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Open House and Open Hearts

Once again Caroline House has been touched by the generosity of friends, new and old, who have opened their hearts to our ministry for women and children.

After a long hot summer our expansion is completed and in record time. We boast a large children's room and an upstairs classroom, which has also become a large meeting room with much-needed extra tutoring space. This addition would still only be a wish if it wasn't for the generous donations of the Margaret & Stanley Suzanski Charitable Trust and an Anony-

mous donor. With these funds we were able to contract with **Two Brothers Old Restoration** and their dedicated crew of workers. They were given a tight schedule and their workers put their hearts and skills into completing the job.

To make our renovation complete, **Anthony Carlos of Outdoor Lawn Service, Inc.** donated labor and materials to beautify our lawn and revamp our parking lot in time for the opening day of classes.

The dedication and open house took place on Sep-

tember 22 with Caroline House staff, Board of Directors and friends in attendance.

With the open hearts of all those who generously support us, our ministry at Caroline House continues. We have increased enrollment and are now able to serve more students.



Jean Fredricks cutting the ribbon for the building addition with Sam Carpenter, Tonin Kimca and Norek Kimca

Poof! The tutor waved a magic wand...

...and Caroline House was transformed into a bustling half-day summer school program tutoring children from second to eighth grades. The magic of Caroline House Summer School would not have happened without the dedication, energy and empathy from our volunteers. Volunteers provided each student with one-on-one tu-

toring every day for 3 weeks. This allowed each child to learn at his/her own pace without feeling intimidated or rushed. The encouragement



and praise that each student received throughout the day provided him or her with the confidence to succeed in school. Special thanks to **Diane Johnson and Mary Carroll** for overseeing all aspects of this program, to head teachers **Kate Ordway, Wendy Kann, and Erin McCurley**, and to all the wonderful volunteers.

Why I give to Caroline House...



Tim and Alexis Yates

Part of what makes Caroline House so special are our VOLUNTEERS.

Alexis Yates (and her two year old daughter Campbell) is one such volunteer who works with the Caroline House preschool program. This busy mom of three (with supportive husband Tim) enjoys teaching and feels volunteering should be a part of her family's life. "When I heard about Caroline House

from my friend in the Junior League, I called Caroline House the next day! My husband Tim and I feel very blessed and I enjoy the opportunity to work with Caroline House. Campbell just can't wait to play with her friends and she knows all the preschoolers by name. I look forward to getting more involved with Caroline House in the future."

The Men Behind the Mission... of Our Addition!

Did you know?
100% of all children who graduate from the Caroline House preschool program attend English speaking Kindergartens.

It was Sister Peg's first time as a general contractor so she was concerned about making the right choice for the Caroline House addition. After much deliberation (and prayer!) Sister Peg chose **Two Brothers Old Restoration**. The Kimca brothers are an immigrant success story! Tonin and Norek came to the United States from Albania 18 years ago. Since that time

they have built a successful construction business, completing hundreds of renovation projects. Two Brothers was chosen because of their excellent work in several area churches. Sister Peg said "Tonin is a man of his word. Not only was our 4,000 square foot addition completed in 6 weeks and on budget, but all of the work was done with great craftsmanship. All the



Norek and Tonin Kimca

workers were gentlemen; they cleaned up after themselves and often volunteered to help us with odd jobs around the House."

Sister Connie Carrigan celebrates 50 years as a School Sister of Notre Dame with her students at Caroline House



Sister Connie

Sister Connie Carrigan wanted to do something different for her Jubilee year as a School Sister of Notre Dame (SSND). Most Sisters celebrate with their communities and families in a renewal of vows, sharing the joy of their years of service as SSNDs.

Sister Connie has spent many years working with women and children as a teacher and as a coordinator of diocesan and community programs. For close to a decade, Sister Connie has been sharing her talents as a teacher and development assistant at Caroline House.

Why did Sister Connie choose to have her celebration with the students of Caroline House? "**I knew these women have probably never participated in a Jubilee celebration and I wanted to share my joy with them.** The women of Caroline House have many struggles and learning English is just one of them."

The Children's Corner

The new school year is a wonderful time to reflect on the past year and plan for the coming year in the preschool classroom.

