



CHILDREN'S AID
AND FAMILY SERVICES

Turning Points

Holiday 2009

Serving vulnerable children and families since 1899

The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources Merges with Children's Aid and Family Services

THE CENTER
FOR ALCOHOL AND DRUG RESOURCES

Children's Aid and Family Services is now helping even more vulnerable people in the community after its recent merger with The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources. The Center, located at 241 Main Street in Hackensack, is a recognized leader in community and school-based education programs about alcohol and drug abuse prevention throughout Bergen County. It also provides extensive resources, information, expertise and support in understanding and preventing alcohol and drug abuse.

The Center was founded in 1979 as the Bergen County Council on Alcoholism with a \$10,000 grant from the Junior League of Bergen County for a K-12 alcohol education program. It was originally headed by Bill Tackman, a recovering alcoholic with a passion for raising awareness about the consequences of alcohol abuse. To that end, it also received a grant from the state of New Jersey for drunk driving awareness and fetal alcohol syndrome education. In 1986, it became



(l. – r.): DEA special agent Douglas Collier, Bob Jones, Ph.D.; Ellen Elias Rocca and Chief Robert Kugler, Saddle Brook Police Department at a press conference announcing Operation Medicine Cabinet.

known as the Bergen County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Inc., to reflect the nationwide trend of treating alcohol and drug abuse together.

During the past 30 years, The Center has evolved from a staff of one, focusing on raising awareness of alcohol abuse, to today's team of 11 professionals who conduct a myriad of programs and workshops for people of all ages. The Center's staff works with individuals, families, schools and community groups to provide them with the tools needed to reduce the prevalence and consequences of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. For example, "Footprints for Life" is a research-based prevention program presented in the classroom for children in second and third grade that teaches them about healthy choices and decision making. "Children in the Middle" is designed to help parents, coping with divorce or separation, reduce the stress for their children. "Creating Healthy Attitudes in Teens" gives first-time juvenile offenders, charged with a drug or alcohol offense, the opportunity to learn the consequences of alcohol and other drug abuse so their first brush with the law will be the last one. Then there's the "Wellness Initiative for Senior Education," which is a



(l. – r.): Kathi Viola and Andrea Gionta of The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources at the health fair hosted by Fairleigh Dickinson University.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's been a busy fall for the agency, with several fun events, including the Community Yard Sale, the Wine and Food Tasting Evening and the Adoption Celebration. I thank everyone who lent their support, either by attending, volunteering or making a donation.

The holiday season is almost here, and we're working to make this a happy and memorable time for the vulnerable children in our care. The agency relies on your generosity and help to make this time of the year special.

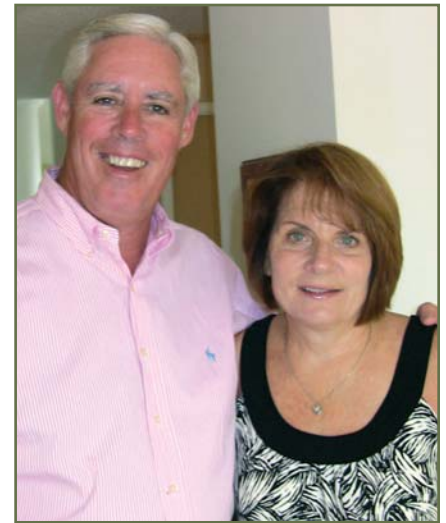
This year's holiday fundraising appeal features the story of the Burke family, who were also recipients of the "Angels in Adoption" Award. Like the Burkes, your support makes a tremendous difference and enables us to offer our children the best chance for a fulfilling life.

I thank you for everything you do and wish you a wonderful holiday season.

Robert B. Jones, Ph.D.
President & CEO

The Burkes: "Angels in Adoption" Recipients

U.S. Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) selected Ted and Marsha Burke of Glen Rock, NJ as 2009 *Angels in Adoption*, for their outstanding advocacy of adoption issues. The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI), which orchestrates the Angels in Adoption program, honored Mr. and Mrs. Burke, along with more than 190 Angels, at an awards ceremony and gala event in Washington, DC this past fall.



