



CHILDREN'S HOME of Poughkeepsie

SINCE 1847

Summer 2011

NEW BEGINNINGS

A few years ago I wrote about Alex, who had spent several years at the Children's Home and was doing well. He had joined the Marathon Project, a Dutchess County group promoting running as a healthy alternative to gangs and drugs. Now Alex is with a loving foster family, and he has also found an outlet for his passion: dancing. When we realized how talented Alex was—last year at age 15 he choreographed most of the Kids Who Care Talent Show, produced annually by the Home's residents to raise funds to help others in the community—we were compelled to do something about it. The New York Academy of Ballet in Poughkeepsie very generously offered a full scholarship to Alex for dance lessons. They teach several dance genres: ballet, hip hop, jazz and modern. At the same time, Alex was in the final stages of preparing to move in with his new foster family. Now fostered for several months and having just performed in New York Academy of Ballet's performance recital this June, Alex has truly moved forward in positive ways in his life. He is in high school, is making friends and enjoying his new life, while still maintaining his friendships at the Children's Home. He again helped with this year's Talent Show and came to our interview on his way to rehearsal full of smiles.

When asked about his years at the Home (he was here from age 9-16), Alex described his experience as like being in a family. Of the staff Alex says "they can take somebody whose life is awful and make them feel like they have a family—to feel good." About his new foster family he smiles again and says they spoil him,

buying him clothes and shoes and other things teenagers like. They are also active in their church. His new family is practiced at foster parenting: they currently have 5 boys, all foster children, and over the years have fostered 19 youth. "They are great; they are helping change lives," says Alex. The family breeds dogs and everyone pitches in. Alex is proud that he got to name one of the puppies. He clearly feels his life has changed for the better, even though he

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Alex

expresses a fondness for the Children's Home and the staff and all that was done to help him grow while in care.

When I asked Alex where he saw himself in 10 years, he said he wanted to go to college, perhaps to study architecture, or maybe he would be performing somewhere. Whatever path he takes, Alex can have a great future and we wish him well.

*Theresa D. Kerin
Director of Development & Public Relations*



David poses for a photo with Assistant Unit Supervisor, Yusuf Saafir, after accepting the Nature Award at the Annual End of School Picnic and Awards Ceremony. David has an extraordinary love for all animals and does a great job caring for many of the pets that reside on campus.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It's close to the end of June now and the kids are wrapping up the last tasks of their school year and sitting through Regents exams. Five of our residents graduated from FDR or BOCES this year and are headed to Dutchess Community College or a jobs program. They're moving from the Boarding Home program into the Supervised Independent Living Program (SILP). They're facing the biggest hurdle of their young lives with trepidation – their 21st birthdays. As Tom Petty put it, they're heading “into the great wide open.” They know that on that birthday they'll be shoved out into the world and on their own – transformed into high wire walkers over a safety net with gaping holes. They're starting become really scared.

better for these kids than no family at all. Think about those 21 year olds getting ready to go it alone.

So we are deep in the process of change, changing our programs to meet the needs of children in this new environment. We have developed new programs including Therapeutic Foster Homes and the Young Mothers Program, expanded options for regular foster homes, specialty group homes, improved and expanded clinical services, and enhanced independent living skills development programming. We are also continuing to refine our programming



Assemblyman Marc Molinaro, former event honoree Senator Steve Saland, Sheila Appel, Manager of Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs for event honoree IBM Corp., Board President Sandra Kegan, Associate Board member Margaret Calista, also an event honoree, and Executive Director Walter Joseph pose at the 3rd annual Margaret G. Race Awards Reception.

At the other end of the scale we are seeing larger numbers of younger children coming into the emergency program and staying longer. At mealtimes, our dining room looks like a preschool class. Of course, none of these children are with us because of happy things. We work towards a brighter future for them.

Your contributions make the difference between warehousing children and helping them and their families heal. We are deeply grateful.

This year also marked some major changes for the Children's Home. We have reduced our long term population on the main campus from 40 beds to 19. This reflects major changes sweeping the foster care system. Initiatives to reduce the number of children and youth placed in institutions have blossomed in social service districts, schools, courts and the juvenile justice system. These are positive initiatives as they are aimed at keeping children connected to their families and communities, even though many of these families have failed to meet their obligations to their children. In the long run, a damaged family may be

and skills development for staff, focusing on the effects of trauma on the children and how we can help them move beyond their traumatic experiences and look to a better future.

