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The BayView

SPRING 2011



Oh, What a Year



This has been another wonderful year for the Junior League of Oakland-East Bay. From community projects, to a new Strategic Plan, to several fantastic fundraisers, to the re-launched BayView, women in every corner of our League have been moving mountains!

The end of the year is always exciting, because we take time to celebrate our members, the lifeblood of our League. This year's Board and leadership team had lofty ambitions – a new strategic plan, a new community project, increasing training and hands-on voluntarism, reintroducing The Bay View, and engaging our members and community in a new spring fundraiser. The goals were many, but thanks to the power of 150 committed active members, 50 incredible new members, and 350+ supportive sustainers, we did it!

The 2011-14 Strategic Plan, approved by members in April, is a fantastic roadmap for our organization. In the community programs area, we completed our three-year project building a technology resource center for the clients of STAND! For Families Free of Violence, and the center is in use daily at STAND!'s shelter facility. This year, we contributed over 700 hours of hands-on community support at more than 20 Done in a Day events serving East Bay organizations. Our New Members also planned an intensive day of learning and development for foster youth, serving almost 50 young people who are on the brink of exiting the foster care system. Next year, we look forward to a new partnership with Loved Twice, a nonprofit that collects and distributes recycled baby clothes to newborn babies in need.

Another goal was to increase training opportunities, and members enjoyed over 20 League-sponsored training events in addition to countless web and outside trainings. We were also thrilled to relaunch The Bay View, a great opportunity for connection with our community and our members. Finally, we launched a wildly successful new fundraiser with Chocolate Indulgence, an event that is sure to become a fixture in our community and an opportunity to ensure our future growth. If you weren't one of the almost 300 who attended Chocolate Indulgence this year, you'll definitely want to mark your calendar for next spring!

Our many accomplishments are due to one thing – the incredible women who choose membership in the JLOEB. I often say that the smartest and most talented women I know are Junior League women. It is remarkable what our organization has been able to accomplish, both this year and over the course of the past 75 years.

It has been a tremendous honor to serve as President. The Junior League has enriched my life in so many ways, and I will be forever thankful for the experiences I've had, and the friends I continue to make along the way. My deepest gratitude for everything you, as a member or supporter, do to make the Junior League of Oakland-East Bay such a thriving organization.

Warm regards,

Mackenzie Lesher

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A Project from the Heart: Loved Twice

In June 2010, the Project Research and Development Committee (PR&D) began the task of finding a new community project for the Junior League of Oakland-East Bay. Two key areas arose after a thorough community needs assessment, which included interviewing school board members, police representatives, local government officials and other stakeholders, and reviewing the community needs assessment reports put out by various local foundations. Those two areas were: family self-sufficiency and poverty. Ten months later, following this extensive research, JLOEB members voted in Loved Twice as our community project for 2011-2013.

At the urging of first year Active, Alexis Bernstein, the League decided to investigate working with Loved Twice, an organization that provides gently used baby clothes to low-income mothers. At first contact with Lisa Klein, Founder and Executive Director of Loved Twice, it was easy to see her vision, her drive and most of all her passion. She began Loved Twice after seeing the living conditions in New Orleans following hurricane Katrina. Lisa posted an ad on Craigslist, and soon after, donated over 100 pounds of baby clothes to a New Orleans church for mothers in need.

This experience ignited the passion in Lisa to help low-income

mothers in her own community. While Lisa is still Loved Twice's only employee, the organization has grown to over 100 volunteers sorting and distributing clothes to East Bay hospitals and shelters. In 2010 alone, Loved Twice delivered 1,050 boxes of clothes and other essentials for a baby's first year of life.

Loved Twice is at a critical point in its growth and development, especially with 12% of all East Bay children living in poverty. JLOEB and Loved Twice will work together to expand the work of Loved Twice through increasing community and professional outreach efforts, helping to organize sorting parties and clothing drives, and assisting with fundraising efforts. JLOEB's strategic business planning expertise will help to build operational systems to enable Loved Twice to continue to flourish.

Our partnership with Loved Twice began in April of this year, when JLOEB hosted our first clothing collection and sorting party. 800 pounds of baby essentials later, League members delivered 65 boxes to Children's Hospital Oakland and 65 boxes to the Davis Street Family Resource Center in San Leandro. We are just beginning our journey with Loved Twice, and already we are feeling "thrilled once!"



Loved Twice Founder and Executive Director Lisa Klein.



Junior League members at our first-ever sorting party with over 800 pounds of baby clothes for Loved Twice.



Chocolate Indulgence: A Sweet Success

Start with fabulous chocolate desserts from Élevé, Patrick David's, and Bridges. Add a dash of Wente wine. Finish with a beautiful venue, a silent auction, two incredible raffle prizes, and a little friendly competition. By all accounts this was a recipe for a fun and fabulous event.