Ted and Marsha Burke

The Burkes have spent the majority of their lives helping vulnerable foster children. They met after college while both were group home counselors for foster children. When the Burkes learned of the agency's Boarder Babies Program (now known as the Medically Needy Infants and Toddlers Foster Care Program), they contacted the agency and went through the foster/adoption process. They eventually adopted the first baby placed with them, and when they learned his birth mother had another child in foster care, they advocated for her to be adopted by Mr. Burke's cousin.

Additionally, Mr. and Mrs. Burke have dedicated countless hours to help recruit prospective adoptive families, particularly for the older children still waiting for homes. Mr. Burke volunteers his time to produce videos of the older children waiting for adoptive families. The videos are featured on the agency's website, www.cafsnj.org.

The *Angels in Adoption*™ program was established in 1999. Since then, the program has developed into a yearlong public awareness campaign culminating in a gala and celebration in Washington, D.C.

2009 BUILDING FUTURES AWARDS



(l. – r.): Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO of Children's Aid and Family Services; Ellie Spray, marketing team leader, Whole Foods of Ridgewood; and David Treich, store manager of Whole Foods of Ridgewood. Whole Foods of Ridgewood received the Business and Labor Leadership award. (Photo © TimothyGlenn Photographers Inc.)



(l. – r.): Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO of Children's Aid and Family Services; William Hanse, chairman of the board of Atlantic Stewardship Bank; and Paul Van Ostenbridge, president and CEO of Atlantic Stewardship Bank. Atlantic Stewardship Bank received the Corporate Leadership award. (Photo © Timothy Glenn Photographers Inc.)

Celebrating National Adoption Month

On Sunday, November 15, Children's Aid and Family Services hosted an Adoption Celebration to announce its expanded Adoption Services at its "Family and Adoption Services Center," 148 Prospect Street, Ridgewood, NJ.

Students from Ridgewood and Fair Lawn High Schools were dressed as storybook characters who were adopted, including Superman, Moses, Dorothy of the "Wizard of Oz," Pinocchio and Harry Potter. They offered each guest a festive welcome. The event commemorated November as National Adoption Month and was a celebration for anyone touched by adoption. Adoptive families came from Bergen, Essex and Passaic Counties to celebrate and learn more about the adoption process and the new services being offered.

Legendary hip-hop artist Darryl "DMC" McDaniels was on hand to share his personal journey of finding his birth mother. To the delight of the crowd, he posed for pictures with the guests and then he performed his original song, "Just Like Me," as well as "Walk This Way." A strong advocate for adopted children, DMC serves as our celebrity spokesperson.

Upcoming free workshops at the Family and Adoption Services Center in Ridgewood include:

- Adoption 101: Everything you ever wanted to know about adoption
- Trans-racial adoption: Explore the issues of raising a child of race or culture different from your own
- Same-sex partner and single parent adoption: How to help children handle difficult questions
- Leaving home is hard to do: Preparing your adopted child for college or work
- The adopted child's journey: Questions along the way
- Search and Reunion: Explore the issues to consider in making a decision to search for a birth relative or not
- Older child adoption: Is it for you?

For more information or to register for the workshops, call the Adoption and Family Services Center at 201.445.7015 or visit www.cafsnj.org.



(l. - r.): Carmen, Jesus and Tyrone Freid getting autographs from Darryl "DMC" McDaniels.



Maya and Noa Aronovits with Pinocchio, Harry Potter, Moses and Dorothy.



(l. - r): Naziir, Shawn and Zionay proudly showing the pumpkins they decorated.

health and wellness program for older adults that discusses stress management, depression, alcoholism and prescription drug abuse.