We couldn't do this without your help and support. We are not funded by our government contracts at the level required to provide quality care to children. Your contributions make the difference between warehousing children and helping them and their families heal. We are deeply grateful.

Walter Joseph

GROUP EMERGENCY PROGRAM PROTECTS ITS 1,000TH CHILD

In just eight short years, the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie's Group Emergency Foster Care Program has passed the milestone of 1,000 children taken into care. Established in 2003 at the behest of Dutchess County's Division of Social Services, the program provides emergency beds round the clock for children in imminent danger who have to be removed from their homes. Originally opened with six beds, the program has steadily grown to its current twenty-three beds. The program is structured to support children experiencing the trauma of abuse and then removal. The Children's Home employs the Sanctuary Model of trauma informed care which immediately addresses treatment of trauma through play and art therapy with psychologists, social workers and child care staff working as a team with the children.

"The surprise for us when we opened this program" says the Home's Executive Director Walter Joseph, "is the number of babies we get. Over 85% of the time we have one or more babies in care." The

purpose of establishing the program was to minimize the trauma for children who must be removed from their homes. Children in the program are taken to their home schools, mix with their friends, go to their churches; their lives are kept as normal as possible with a staff that offers loving and nurturing care to each child. The GEFC program staff oversees all medical and other assessments for the children placed, and upon completion the information is used by the courts to determine the next best placement for the child, whether it is back with their now-stabilized family, with a relative, or in a foster home. "While it is sad to think that so many children have needed services, it is wonderful that we can provide a safe, loving and nurturing place for those who for no fault of their own, must be removed from home," added Mr. Joseph. As a comparative for the GEFC figures, throughout the 164 years of the Children's Home history, a total of 5,219 children have been in care, excluding the GEFC program.

*"We truly appreciate all of you volunteering your time."
From the girls in Hackett House to the IBM volunteers*

IBM VOLUNTEERS LEND A HAND

On June 15, the official IBM Day of Volunteering to celebrate the company's 100th anniversary, over 30 IBMers and friends of the Children's Home gathered on campus to work on several projects: they stained the porch at North Cottage and removed a smaller deteriorated porch, cleared dead trees from the Nature Trail surrounding the campus, built a large deck for the arts & crafts cabin, and tilled, raked and weeded two playgrounds. Two weeks previously, another group had built a Therapy Herb/Vegetable Garden for the children. The Home's children and staff are very grateful for the many improvements. The "Duke" was the official mascot for the deck-building crew.





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I'm not sure if the old saying "The more things change, the more they remain the same" is really true. At the Children's Home things have been changing rather dramatically in recent years and we have been trying to keep you all updated. Under Walter Joseph's able leadership, we have moved in new directions as needs emerge.

As you know, the response to the Young Mothers Program has been remarkably positive and we recently received license for expansion—just over a year after its opening! We are adding 10 more beds for pregnant girls in foster care and their babies. We have also been training Therapeutic Foster Families and already have a couple of youngsters placed in the care of families. The Group Emergency Foster Care program has grown to 24 beds. We began with just 6 in 2003 and as you will read in this issue, have surpassed the 1,000th child served. Rather a sad/happy situation. We are very grateful that we can offer a safe, stable, loving haven

to children traumatized by emergency removal from their homes.

On the Board front, we have taken steps to modernize the Board structure and amend our charter to bring it up to date with current New York laws and regulations. A committee is at work to research and produce suggestions to the full Board in the early fall. Other Board changes include a reduction in the number of meetings from ten to five annually and other measures to streamline our operations and make it easier for today's young professionals to serve.

As I turn over the presidency to Carol Weber, I reflect on a year of incredible change and positive happenings, even in the midst of financially very challenging times. Our core mission remains serving at-risk children and their families in the Hudson River Region—we are just doing it in new ways, so perhaps things are remaining the same after all.

Sandra C. Kegan



7th grade students Fiona Drunkenmiller and Samantha Bott of St. Denis-St. Columba School in Hopewell Junction present a check to Children's Home Development Associate, Brad Weaver. Fiona and Samantha decided they wanted to make a difference in the lives of less fortunate children and planned and coordinated a fundraiser at their school. They donated the proceeds to the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie.