On March 19, the Junior League of Oakland-East Bay hosted the East Bay's sweetest event – Chocolate Indulgence. Over 200 guests enjoyed a delicious assortment of appetizers, wines and of course, decadent chocolate desserts.

When the last soufflé had been tasted and the last of 84 silent auction items claimed, Chocolate Indulgence proved a huge success for a first time event with net income of approximately \$16,000. Needless to say, many of the attendees are already looking forward to the "Second Annual" in 2012.

Congratulations to Lisa Pickup, Melissa Jose, and the entire Special Events Committee for hosting this fantastically sweet event.

The Judges:

Collette DeMitis - Guest Judge
Caroline Fey - Mariposa Kitchen
Ethan Fletcher - Diablo Magazine
Leena Hung - The Restaurant at the Vineyard, Wente
Mackenzie Leshner - JLOEB President, 2010-2011
Wendy Lieu - Sôcôla Chocolatier

Dessert Competition Winners:

People's Choice Award - Élevé Restaurant's Chocolate Elegance Mousse
BEST Chocolate Dessert in the East Bay - Patrick David's Hazelnut Encrusted Ganache Treats (cover photo)

Special Raffle Winners:

Six Months of Date Night -
(aka, gift certificates to local restaurants)
Heather Hamilton
Restock Your Wine Cellar - Sarah Tolson

A Special Thank You to our Chocolate Indulgence Sponsors:



Pictures left to right (from upper left):

1) Chocolate Indulgence Co-Chairs Lisa Pickup and Melissa Jose. 2) Wine Cellar raffle winner, Sarah Tolson. 3) Diane Bode, Erin Oakes and Heather Power--let the bidding begin! 4) Jessica Peterman and Jocelyn Jackson model their VIP bags 5) The People's Choice Award, Chocolate Elegance, from Eleve Restaurant 6) Sophia deBruyn and Elke Rank offer raffle tickets or a photo op. 7) Elizabeth Moorehead, Karol Frietzsche, Laura Donohoe and Kym Frietzsche indulging in fun. 8) Liz Claytor and Lisa Taw taking in the night. 9) Katreece Montgomery, a.k.a., The Chocolate Addict, showcases a few chocolate decorating techniques.

Up“Lift”ing Annual Sustainer Luncheon

Over 60 Sustainers gathered at the Orinda Country Club on Tuesday March 12 to hear Kelly Corrigan—mother, daughter, sister, friend, humorist and New York Times best-selling author, give a small dose of her words of wisdom. Kelly spoke passionately about her dedication to family and community, and her continued support of Children’s Hospital and Research Center in Oakland, the Hospital and Research Institution that saved her daughter’s life. She also humored attendees with several readings from her most recent book, *Lift*, evoking both laughter and tears.

And then it was time to pay tribute to the 2011 Sustainer of the Year, Sue Smegal. Performing the honors was last year’s recipient, Maridel Moulton. Maridel highlighted the many years of JLOEB training which Sue has subsequently put into practice in the Piedmont school system. From being a Core teacher at Piedmont Middle School to serving on the Parent Club Boards of Wildwood Grammar School, Piedmont Middle

and High Schools, to ultimately being elected to the Piedmont Board of Education, and serving for 10 years, including as Board President, Sue exemplified Mary Harriman’s goal of taking your League experience into the community.

Sue’s list of accomplishments and voluntarism extend far beyond the education realm. She actively participated on the Alameda County Child Abuse Prevention Council, was a volunteer at the Cerebral Palsy Center in Oakland, and served on the Easter Seal Foundation Board and the Family Service Agency Board. Sue was an active member on the Board of Directors of the Ann Martin Center which provides counseling and direction to students struggling with learning at school. For many years, Sue served as a member of Hill Branch of Children’s Hospital, including as its Chairman of the Branch and Co-Chairman of The Winter Ball.

Congratulations to Sue Smegal, 2011 Sustainer of the Year.



Maridel Moulton and Sue Smegal



The ever-witty Kelly Corrigan.



Sustainer Co-Directors Molly Griffin-Wilson and Jeannette Cox with Lori Kriens



Sonja Vukasin, Sally DeMaria, Judy Toomajian and Diana Odermatt enjoy a laugh at the Annual Sustainer Luncheon

Where Is She Now? Barbara “Barbie” Jacobus

JLOEB is described on our website as “the very fabric of your community.” I recently learned just how interwoven the threads of our experiences really are.

A few months ago, I joined up with Team Challenge, an endurance training and fundraising program sponsored by the Crohn’s and Colitis Foundation of America. I am training to run the Napa to Sonoma Half Marathon in July and helping to find a cure for these debilitating digestive diseases that impact over 1.4 million Americans.