Forming Strong Partnerships

“The Center has a wide range of collaborative partners in the community, including schools, local and county law enforcement and counseling centers,” says Ellen Elias Rocca, director of The Center and vice president for addiction services at Children’s Aid and Family Services. “We know that alcohol and drug use is prevalent in our society and the only way that we will be able to change the culture of use is to inspire and collaborate with many different partners.”

One such example is Operation Medicine Cabinet, which was organized to encourage local community residents to properly dispose of their unused, unwanted and expired medicine. The abuse of prescription drugs is a growing problem, especially among young people who can access these substances easily in their own homes. Operation Medicine Cabinet had 43 towns involved and was spearheaded by the Drug Enforcement Administration’s New Jersey Division (DEA), the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General and the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey (PDFNJ). The Center took the lead in distributing materials and helping to identify collection sites, and the event was a success, with many municipalities collecting large quantities of medication for disposal. Most important, it helped people begin to talk about the issue of prescription drug misuse and abuse, a first step toward bringing about change.

The Center is also coming up with creative ways to engage some “hard to reach” audiences. For instance, staff members recently participated in a health fair at Fairleigh Dickinson University to help educate students about substance abuse. The theme was “365 ways to party” without alcohol or drugs. They featured a “Wheel of Fortune”-type game of questions and answers about the effects of substance abuse and gave prizes to the students that participated. “More than 200 students stopped at our table,” says Ms. Elias Rocca. “What could have been perceived as intimidating or judgmental to the students was instead embraced by them, and they learned about positive, substance-free ways to socialize and have fun in the process.”

The Center also receives many calls every day from families who have someone in crisis because of substance abuse. As this is a sensitive and confusing time for the person calling, The Center staff patiently works to help the caller through the process of finding the appropriate resources and support.

A Merge That Strengthens Both Agencies

Children’s Aid and Family Services has worked closely with The Center for many years, and The Center’s staff has provided several prevention trainings to agency staff and the foster children in the agency’s care. “I am delighted that The Center has joined our agency family,” says Bob Jones, Ph.D., president and CEO of the agency. “Its services are a wonderful complement to our existing social skills and other parenting and family education programs. Further, the consolidation of our two agencies in this way strengthens all aspects of our shared mission commitments. Children’s Aid and Family Services provides infrastructure support that can enable The Center to take its services to the next level; at the same time, our employees and clients will benefit hugely from the addition of The Center’s staff and their experience and expertise in substance abuse issues.”

The Center will continue to be based at its current location in Hackensack. For more information, call 201.488.8680 or visit www.cafsnj.org.

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CHILDREN'S AID AND FAMILY SERVICES

For more information or to schedule a tour of the Center, please call **201-261-5970** or visit <http://turrell.cafsnj.org>

Susan Frech: The *Wonders of Adoption*

Susan Frech is a married mother of two young daughters with a career in sales and marketing. She exudes warmth, happiness and gratitude. She was born in Vietnam during the war and eventually adopted by a family from Wayne, NJ through the agency. Her adoptive mother, Tanya Virgilio, contacted the agency recently to share Sue's incredible story with us.

In 1973, a baby girl in Vietnam was abandoned by her birth parents. Sadly, this was an all-too-common occurrence in the war-torn country. With chaos reigning, many parents were simply unable to care for their children, and in some tragic instances were even captured or killed. Their children — if they survived infancy — had few prospects.

Little Lan Chi was taken to an orphanage in the province of Vinh Long where she joined other babies and children without families to care for them. It was understaffed, overcrowded and lacked sufficient baby supplies. The overwhelmed staff cared for her as best as they could in such dire circumstances, but her future looked grim.



Adoptive mother Tanya and her daughter Susan.

A Family Hoping to Adopt

Tanya and Joseph Virgilio of Wayne had a 1-year-old son, Eric, and had long wanted to adopt a child. Mrs. Virgilio eventually contacted the agency. After undergoing a lengthy adoption process, the agency caseworker called the Virgilios with some happy and surprising news. There was a baby girl from Vietnam who was available for adoption. In fact, she was the first baby from the war-torn country being adopted through Children's Aid and Family Services and her name was Lan Chi.

