was the recipient of \$10,000 and the **BMW Community Impact Award's "Grand Award"** for its Isaiah House project in 1989-1990.

**Caring Kids** and **Kids on the Block** came about locally in the early 1980's as a puppet show intended to educate school children about the personal side of having physical disabilities, such as blindness or being in a wheelchair.

**Project Food Harvest** was adopted in early 1993 and continued through the 1990's. In addition to feeding more than 100 people per month through this program, we ran a special program of picking up donated food twice a week from Sodexo USA Inc., the independent food contractor for Saint Barnabas Medical Center, and delivering it directly to soup kitchens and shelters.

In the late 1990's, the League developed its **Pink Ribbon** program, a breast cancer education and screening program for lower-income minority women in Orange. The Junior League collaborated with the American Cancer Society, the Saint Barnabas Medical Center, the City of Orange Health Department and the North Jersey Affiliate of Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation to provide education, free mammograms and free treatment for the women in Orange until 2002. In 2000, JLOSH received the **BMW Community Impact Award's "Merit Award"** for its **Pink Ribbon** program.

In 2001, the **Tillmes House** project was established to provide life skill workshops for young girls aged 12 through 18 who are in residence for up to sixty days at Tillmes House, a crisis center for girls in East Orange.

This is just a sampling the positive impact our volunteers have had in our community! Imagine what JLOSH can do over the next 100 years!



**League Presidents at State Board Training, May 2010**

*"I can honestly say that some of my best friends, to this day, are women I meet in the Junior League."*

- Karen Gaylord, member since 1978

### **WHAT IS A SPAC ASSOCIATE MEMBER?**

*Submitted by Myriam Scicolone,  
SPAC "A" Delegate*

The State Public Affairs Committee (SPAC) is more accessible than ever! The new SPAC Associate Member option provides all of the benefits of training and education with none of the SPAC delegate responsibilities. Associate Members are welcome to attend any of our meetings and participate in our workshops and other programs. More importantly, the Associate Member can provide knowledge, research or passion to our current issues that include human trafficking, childhood obesity, foster care and pesticides in the environment. This program is open to all JLOSH members. **Please contact your Advisor and SPAC delegates if you are interested in being a SPAC Associate Member.**



**JUNIOR LEAGUE OF  
THE ORANGES AND SHORT HILLS**

*Women building better communities*

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**Current Resident or**

**SAVE THE DATE FOR THIS YEAR'S  
LEAGUE FUNDRAISER!**

March 11, 2011  
Maplewood Country Club



To invite your friends or family to the event,  
please send names and addresses by

November 20<sup>th</sup> to

[chipsguestlist@live.com](mailto:chipsguestlist@live.com).

If you, or someone you know, is interested in  
donating to the event or silent auction,  
please contact event Co-Chairs:

**Melissa Sheehy** ([mlsheehy@gmail.com](mailto:mlsheehy@gmail.com)) or  
**Kim Walls** ([kimwalls@mac.com](mailto:kimwalls@mac.com))

***We look forward to seeing you there!***

*We would like to thank  
our supporters*

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