Past Year Highlights:

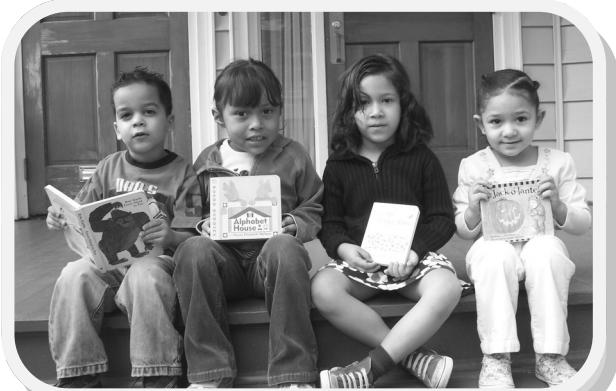
- ◆ All children passed learning goals
- ◆ 57 children and mothers visited the Bronx Zoo
- ◆ Wonderful outpouring of support at our Fun Fundraiser Fiesta
- ◆ Tireless and energetic workers and walkers at our walk-a-thon, this year held in April at Fairfield University
- ◆ All children eating their vegetables —many grown from our backyard garden that the children help to plant



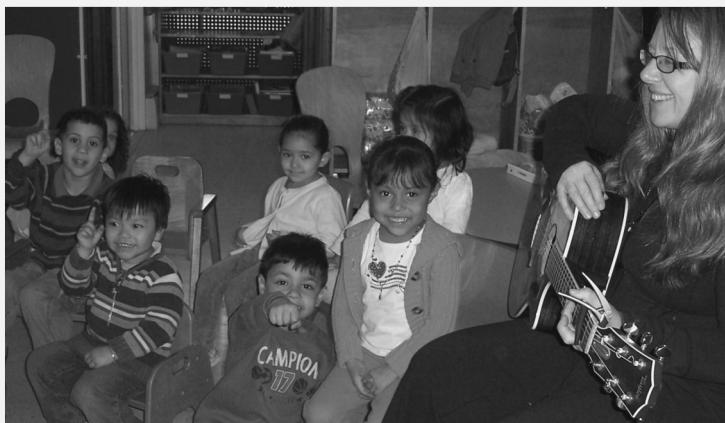
Making New Friends

This Year's Happenings:

- ◆ Several children are starting to sound out words, taking their first steps toward becoming readers!
- ◆ Fun Fundraiser Fiesta set for October 28
- ◆ Children delighting in the extra play space as a result of our classroom addition
- ◆ New kitchen area to prepare nutritious food for the children
- ◆ Yoga and dance classes for the older children



Sharing Books Together



Sing-a-long Fun with Lyndy Toole

As you can see, we have great plans for the coming school year. We hope we can include **you** in them!

Please call Preschool Director Jean Fredricks at (203) 334-0640 to join us in the classroom for one of our Wednesday "lunch specials."

A Bit of Caroline House History

by Megan Kacenski

Caroline House was created to help women better their lives. It's beautiful to watch a young woman smile because she has learned English and can help



St. Joseph High School students with Founding Member Sister Bernadine. (Left to right: Kerry Hayes, Anna Lonardo, Sister Bernadine, Megan Kacenski, and Kelsey Meise)

her children have a better life.

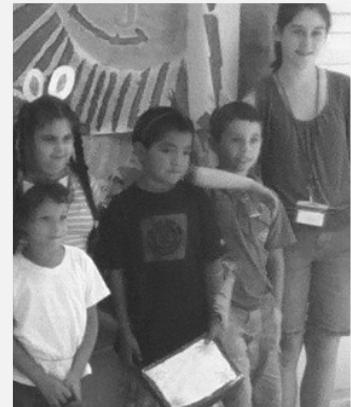
I was fortunate to spend the afternoon with Sister Bernadine, a former teacher at Caroline House and one of the founding members. Sister Bernadine gave us a wonderful history lesson on Caroline House and many reasons to stand in awe of its successes today!

- Caroline House opened its doors on October 22, 1995
- 12 women were the first students
- Two building additions have been put on to Caroline House to better serve more students
- Since 1995, Caroline House has taught over 1,000 women and 450 children

Theatre Program Debuts at Caroline House

This summer an acting class taught by Erin McCurley was added to the summer program. Erin, a junior at Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden, has been a Girl Scout since first grade. She is currently working on her Girl Scout Gold Award. Erin wanted her project to involve working with kids, as she wants to become an elementary school teacher. The class involved reading a story, talking about literary and acting terms, turning the story into a play, assigning

parts to each child, creating scenery and costumes, practicing, and performing. *The Little Red Hen* was performed by second and third graders, *The Enormous Carrot* was performed by fourth and fifth graders, and *You Are Special* was performed by sixth through eighth graders. Most children had never been involved in creating a production before. The children did a wonderful job! They enjoyed their theatrical debut and had lots of fun. We look forward to continuing the class in the future.