The Virgilios were overjoyed that the baby would join their family, but there was great anxiety about her journey. "We weren't sure when she would get to New Jersey," Tanya recalls. "I remember being ready to pick up the baby one week, and then hearing horrible news of bombings and civilian passenger planes not being sent out."

Eventually, the baby was put on a flight out of the country and arrived in August 1974 at LaGuardia Airport. The Virgilios were so excited they arrived six hours before the flight was due. "We cried in such joy when the baby arrived," recalls Tanya. "And when we got home, there were at least 40 people at the house just waiting to greet Susan, which is what we named her."

Although she was 16 months old, Susan weighed only 12 lbs. — about the same weight as a 3-month-old — and was unable to crawl or walk. "She had a bowl haircut because of scabies and marks all over from having the measles," recalls Tanya. "She was so emotionless and remote; quite the contrast from the way Susan is today!"



Clockwise (l. - r.): Keira, Susan, Michael and Emily Frech.

*See **Adoption** page 7*

Food, Wine and Fun

Nearly 200 agency supporters attended the annual Wine and Food Tasting Evening recently at St. Leon's Church in Fair Lawn, NJ. The programs supported by the event focus on infants and young children in the agency's care. They include Baby Basics, which provides free nutritional formula and diapers to low-income families with children ages 2 and younger, and the Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center.

Wine connoisseurs enjoyed a selection of fine wines, provided by Carlo Russo's Wine & Spirit World in Ho-Ho-Kus. Guests also savored delicacies from area restaurants, including The Best of Everything, Blue Moon, Bourbon BBQ, La Strada Gourmet, Oceanos and Rivara's.

"We are especially grateful to the evening's sponsors, Applebee's Neighborhood Bar & Grill, Atlantic Stewardship Bank, United Water and media sponsor Town News," said Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO of Children's Aid and Family Services. "We are also thankful to our wonderful group of volunteers that planned and coordinated the event."



(l. - r.): Ramsey resident Terry Duvall with Erylyn Riley, Dru Pierce and John Pierce. Ms. Riley and Ms. Pierce are members of the Event Committee. (Photo courtesy of Timothy Glenn Photographers, Inc.)



Members of the Event Committee with agency staff. Front row (l. - r.): Madinah Grier, vice president, Development and Communications; Sally Clark; Maribeth Lane, member Board of Trustees. Back row (l. - r.): Cathy Newman, Bob Jones, Ph.D., president and CEO; Carol Smith, member Board of Trustees; and Jan Lescroart. (Photo courtesy Timothy Glenn Photographers, Inc.)



Members of Children's Aid and Family Services' Board of Trustees (l - r.): J. Christopher Nettleton; Maribeth Lane; Carol Smith; Bob Jones, Ph.D., president and CEO; Brenda Gallagher; Nina Sharma and John Kandravv, chair. (Photo courtesy Timothy Glenn Photographers, Inc.)



(l. - r.): Harlen Coben, Dr. Anne Armstrong-Coben, Chuck Russo, owner of Carlo Russo's Wine and Spirit World in Ho-Ho-Kus.



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United Water: Making a Difference

Since its founding in 1869 as the Hackensack Water Company, United Water has a record of strong community involvement. Each year, the company donates close to \$1.5 million in contributions and in-kind services to hundreds of local organizations. Its primary focus is to support nonprofit organizations dedicated to the environment, education and humanitarian services.

The company's charity, UW Cares, is a nonprofit program that provides financial assistance to customers who are having trouble paying their water bills. Additionally, United Water employees are quite active in giving back to the community, and proud to make a difference in the towns and cities where they live and work.

The employees of United Water New Jersey are no strangers to Children's Aid and Family Services. For the past several years, the organization has provided ongoing support to the agency.

