

Susanna's Chronicles

Volume 3, Issue 2

Fall, 2009

President's Message

I joined the Susanna Wesley House Board of Directors about six years ago. December will mark the end of my time on the board. Two things stand out for me over the years: 1) the families I have seen come, grow and go at this beautiful home; and 2) the generous and loving people whom I have encountered and with whom I have worked.



Cynthia Taylor

There are more toddlers and teens at SWH than ever before. Two of the teens, Dasia and Bria, were the chief decorators for the Halloween activities with their mom, Marika, adding the finishing touches. I asked Marika how her job was going. She proudly shared that she had been recently promoted to shift manager.

One person I am pleased to have encountered is Christine Palmer, our new office manager. Since her arrival in mid-August, we have come to rely on her knowledge, experience and positive energy. (Read more about Chris in her introductory article.)

In May, my third visit to the Linden-Linthicum United Methodist Women (UMW) included an encounter with Russian Dancers and a turn at their cake walk for Colleen Cates, SWH Chair of Development. I took our slide show to the UMW at Arbutus. Peggy Millender joined me for a presentation to the Provident UMW. Violetville United Methodist Church (UMC), St. Matthews and Nichols-Bethels made visits to SWH bringing items for the residents. Glenelg UMW spent several hours planting in the gardens on the side and back of the house and took time for a tour.

Thanks to thank my daughter, Celeste Taylor, and my best friend, Sheila Eley, for their work on our fundraiser and the development committee for the past two years. You worked hard and contributed much to our organization. Thanks also to the Board of Directors for your service. At our fundraiser on September 19th, I presented Peggy Millender with the SWH President's Award for her 11 years of outstanding service on the Board of Directors.

Please continue to support SWH so that we can continue our commitment to support needy women and their children as they come, grow and go. Thank you!

- *Cynthia Taylor*

Meet Chris Palmer, New SWH Office Manager



I am so happy to have joined the SWH family! I have held administrative positions for the last 25 years, and also have an extensive background in music and desktop publishing. For the last 7 years I served as Church Administrator for a Presbyterian Church in Northern Baltimore.

Since I began working here in mid-August, I have had the pleasure of getting to know many of the board members and volunteers. It is truly an honor to work for an organization with such a wonderful mission, and the energy here is positively contagious! With the devastation of homelessness reaching epidemic levels all around us, SWH is an oasis of hope, not only for the families it serves, but also for those who serve them.

I look forward to getting to know and assist many more of you in our common goal of providing a nurturing environment where families can safely prepare for independence. I invite you to call or stop by during office hours and say hello. I am here M-F from 9am – 1pm, and until 3pm on Tuesdays. – Chris

Barefoot in the Park –Lorenzo's Timonium Dinner Theater

by Colleen Cates

How can someone support Susanna Wesley House while having an afternoon of fun, food and fellowship? Friends of the Susanna Wesley House asked that same question and decided to get together at Lorenzo's Timonium Dinner Theatre on Sunday, July 12th. About 45 people gathered to enjoy the comedy "Barefoot in the Park." Many of us remembered the play from the sixties. The premise of the story: after a six-day honeymoon, a spanking new lawyer and his young bride move into a new, high rent apartment that she has chosen for them. But the difficulty is, in order to enjoy the charming character of the apartment; one has to climb six wheezing flights! Things go awry, but in the end everything turns out for the best.

Kudos to Towson UMC, which had the most people in attendance! SWH received donations of almost \$700! We had such a good time that another Dinner Theatre is being planned for the Spring. Be on the lookout for the date and place.

Lunch with the Auxiliary

by Cynthia Taylor

In our Spring newsletter, I shared the news that the SWH Auxiliary had disbanded. In June the remaining members invited the Executive Committee to join them for lunch. They presented a final check to SWH and shared stories of how they became members of the Auxiliary.

Jeanette Chilcoat, Auxiliary secretary, lived in the Wo-Ho-Miss Lodge (currently SWH) for six years starting in 1942. Her plan was to be a nurse but she decided it was not to be and she got a job with the Century Indemnity Insurance on Read St. She married in 1948 and had her reception at 609 Park Avenue. The Board gave her \$25 towards her reception. It was June and she had roses and a Julius Gutman (an old Baltimore Dept. store) cake. 100-150 attended the wedding and she was married at the Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church. Her husband had three sisters at SWH and one was her roommate and she met her future husband at a dance. A member of Loch Raven UMW asked her to join the Auxiliary. They needed a secretary and she felt obligated to serve, so she joined.