Children learn acting with Erin McCurley

Mother and Child Literacy: Gemma and Geli



Gemma and Geli share a story together

Gemma and her 5-year-old daughter Geli take a one-hour bus ride to Caroline House every school day. Gemma is originally from Mexico and is currently enrolled in our level 4 ESL. Geli has been attending our preschool since she was two. Her language and learning skills continue to grow through the nurturing support in the preschool classroom. She is attending one more year in the preschool to ensure readiness for success in kindergarten for 2013.

Gemma is humbly proud of the progress she has made since coming to Caroline House. She says that the doctor at her health clinic remarks how well she communicates in English. She is now able to help her 8-year-old son with his homework. Her son attended our summer tutoring. While he was building math, reading, and creative arts skills, Gemma used our computer room to keep up with her English using language-learning software.

Martinis & Mingle 2012

Thank you to the Caroline House supporters who made Martinis & Mingle such a success - and so much fun. Over 195 friends of Caroline



Sharon Carpenter and Diane Johnson celebrating Caroline House

House gathered at the beautiful Patterson Club of Fairfield for an evening of music, great food and better company. This festive evening raised over \$75,000 to help the women and children of Caroline House. In Sister Peg's address to the crowd she said, "We would like to thank our sponsors and friends, but I would also like to applaud all our women and children that make up what Caroline House is today!"

Thank You to Event Sponsors:

GOLD - Pfizer, The Stuart & Susan Bell Family Foundation, Timothy & Kelly Reed, ReedITC, Ray & Claire Condon, **SILVER** - Agnes W. & Ernest W. Kaulbach Charitable Foundation, and Jeff & Marie-Paule De Valdivia, **BRONZE** - Frank & Claudia Matthews, Gen Re, School Sisters of Notre Dame Atlantic-Midwest Province and Wells Fargo.

Student Guest Speaker M&M '12: Yolanda Rivera

Caroline House student Yolanda Rivera shared her story of hope and gratitude. She spoke of how after she and her family moved from Puerto Rico, "I was speaking English, but it wasn't always correct. At Caroline House, I've been learning pronunciation, grammar and proper vocabulary." Her 2-year-old daughter Zofia began the preschool program last year,

and at first would cry when leaving her mom. Expressing thanks for the patience of preschool staff and volunteers, Yolanda said Zofia is now happy and eager to join in classroom activities.

Yolanda thanked her "great ESL teachers who are always willing to help us communicate better." She also praised "my companion students...Many couldn't ex-



"Caroline House has been a great

benefit and blessing for me."

-Yolanda Rivera

plain to a doctor how they felt, or say thank you... Now they can communicate and talk to their children's teachers. I am very proud of them, and they are a strong motivation to me."

Special thanks to...

The Martinis & Mingle Committee - Cecilia Campbell, Jane Richards Colihan, Joyce Flynn, Eliana Foisie, Marcy Haley, Liza Hesburg, Sister Maria Iannuccillo, Christine Juneau, Janet Lett, Monica McInerney, Kristine Mehanna, Kelly Reed, Kathleen Stagg, Carmen Stalder, Laurie Stefanowicz, and Suzanne Turner

Master of Ceremonies — David Conway

Martinis & Mingle Photo Gallery

Photos generously taken by Deacon Lance Fredricks



Caroline House

An Education Center for Women & Children

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Sister Peg's Perspective

Our Graduation/Promotion Ceremony seems like a long time ago, even though it was only in June! It was a great celebration of all that our students have accomplished. Shortly after, we started Summer Camp for 35 neighborhood children with the aid of 74 volunteer tutors. Yes, some kids had two tutors working with them!

An added feature this year was the Theater program, run by **Erin McCurley** as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award. Erin got the students to reflect on a story, write their own script, rehearse, and make costumes, props and posters to announce the shows. The students really "owned" this whole process and it was evident on the day when they presented to all at Caroline House and to

family members. We had the "Perfect Audience," even though they had to sit on the ground in the back of the house!

Two other Scouts also made great contributions to Caroline House. We are most grateful to **Grace Juneau** of Weston who completed her Girl Scout Silver Award by building a beautiful bookcase to store our reading books for the tutoring program. Eagle Scout **Chris Driscoll** of Westport transformed our basement into a model storage space. He painted, built shelves, and organized all supplies in clear bins to create a neat and bright storage area.

Minutes after the Summer Camp concluded, workers were here to add on space for our Preschool and ESL students. They were giv-

en six weeks for the construction and they completed the job with excellent craftsmanship, on budget and on time. Caroline House not only has a better facility, but we also gained good friends with **Two Brothers Old Restoration and Outdoor Lawn Service**, who beautified our environment.

For all of these summer activities we had perfect weather, so we know we had angels watching out for us. We are so grateful to all of these friends and to you for your ongoing support!



*Sister Peg Regan, SSND
Executive Director*