MARIST SENIOR COORDINATES BOOK DONATION

Kaitlin Ryan poses with over 600 of the more than 2,000 books she acquired through several book drives to benefit the Home's children. Kaitlin undertook the task as her Senior Capping Class project for Marist College. She went to her elementary school, her high school, a middle school and another high school where her mother works—all in New Jersey—to promote book donations for the Children's Home as well as Big Brothers/Big Sisters. The Children's Home was the happy recipient of more than 600 books, sorted by age and category by Kaitlin and her family and friends. Even Kaitlin's cousin, Cayleigh, helped by working with her Girl Scout troop to make dozens of bookmarks as well.



CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Our two-pronged annual campaign has again reached the goal of \$270,000 overall with a total donated of \$274,186 by the end of May. The Annual Appeal goal was \$200,000 of the overall and had reached \$200,478 in donations. The remainder donated was in restricted gifts and grants. The children, staff, board and administration are very grateful to everyone in the community who has supported the mission of the Children's Home. In Kind donations, volunteer groups, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, church groups, and many others have brought gifts, managed toy drives, held clothing drives, made blankets and quilts, donated arts and crafts supplies and undertook projects to enhance the campus. We are deeply grateful to you all!

GUARDIAN SOCIETY

We welcome those of you who have included the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie in your estate plans, to the new Guardian Society. If you have not informed us of your future gift, we would appreciate the opportunity to thank you now for helping ensure the long term future of the Children's Home. Also, your gift can encourage others to think about joining the Guardian Society. After all, it is past bequests and estate gifts that have made it possible for the Home to thrive for 164 years.

WAYS TO CONNECT

To learn more about our programs and stay updated with our activities, "Like" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/childrenshomeofpoughkeepsie or visit our website at www.childrenshome.us.

There are many ways to help the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie.

- If you currently give an annual gift, consider making it easier by setting up monthly giving through the Home's secure site at www.childrenshomedonations.com. Setting up an automatic charge monthly spreads out your commitment evenly and saves the Home the cost of mailing.
- Talk to your employer about setting up an automatic payroll deduction to benefit the Children's Home. For information, contact Development Associate Brad Weaver at 845-452-1420 x 177.
- If you shop online, go through iGive.com and a percent of whatever you buy from the over 800 stores listed can go to the Home at no cost to you. It's an easy way to give more.
- Consider becoming a Visiting Resource for a youth at the Home, or even a Foster Family. For more information on these programs, contact the Human Resource Department at 845-452-1420.
- Conduct a food, clothing, school supplies, arts and craft supplies or other type of drive to benefit the children at the Home. Call Theresa Kerin at 845-452-1420 x 155 for information. Donations of new or nearly new items help save the Home dollars that can then be used to provide more services to our children.



During Easter week, Owen Clarke and his grandson, Brayton, delivered a 3-foot chocolate bunny to the Home's children. Owen related that when he and his brother were young, their father brought home a huge chocolate bunny that he had won. While the boys salivated over the thought of stuffing themselves with more chocolate, their father talked to them about children who had little Easter candy at all. The next morning, they piled in the family car and drove to St. Joseph's orphanage (New Jersey) with the bunny to give it to those children who needed it more than they did. Owen says he never forgot that incident or the message of giving to others, and wanted his own grandson to begin to understand the goodness of giving.

NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE HOME'S BOARDS



Twenty-three year Children's Home employee Nancy Schneider, who is clothing supervisor and assistant purchasing agent, reacts to being honored as Employee of the Year at the annual Staff Luncheon in June. Presenting her award is Human Resource Director Danielle Mitchell while Executive Director Walter Joseph looks on.

CAROL BARMANN graduated from the State University at New Paltz where she also earned her Masters in Elementary Education. She taught for nearly all of her 30 years with the Hyde Park School District at Netherwood Elementary School, and was active on many district committees and in giving workshops throughout the Hudson Valley. While retired, Carol remains active with the SPCA, in political campaigns, the annual Hyde Park Community Day, and with Hyde Park's senior citizens. She also enjoys traveling and reading.

APRIL GOZZA pursued a teaching degree from Mount St. Mary College but turned her focus to the not for profit sector in 1999. She was instrumental in establishing The Chamber Foundation with the former Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce to help create educational opportunities for youth and the workforce. Currently she is Director of Resource Development for United Way of Dutchess County where she and her team find opportunities to create and implement strategic development plans to raise funds for community needs. She manages all marketing and communications initiatives to advance the public awareness of United Way. April has also been active in the community, serving Dutchess County Arts Council, Vassar Brothers Medical Center, the Samuel FB Morse Historic Site and others.