Catherine McLaughlin, Auxiliary treasurer, was asked to be on the board by Edna Russell (former SWH President) and Anna and Earl Sterlock. Kay Barrans, Auxiliary president, was asked by two past presidents who "told her to do it." It was about 1990. Stella Peck and Helen Boblitt were brought to the Auxiliary by Ethel Smith in 1980. Stella became Auxiliary secretary. There were 20-30 people on the Auxiliary at that time.

Do you have ideas for starting a "Friends of SWH" group? We would love to start a new tradition of service and support of the SWH. Give us a call if you are interested.



Stella Peck, Kay Barrans, Jeanette Chilcoat, Helen Boblitt, Catherine McLaughlin

Susanna's Chronicles is published periodically by Susanna Wesley House, Inc., to communicate news and matters of interest to SWH, its directors, staff and residents. For more information, please contact the Susanna Wesley House, 609 Park Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21201, 410/837-3787, or email SusannaWesley@verizon.net

Susanna Wesley's Newest Families

Since June, four new families have come to live at SWH. Ms. G. arrived on June 18th. She has a 6 year old daughter and a 2 year old son. She is employed at Harbor Hospital as a dietician. Her 6 year old is a 1st grader and her 2 year old attends a therapeutic nursery center. Her goal is to obtain a GED while at SWH.



On July 14th, Ms. C moved into SWH. She had partial custody of her 18-month old son and was working to regain full custody, which we are happy to report she accomplished in September. Ms. C is also working on recovery and has been abstinent for 16 months. The mother of four took the GED assessment test in October and is scheduled to take the pretest in November. She would like to attend Baltimore City Community College and major in Nursing, Criminal Justice or Sign Language.

Ms. M moved into SWH on July 22nd. She completed an 8-week training course as a Patient Care Technician (PCT) at the Maryland Center for Arts and Technology. She was employed at Harbor Hospital as a PCT and also has training as a Certified Nursing Assistant and General Nursing Assistant. Due to an injury, Ms. M. is on leave. She has a 14 year old son and a 5 year old daughter. Ms. M.'s goals are to seek long-term employment in the nursing field and to purchase a house for her family.

On October 5th, Ms. B moved into SWH with her 4 year old son. Since moving in, she has been accepted to the LPN (nursing program) at Sojourner Douglass College as a sophomore. She also volunteers at University of MD in the trauma and operating room.

We welcome these families to SWH and hope their stay will be a fruitful experience.

SWH Kids Summer Fun

Darian (14) spent the summer in Atlanta with family and friends.

Deja (4) attended Tide Point Daycare for the summer, and went to Six Flags.

Traunyay (13) worked at a snowball stand at Bon Secours Hospital and completed the Yeap Program, a 16-week job readiness training program.

Tysheria (6) attended Camp St. Vincent.

Dasia (14) had a summer job through New Horizons assisting the elderly at Stadium Place.

Bria (11) attended Camp St. Vincent.

D'Monte (14) and **D'Arria** (5) visited North Carolina for a family reunion.

Erika, Alana, & Christian went to (SAX), a 2-week music & dance camp program at Loyola College. They moved from SWH in April. Thanks to Carl and Barbara Grubbs for providing them with scholarships.



Let Your Talents Out!

We have a few wonderful opportunities to serve on several committees including property, finance, fundraising/development and publicity. Call today to find out how to lend your talents to serve the women and children of SWH.

Also, donations of services by licensed and bonded professionals are always welcome. Electricians, plumbers, painters, roofers, HVAC, carpet cleaning, carpenters, appliance repair, etc. – there is always something that needs a little TLC in a building that will turn 165 next year! **We have an immediate need for a cabinet maker to build a lockable TV cabinet for the resident's parlor on the first floor.** We are also in need of a computer “guru.”

Or perhaps you have a personal service to provide to one or more of our residents? – dentistry, optometry, music lessons, etc. Let us know, and we'll work through the case manager to match your service with a resident in need.

SWH Halloween Party

The 12 SWH kids and their moms enjoyed a Halloween Party complete with pizza, cupcake and bag decorating, games and trick or treating. They were joined by another 14 kids and their moms, mostly former SWH residents. Thanks to all of the volunteers who made the evening such a success! And thanks to the SWH moms, who had everything cleaned up and in perfect shape in under a half an hour after the party! One little girl who was visiting summed up the importance of the evening when she remarked to a volunteer: "I'm so happy to trick or treat here because if I did this in my neighborhood, I'd get beat up."



Inspired to Serve
September 18, 2009



Pam Pryor



Cleona Garfield



Second Annual Fall Luncheon a Success

by Peggy Millender



Peggy Millender with one of the Fall Displays she made for the Silent Auction.