This summer, United Water hosted a "Day of Giving" campaign, where 50 United Water employees volunteered at the agency for two days. A dozen volunteers worked in the administrative office, two dozen staff members assisted the teachers at the Turrell Center inside the classrooms and the all-volunteer force at The Depot received much-needed help sorting and storing inventory. Several other volunteers helped sort and organize Baby Basics items at the agency's Family and Adoption Services Center in Ridgewood. An additional dozen workers mulched the front, back and side yards at the Path 1 foster care home.

The company also held several "Dress-down Fridays" where employees paid \$3 to wear jeans and/or sneakers to work. Additionally, the company sponsored its annual Charity Softball Game where half of the proceeds were donated to the agency.

Additionally, United Water was a sponsor of the agency's Wine and Food Tasting Evening and generously agreed to cover the printing costs of the invitations for this event.

In October, thanks to the recommendation of United Water, the Volunteer Center of Bergen County's Business Volunteer Council (BVC) designated the agency's Baby Basics program as the beneficiary of its annual "Night at the Races" at the Meadowlands. All invitees were asked to bring a Baby Basics item with them to the event. The result was over \$1,100 worth of diapers, formula, wipes and other baby items to benefit the Baby Basics program.

"Children's Aid and Family Services is enormously grateful for the generosity of United Water and its employees," says Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO of the agency. "They are a shining example of how to make a difference in the lives of others."



United Water was a sponsor of the agency's Food and Wine Tasting Evening and some of its employees attended the event. (l. – r.): Sarah Mansfield, Joann Berenguer, Alex Noriega, Lisa Harry, Karen Stapleton and Treva Spencer-Dupree. (Photo courtesy of TimothyGlenn Photographers, Inc.)

Susan Frech: The Wonders of Adoption

continued

The Virgilios and their extended family and friends enthusiastically dove into the task of helping the toddler adjust to her new environment. Susan cried often and needed a great deal of attention because of her time spent in the orphanage. For example, she was used to sharing a crib with 12 other babies. Her big brother, Eric, played a major role in helping her adapt to her new surroundings by playing with her constantly. Her grandparents came from Chicago and spent several weeks with the baby. Additionally, many friends and neighbors showered Susan with attention.

For her part, Susan has overwhelmingly positive memories of her childhood. "If I hadn't been adopted, I'm sure my life would have been filled with hardship, turmoil and trauma," she says. "I feel blessed to be here. My family has always been so close and loving. My mom got me involved in tons of activities to see what I would like. Because of her efforts, I have a passion for art and dance that I'm now sharing with my daughters."

One day, Sue would like to travel to Vietnam to see her native country and learn more about the culture. Sue and her husband Mike, also a native of Wayne, hope to one day adopt a child when her birth children are a bit older. "I love my life and am completely fulfilled," she says. "Things could have turned out so differently. I've been so fortunate and would like to give something back."

Although the agency no longer handles international adoptions, we are always seeking nurturing adoptive parents for older children with special needs, as well as medically fragile infants and toddlers. To learn more, call our recruitment specialist at 201.226.0300 x242.

SAVE THE DATE

HOME ON THE RANGE

Mark your calendars for Children's Aid and Family Services' annual fundraising gala. Our signature event is on Friday, March 26, 2010, at the stately Hackensack Golf Club in Oradell, NJ. The event will benefit vulnerable children and families in our shared communities.

The agency is currently seeking sponsors to help support the event. Past sponsors include Boiling Springs Savings Bank, Mutual of America, Toys"R"Us, Town News and Wyeth. For more information on the event and other ways you can lend your support through a donation to our silent auction or journal advertising, please visit our website at www.cafsnj.org. Stay tuned, there's more to come...



The mission of Children's Aid and Family Services is to preserve, protect, and when needed, provide families. Motivated by compassion for vulnerable children, young adults, frail elderly and their families, we provide high-quality and innovative services that meet their social, educational and emotional needs. Since 1899, the agency has been recognized as a leader in adoption and specialty therapeutic services for children who have been severely traumatized and abused. For more information, please visit www.cafsnj.org.



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