As it turns out, one of those 1.4 million Americans is Barbara “Barbie” Jacobus, a former outstanding member of JLOEB, and one of two individuals chosen as an honoree for the 2011 East Bay Team Challenge group. I was truly inspired to learn about Barbara’s amazing story of struggle and survival. When I learned that she did all of this while also giving selflessly of herself through JLOEB, I knew I had to share her story.

Junior League membership was a bit of a family affair for Barbie as her older sister was a League member. She remembers frequently hearing about Junior League as a child growing up in Piedmont, where participation was popular. Given these facts, it might seem like her choice to participate in Junior League was a given. However, Barbie’s life has been anything but typical.

Barbie began treating the symptoms of her disease at age 13, although she was not officially diagnosed with Crohn’s Disease and Rheumatoid Arthritis until she was 24. She recalls a childhood filled with dietary restrictions, school absences, countless hospitalizations and missing out on many ‘normal’ activities of youth. She jokes that she was the only collegian who had to eat baby food and take naps every day. Her experience managing Crohn’s disease has been further complicated by the fact that she is allergic to many of the drugs currently used to treat the disease. Her battle has included 6 bowel resections and 5 spinal surgeries (to correct degenerated disks caused by the Rheumatoid Arthritis). Throughout these trials, Barbie’s father, a physician, counseled her to “be more than this disease.”

Taking his advice to heart, Barbie has given graciously of herself as the mother of two beautiful daughters (although pregnancy was ill-advised due to her illness) and as a community volunteer through her membership in the Junior League. Barbie admits that “it was a challenge to manage the demands of active membership in JLOEB” along with those of her family and

Crohn’s disease. However, she says she has always been committed to community voluntarism, and this commitment forced her to “learn how to manage [her] illness as never before, so [she] could meet its demands and [her] intentions.”

Barbie’s JLOEB career included serving as Chairman of The Shop and as Assistant Treasurer and Treasurer on the Board. Barbie was serving as Community Vice President, on track to continue providing leadership to the JLOEB in advanced roles, when a serious Chron’s flare-up forced her to resign in 1987.

She says that she “loved everything [she] did in the League” and notes that serving as Chairman of The Shop and being involved in the production of the League’s first cookbook “California Fresh” were the most exciting projects for her. Acknowledging the valuable training afforded through participation, Barbie insists that her JLOEB membership “was more challenging, more rewarding and more fun than most anything else” she has done.

In relating to me the story of her membership, Barbie called the JLOEB “a highlight in [her] life, due to the membership of such quality women”. I have come to know exactly what she means. As a recent transplant to the East Bay, I joined JLOEB this past year to become involved in my new community and to meet new people. Membership in JLOEB has afforded me the opportunity to learn about and give back to my new hometown and to create friendships with some truly amazing women. I am so thankful and honored that Barbara Jacobus is one those amazing women with whom I share the bond of affiliation in JLOEB. She is an inspiration to all of us to continue give graciously of ourselves despite our personal challenges. When I was a little girl, I wanted to grow up to be Barbie™. As it turns out, I still do.

To learn more about the Chron’s and Colitis Foundation of America, Team Challenge, and how you can help to support Barbie and others suffering from Inflammatory Bowel Diseases visit: <http://www.active.com/donate/napa11sf/NapaAHuie>

Meet Our Membership: New Member Gisele Verrier

Sophia de Bruyn: How did you hear about the Junior League?

Gisele Verrier: I originally heard about the Junior League from my former boss, Allison Wisener Bowden, who joined JLOEB around 1998.

SdB: What is your most memorable JLOEB moment so far?

GV: For the new member project, I was a group leader. I had the chance to hang out with a group of foster kids all day and go through the program that was made for them. I enjoyed meeting and talking with the kids. These kids come from difficult circumstances and it was great to see how they manage their lives and still have fun. That spoke to me.

SdB: Do you have any hidden talents?

GV: I can tell a lot about a man's personality from his shoes. I would be willing to demonstrate it to any lady who wants to go out with me one night!

SdB: How do you spend your days?

GV: I get up early, take care of my son Ethan, go to work as

an Executive Assistant at Genesys/Alcatel-Lucent in Daly City, do whatever I do after work, and don't get to sleep until 1 or 2 in the morning.

SdB: If you could do anything else, what would it be?

GV: Create my own non-profit.

SdB: What do you most value in your friends?

GV: You have to be honest—even when it's ugly.

SdB: What's one thing you want to do in the next 10 (or 20) years?

GV: Live in NYC!

SdB: If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

GV: I would be more tactful.

SdB: What is your favorite scene from a movie?

GV: The one that jumps instantly to mind is in "Say Anything" when John Cusack is holding up the boom box so that he can express to Ione Skye that he loves her.

SdB: What is your "must have" Trader Joe item.

GV: The cinnamon pear cider – it's non-alcoholic but still delicious!

