

LaCASA



Patty and the Multicolored Quilt by Eleanor Taylor Bland

As a long time LaCASA board member, I am especially gratified by the commitment of our Aunts & Uncles*. Often, when I hear about what is happening at The Lake County Council Against Sexual Assault today, I recall the 'good old days' circa 1970. I remember nine-year-old Patty who wanted to be seven forever. One day Patty drew a picture of a bassinet, covered by a quilt made up of squares. Each square was multi-colored with a thick layer of crayons. In the picture, Patty was a tiny stick figure. Her mother was pregnant and the symbolism of the rounded shape of the quilt seemed obvious.


At the time I was an assistant counselor and provided additional 'parenting' during the school day. At a staffing, other counselors saw Patty's picture as representing sibling rivalry. I knew better, because I knew Patty.

A month before the baby was due, Patty's mother came to see me and she knew exactly what the picture meant. She was expecting her third child and Patty's eleven-year-old sister Nancy had Down's Syndrome. Her current husband, Patty and Nancy's step-father, verbally and physically abused her even during her pregnancy.

Patty was afraid for the new baby's safety, and she was afraid to be nine. When Nancy was nine, her step-father began sexually abusing her.

I'll never know what happened to Patty and her family because I moved to South Carolina at the end of the school year. Family services were limited by tight budgets and by the time in which they lived.

There was no LaCASA or A Safe Place for Patty's family. There were no Aunts & Uncles. Those were the 'good old days'. Thanks to LaCASA, those days are gone. For this I am grateful.

*Aunts & Uncles Club Member's annual sponsorship commitment of a thousand dollars or more supports LaCASA's Children's Programs. Eleanor is shown here on the left with LaCASA volunteer Nora Byrd at a recent reception to thank the Aunts & Uncles. 

**"I remember
nine-year-old Patty
who wanted to
be seven forever."**

Serving Brings Out The Best

LaCASA has been extremely fortunate to make long lasting connections with great people.

Jane Hunter has been LaCASA's Director of Community Education for 15 years! Jane and her bi-lingual staff conduct programs at schools, colleges and civic groups teaching thousands of children, teens and adults that they have a right to personal safety and to say NO to sexual assault and abuse. "Our events get everyone involved so they learn to protect themselves from being touched or abused," she said. "And equally important, they go away with a greater sense of self confidence and awareness." Thanks Jane, on behalf of all those you have helped to protect.



(from left) LaCASA's Associate Director Lynn Osborn, Coordinator of Volunteers & Training Wendy Ivy,, and Director of Community Education Jane Hunter; welcome attendees of our annual "Women Helping Women" community awareness and orientation event.

Lynn Ruth Haines, LaCASA's Office Manager, has worked in several capacities during her 10 years at LaCASA. She was instrumental to the success of our 1996-97 Capital Campaign to build The Zacharias Center. It has always been clear that her heart is in her work.


LaCASA sends its warmest thanks and best wishes to Sue Aldrich, who recently retired from our Board of Directors after 15 years of service. One of the most dedicated and courageous supporters that we've been blessed with, Sue applied boundless energy and thoughtful insight to each event and program, and never accepted less than the best for LaCASA's staff, supporters and clients.

Teresa Bartels (President, Hallbart Holding, L.L.C.) has given her time and expertise to LaCASA since 1983. "The more I learned about sexual assault and abuse, the more I knew that I had to be involved in LaCASA," says Teresa. a past-board president who recently facilitated a new strategic plan for LaCASA.

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Being on "Medical," as the volunteer's refer to their work responding to emergency room calls, is taxing physically (calls come at all hours) and emotionally (one never knows what one will see). But two people, Lori Pease and Shelly Kneeland, have done this important LaCASA work for 15 years.

Zacharias Center Improvements

A long dreamed of project is finally under way. LaCASA's huge basement, which supplies storage and display space for our annual Rummage Sale, is getting renovated with the help of Pamela Blevons, interior designer with Susan Fredman & Associates. She volunteers time at the non-profit "Designs for Dignity," founded by Susan Fredman. The organization's mission is to provide pro bono design services and donated materials to enhance the environments of non-profit. Rummage Sale committee co-chair Mary Meyer is coordinating the project, which involves the construction of new shelving, new walled off spaces, installation of a bathroom, and painting of the entire basement. 

LaCASA Board of Directors

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LaCASA Staff

Pamela Baker, Adult/Adolescent Counselor, ext. 13
Stacey Coleman, Crisis Intervention Advocate, ext. 31
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Toren G. Flink, Executive Director, ext. 16
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Lynn Ruth Haines, Office Manager, ext. 18
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Jane Hunter, Director of Community Education, ext. 26
Wendy Ivy, Coordinator of Volunteers & Training, ext. 24
Lynn Osborn, Associate Director, ext. 28
Claress L. Pettengill, Director of Development, ext. 17
Marcela Rodriguez, Bilingual Counselor, ext. 30
Georgia Vasquez, Prevention Specialist, ext. 22
Cecy Wren, Director of Client Services, ext. 22

LaCASA Groups

Fundamentals of Healing - 12 week introductory group offers information and support for adults just beginning to come to terms with issues of sexual violence in their lives.

AMAC Therapy Group - 16 week group provides advanced therapeutic guidance and support for survivors of childhood sexual abuse who have had previous therapy.

Caregivers Group - 6 week group gives support/information to adults who are in parental roles to children who have been sexually abused. Topics include child development, childhood trauma and its impact on the family, mandated reporting, boundaries, discipline, and communication.