At 7:00 am on Saturday, September 19th, board members, committee members and spouses arrived at **Oregon Ridge Lodge** to get ready for the big day that had been in the planning for months. As **Hunt Valley Caterers** arranged the tables, the hall was decorated with mums and Fall displays and the silent auction was set up. By 11:30 am everything was ready for a crowd of 130 people to enjoy the luncheon, the speakers, and put in their bids for some exciting items donated by businesses, board members, and United Methodist Women's groups.

In keeping with the theme, "**Inspired to Serve**," speakers Cleona Garfield and Pam Pyror told the audience what inspired them to pursue careers in service to women in need. Cleona, director of **Dress for Success**, credited persons in her life for pointing her in the direction she has taken. Pam, case worker at **SWH** employed by **Women's Housing Coalition**, starting with an original poem, gave a firsthand account of a successful career, from young single mother to various jobs in non-profits, to college graduate, to case worker. Thanks to both of them for sharing their life experiences.

When the day was over, the second "**Inspired to Serve**" luncheon was deemed a success, financially and in spreading the word of the **SWH** mission. To all attendees, those who could not attend this year, and those who want to support us in the future, please mark your calendars and join us next year on September 18, 2010.

Special Thanks to our Silent Auction Donors

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Updated Wish List

Susanna Wesley House relies on donations to carry out its mission to provide a safe, comfortable and home-like environment for women in need and their dependent children. We appreciate your thoughtfulness in providing items from our wish list. Due to space constraints we are unable to accept other items at this time. If you have a question about our need for a particular item, please call the office at (410) 837-3787 or email SusannaWesley@verizon.net. Thank you for your continued support of the women and children of SWH.

Gift Cards	Pots & Pans	Dish Washing Liquid
Twin Sheet Sets	Tupperware	Laundry Detergent
Full Sheet Sets	Towels & Potholders	Pampers /Pull-ups (size 4, 5, 6)
Pillows (new)	Dish Cloths	Electrical Outlet Covers
Can Openers	Wash Cloths	Plastic Hangers
Utensils	Feminine Hygiene Products	Cleaning Supplies
Dishes (plates, cups, & glasses)	Soap	

Your cash donations continue to help us fulfill our greatest needs.

To give on-line, go to www.JustGive.org. Under "find a charity," enter *Susanna Wesley House Baltimore*.
The rest is easy!



This Old House at 609 Park Avenue

by Peggy Millender

Built in the 1850's as a suburban mansion, 609 Park Avenue is one of the stately town houses along Park Avenue in the Mt. Vernon Historical District. Purchased by the Methodist Women of the Baltimore Washington Conference in 1921, it has transitioned from a boarding house for young women, to a "boarding house for mothers with elementary age children," to a home with nine living units for homeless mothers and their dependent children of all ages today. The building is the responsibility of an independent board of directors incorporated into a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The board must raise over \$100,000 per year to operate SWH. The mission of Susanna Wesley House, Inc. is to provide a clean, safe, well-maintained home where mothers and their children can receive the services they need to become contributing members of the community. Since 2003, the board has partnered with Women's Housing Coalition to provide the case worker and programs for the mothers and children.

Any house requires constant maintenance and repair, especially one as old as SWH. The last renovation was in 2002 to divide the building into the current nine living units. In the last year the windows have been repaired, the front of the building repainted, the fire escapes repaired and painted, the hallways painted, the carpet in two units replaced with laminate flooring, and one of the seven HVAC units replaced. There have been repairs to another HVAC unit, walls from leaks, and emergency clean ups by professionals for flooded areas due to drain back up. Various maintenance contracts, some required by the city to keep our multi-dwelling license, and some as preventive measures, amount to over \$5,000 per year. Other repairs that must be done are replacing a section of front roof, gutter, and some rain spouting. Thanks to you, our donors and our grantors, we continue to keep 609 Park Avenue in good shape.



Coming in 2010 - A New Look !

Keep an eye out for our redesigned newsletter and website coming early next year!

Send us your email address! Would you like to receive SWH updates via email? It's environmentally friendly, and free! Send your email address to SusannaWesley@verizon.net to join our email list. We promise not to share it. ☺

Special thanks to Roger MacWilliams for his continued assistance with small repairs around the house.

Where in the world is Paul Warren? You can follow the former SWH board member and his family's year in China at <http://rpwarren.livejournal.com>.

Be an SWH Santa's Helper

Experience the joy that comes from giving and show the families at SWH how important they are to their community. A Susanna Wesley House tradition, we ask caring friends like you play "Elf," and deliver wrapped gifts for our residents in time to distribute for the holidays. Call or email the office today at (410) 837-3787 or SusannaWesley@verizon.net to sign up and receive your Santa's Helper shopping list. *Gifts must be received by SWH for distribution no later than December 11th.*



**Susanna
Wesley House**
i n c o r p o r a t e d

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