NANCY D. MILLER, a Poughkeepsie native, graduated from Albany Business College. She has retired after working for over a decade for the Poughkeepsie

City School District as Special Projects Assistant for Public Relations. She coordinated many events over her years there and served as the United Way Campaign Coordinator for the Poughkeepsie School District for more years than she can remember. Nancy has long been very active in the community and currently serves on the boards of Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center, Poughkeepsie Day Nursery, Poughkeepsie Public Schools Foundation, and the Kiwanis Club of Poughkeepsie. She is a sustaining member of the Junior League and an avid reader.

JOHN COULTER is a well-known local attorney who earned his law degree from Albany Law School after graduating from Dartmouth. He has long been actively involved in the community with diverse organizations including Hospice, Inc., Meals on Wheels, Rehabilitation Programs, Inc., The Reformed Church, Dutchess County arts Council and Hudson Valley Estate Planning Council.

THOMAS CURCIO graduated from Clark University with both bachelor's and masters degrees. He entered the commercial banking industry 18 years ago and focuses primarily in middle market lending including the higher education and not for profit sectors for TD Bank, where he is Vice President for Commercial Lending, Mid Hudson Region. Tom has served on the board of Dutchess Regional Chamber of Commerce and has been active in coaching youth girls basketball. He enjoys leading a blues and jazz band in Fairfield County, CT.

"Thanks for giving me the push when I needed it. Thank you in advance for whatever else you do for me."

Seth, as he graduates and is headed to RIT in Rochester, NY



Executive Officers for 2011-12 are l. to r. Mary Lou Davis, Beth Devine, Carol Weber, Betty Harrel, Susann Mendoza, Grace Dietz, Joanne Long, Sharon Wilhelm, and Kitty Adamo pose at the Annual Meeting on June 1.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS FOR 2011-2012

- President Carol Weber
- First Vice President Grace Dietz
- Vice President in Charge of:
 - Capital Improvement Sharon Wilhelm
 - Resource Development Beth Devine
 - Governance Betty Harrel
- Recording Secretary Susann Mendoza
- Corresponding Secretary Joanne Long
- Treasurer Mary Lou Davis
- Assistant Treasurer Kitty Adamo

“You can either take advantage of what this program has to offer or just be mad all the time. Preferably I would choose to take advantage of this program.”

Penny, as she moved from campus cottage to group home.

We are including a silent auction this year. You can view the auction items at www.ChildrensHomeAuction.com.

Save the Date
September 22, 2011
 Children's Home of Poughkeepsie
Margaret G. Race Awards
 Associate Board Member Anne Cross
 Retired Dutchess County Family Court Attorney Referee Adina Gilbert
 and Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation
 5:00-7:30 pm
 Dutchess Golf & Country Club



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CHILDREN'S HOME HONORED FOR WORK WITH FAMILIES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

On the evening of May 21, 2011, at the Henry Wallace Center at the FDR Center in Hyde Park, a large group of community leaders, judges, public officials including Senator Saland and Assemblyman Marc Molinaro, and professionals in the mental health field turned out for the Hudson Valley Psychology's Community Award's Event. The Children's Home received an award for Meritorious Achievement in the treatment of families of domestic violence for its groundbreaking work with a large family that had suffered extreme domestic violence.

The Children's Home formed a coalition of five agencies to meet the complex needs of this family that included 7 children in placement at CHP. The other agencies in the coalition also receiving awards were Astor Services for

Children and Families, Dutchess County Department of Social Services, Dutchess County Department of Mental Hygiene, and Family Services, Inc. One of the most unique features of this pioneering effort was the establishment by the Children's Home of a separate off-campus home to house the 7 children of the family and the active involvement of their mother in the daily care and treatment planning of her children. This was a pilot program that had never been done before in NYS. This new model for treating families has attracted national attention and was the subject of a chapter written by David A. Crenshaw, Ph.D., Clinical Director, in *The Handbook of Resilience in Children, 2nd ed.* to be published later this year and will be featured by Dr. Crenshaw in upcoming presentations in Hartford, CT, Fairfax, VA, Sacramento, CA and Boston, MA.

The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie is a community based, non-profit agency dedicated to improving the lives of at-risk children and their families in the Hudson River Region.