Latency Age Group - for children 8-12 who have been sexually abused. May be held in conjunction with a caregivers group. Topics covered include understanding sexual abuse, safety, feelings and coping with feelings, and boundaries.

Adolescent Groups - offered for young people 13-18 who have been sexually abused. Topics include: safety, feelings and coping strategies, relationships, intimacy, and sexuality.

Adult Sexual Assault Group - for women sexually assaulted as adults. It is not intended for adults who may be concurrently dealing with sexual abuse issues from childhood.

Healing the Body Image- 8 week group offered to survivors of sexual assault and abuse who want to reclaim a healthy respect and liking for their bodies and their sexuality.

Support Group for Significant Others - group designed for partners of survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Topics include: crisis, communication, family issues and sex.

LaCASA Phone Directory

24-Hour Crisis Hotline: (847) 872-7799
Non-Emergency Office Phone: (847) 244-1187
Web Site Address: www.lacasagurnee.org

Fewer 2005 Events Makes Them "Truly Special"



"Coming to LaCASA every week has been a true blessing for me," Stacey Pequeno speaking at WHW 2004

Holding the **Women Helping Women luncheon** at the LaCASA Zacharias Center gives us the opportunity to take our guests on tours which will enable them to see our wonderful facility, and gain a better understanding of the work we do to support children and adult survivors of sexual assault. Coupling tours of LaCASA with meaningful programs that feature survivors like Stacey Pequeno (see photo with Torrie Flink and Polly Poskin) has an emotional impact on guest. At last year's Women

Helping Women event, Stacey provided a moving first person perspective, which began with her telling those in attendance that "Coming to LaCASA every week has been a true blessing for me."

Stacey talk was followed by a riveting keynote address by Polly Poskin, executive director of the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

The Women Helping Women Silent Auction is also a big attraction. This year we will offer a silent auction preview prior to the luncheon for those eager shoppers.

LaCASA's Annual Rummage Sale is now a much anticipated event that not only

raises funds, but also is a way of giving back to the community and reaching people not touched by our other efforts. Special thanks to Mike Glabowicz of Stellar Productions in Lake Bluff for the donation again of a gigantic tent. Collection of rummage sale items does not begin until February. For further information contact Mary Meyer at (847) 502-7407.

Consolidating two events: our annual Aunts & Uncles

Reception and the very successful **LaCASINO NIGHT** into one is the brainchild of LaCASA's two "great uncles" Jon Mills and Morris Belzberg. They believe that a great evening's entertainment is a fitting tribute to the wonderful group of Aunts & Uncles.



Outreach in Troubling Times

A recently published study (Daily Herald 11/22/04) reports that one of ten Chicago-area families is now considered among the nation's "working poor". In these times, LaCASA's free services are especially vital to this growing population struggling to survive economically.

LaCASA's reputation as a model agency has allowed us to pursue innovative programs and serve populations otherwise underserved, such women on probation under the jurisdiction of the 19th Circuit Court of Waukegan. We conduct groups offering support, coping strategies, and assistance in developing a better quality of life for these women and their children.

Expansion of prevention efforts has continued, including an ongoing partnership with the Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science to share our knowledge and experience with medical students. Likewise, we continue to work with Lake Forest College to help them better protect the student body.

LaCASA's bi-lingual staff members are highly visible in the community, doing prevention work in schools and churches, and providing on-site counseling to young people in many area schools.

"1-in-10 Chicago area families is among the nation's Working Poor."

LaCASA's stature in the community has attracted interns, both at the bachelors and masters level, and in turn, allowed us to serve more clients. This year we have had interns from: Lake Forest College, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, National Louis University, Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine & Science and Northeastern Illinois University.



In photo: Sonia Rowe from NIU, Christa Leigh LaCASA Medical Advocate, and Molly Merrick from LFC).






Give the Gift of LaCASA

Please consider doing what more and more of our supporters do at the holidays (or for their birthdays) . . . ask your friends to give to LaCASA in your name. They can feel good about their gift, and you will be helping to ensure that LaCASA continues to serve the needs of our community in the New Year and beyond. Speaking of the future, we ask our supporters to consider remembering LaCASA in their estate plans.

Please note: LaCASA is not accepting in-kind donations for the holidays. Please do not bring food or clothing. Instead, we are asking our donors if they want to give directly to clients to provide us with gift certificates . . . which can be for food or clothing . . . and these then will be distributed to our clients during the holidays.

Sweet Birthday Wishes to Harold Lipman!



Mr. Lipman, long-time supporter of LaCASA and an “Uncle” who is a past recipient of the “Sweetest Man Award,” turned 90 years old in October. Many happy returns to Harold and his lovely wife Naida from LaCASA. 

Calendar of Events

- January 27- February 17** *Volunteer Training: 40 hours mandated training for hotline, medical, legal and prevention advocates. Tuesday & Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings.*
- June 24** *Women Helping Women: luncheon fundraiser with tours of LaCASA, silent auction, raffle, live music, and a speaker (to be announced).*
- August 27-29** *LaCASA's 3-Day Giant Rummage Sale: includes new and gently-used items such as: clothing, household items, furniture, sporting goods, linens, books, toys and collectibles.*
- September 10** *LaCASINO NIGHT* presented by Aunts & Uncles features an evening of “mock” gambling, dinner, silent and live auction and special guests.