SdB: Who inspires you?

GV: Most recently, it's been my six year old son, Ethan. He is on pure joy setting 94% of the time. We should all strive to be on pure joy setting 94% of our lives!



Gisele and her son, Ethan



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Pictures on opposite page:

1st Row (kneeling) L-R: Janaia Roeder, Kristen Del Simone, and Michelle Kane

2nd Row (standing) L-R: Lauren Lyon, Renee Eisen, Jennifer Seelig, Jeannie Rogers, Jennifer LeGardeur, David Faustina (Motivational Speaker), Sean Flikke (Challenge Day Leader), Jessica Young, Tessa Rigdon, and Ann Engle
Gift basket for foster youth participants.

New Members Pursue the Right “Path”

Did you know that California statistics show that 65% of youth leaving foster care do so without a place to live and up to 50% of former foster youth become homeless within the first 18 months of emancipation? Couple this with the realization that only 10% attend college (with 1% of those graduating), and it was easy to see why the New Members rallied around a program for emancipated youth.

On a sunny Saturday in April, the hard work of the 2010-2011 New Member Class was on full display during the program, “Emancipation Preparation: Self-Advocacy, Self-Advancement... Your Path Starts Here.” This day-long training session at the Alameda County Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP) center in Oakland hosted over 35 foster teens, ages 16-19. These teens were on-hand to educate themselves on the resources needed for emancipation from the foster care system. As an added bonus, they heard from presenters including motivational speaker David Faustina, and Challenge Day, the group responsible for MTV’s hit show *If You Really Knew Me*.

In a presentation by New Members Ashlee Gutierrez and Randi Ervin, the foster youth were led through keepsake binders containing everything from job searching tips to housing assistance resources. The binders proved so helpful that ILSP requested additional copies to hand out to other foster youth. Teen attendees also rehearsed their presentation skills during a mentoring lunch, and practiced completing employment applications and submitting resumes for consideration.

The New Members obtained generous donations from local businesses, including Sunset Bakery and Noah’s Bagels. In the surprise of the day, Jamba Juice not only delivered fresh fruit smoothies, but also accepted on-the-spot job applications from the attendees. Director of Training at ILSP, Robert Jemerson, remarked: “All of the young women and men who participated benefited greatly due to the tremendous effort of this avid group of Junior League volunteers.” This was an incredible effort by an incredible group of women. Their “Path” as Junior League leaders is just beginning.



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Meet Our 2011-2012 President: Heather Hamilton

Heather Hamilton will take over the reins as JLOEB President on June 1. She has been a member of the League for eight years, holding a variety of leadership positions. Yet, how well do you know you know the incoming JLOEB President? Laura Lamison recently sat down to interview her over a fabulous tuna melt in Lafayette.

Laura Lamison: How did you hear about the League, and why did you join?

Heather Hamilton: My good friend Kim Crosslin joined the SF League when we were working together. I rolled my eyes when she told me, followed no doubt by a wisecrack. Three years later in 2002, Scott, Sara (5 mo) and I moved back to Moraga where I promptly joined the JL desperately seeking a group of women “like me” (Volvo-driving working moms). Having been a “city girl” for some time, I knew I had to get comfortable with my new identity.

LL: What are some of the committees you have been placed on?

HH: My experience right as a first-year active was chairing Strategic Planning—Strategic Planning?!. Thank goodness for Kathy Tabor, a past president, who agreed to “supervise” this “first-year active”. I quickly discovered that League members were incredibly professional and had a wide variety of business skills. That was my first very positive introduction.

Since then, I’ve been on Placement, Done in a Day, the Finance Committee as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, and finally as Community Programs Council Director.



LL: What has been your favorite placement year to date?

HH: My favorite job so far was Treasurer because that is my background. I loved training the League on how the League’s finances work. And I loved the cool \$\$ glasses that came with the job! My biggest learning curve came during my year as Community Council Program Director. Being a Council Director is a whole different experience because you really are the head of a group of leaders. You have to find new ways to motivate and mentor your Committee Chairs who in turn, are motivating their committee members. It is a great placement to learn problem-solving on the fly. Also, learning about organizations in

our community through the Community Enrichment Grant interview process was incredibly informative and rewarding.

LL: What are your goals for 2011-12?

HH: On my 30,000 foot to do list, my top three objectives are:
1) To develop the issue-based impact area enough so that we are set up for long-term success. This is the ground-work year.
2) To institutionalize some giving models that don’t involve an “event”; and
3) To create an environment for more leadership training, and provide education about how best to serve our community,

LL: If you had to evacuate your home with no time to spare, what would you take with you (other than Scott and Sara)?

HH: I’m so practical; I would probably take a box of paperwork.

LL: What was your first concert?

HH: The Go-Gos...but my lips are sealed.



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A Junior League Gift.

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