

## Caroline House Mission Statement

*To enable women and children to reach the fullness of their potential through education in English language and life skills*



## Caroline House

*Founded and sponsored by the School Sisters of Notre Dame*

*Serves the women of the Bridgeport area by teaching classes in English, basic computer, and life skills*

*Offers programs for preschool children while their mothers are in class*

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**Caroline House**  
An Educational Center for Women & Children

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## Our 15th Anniversary

Over fifteen years ago, the School Sisters of Notre Dame had a dream of serving women and children in need. When we were given the house on the east side of Bridgeport, CT this dream became a reality. Now, fifteen years later, we stand in awe and thanksgiving for the tremendous blessing Caroline House is and has been for so many families.

Our hearts are filled with gratitude for:

- the hundreds of women and children who have come and been transformed
- the dedicated staff and volunteers who lovingly give of their time and talent, making Caroline House a place of peace, love and hope
- the large group of generous donors who keep Caroline House financially sound
- the Board of Directors who support and oversee our mission
- the community resources and groups who enrich our programs
- the technicians who keep our computers, telephones and alarm systems functioning
- our SSND community who continues to pray and support our mission

At present we have over 75 people offering a variety of services to us. They come, they stay and we are grateful!

## SAVE THE DATES

- "Martinis & Mingle"  
Friday, March 26, 2010
- 5K Walk-a-thon  
Saturday, March 30, 2010

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Virginia Muller SSND*  
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## Chianti, Cannolis & Conversation



The guys should be so lucky! That was what was on the minds of many women who attended the Fund Raiser for Caroline House on October 22nd at the Westport Country Playhouse. Even those who were familiar with the locale were amazed at the way talented volunteers had converted the lobby into a charming Italian Bistro (with wine, cappuccino, gelatos, cannolis and pastries galore), served by gracious hostesses and charming bartenders. One of the gallant bartenders was so moved by the spirit of the evening that he contemplated giving up his day job, after being offered a \$20 tip!!!

We came to listen to a prolific, popular author, but we had not anticipated that she would also be an outstanding stand-up comedienne with the proverbial soft spot in her heart of gold. Adriana Trigiani demonstrated the wisdom of "writing about what you know" as she shared the people and stories of her life in an

Italian-American family in the latter part of the 20th Century. Her graphic depictions allowed us to visualize and relate to these family members and friends and envision the inspiration for her novels.

As if all this was not enough, Adrianna switched hats and became an auctioneer par excellence, raking in funds as she caused tears to roll down our cheeks and sides to ache from laughter produced by her one-liners. In her magnanimity she even auctioned off the earrings she was wearing, the original drawings of her book jackets and offered to name the characters in her upcoming book in exchange for a donation from the audience members. She ended up giving her earrings away and stayed on after hours to sign copies of her books.

Aside from these delightful surprises, the attendees went home with the insights into their own lives and families, as they reflected on Adriana's journey. The Playhouse echoed with laughter as the departing guests called out: "Let's do this again!" Adriana is known for her NY Times best sellers, e.g. Big Stone Gap Series, Lucia, Lucia and many more.



*Adriana signs another copy of her book*



### Thank You Sponsors

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The TJX Companies  
Wood Avenue Bev Max

## Thank you from the Children's Corner

The children and Jean, who directs the Childrens Program, are grateful for the volunteers who give so freely of their time, talent and treasures to make our program a success:

- Liza, Jane, Patty, Mutlu and Bahia, each give at least one day a week to help teach and care for our twenty six children.
- The college students from Fairfield and Sacred Heart Universities give several hundred hours to us as interns, work study and community volunteers.
- Monsignor Andy Varga sends gourmet casseroles on a regular basis to the delight of our hungry children.
- Teddy built a fantastic elevated closed-in-garden in the backyard, and his dad, Jim, purchased red pepper plants so the children could see the plants growing and taste the peppers.
- Bonnie with family and friends painted our smaller children's room and created over ten storage bins.
- The Mother's Club of St. Mary's (with some Dads) built cubbies for coats and organized the large children's room. They also built shelves for storage in the garage.



*Darwin and Jason  
help Jean.*

**Please know we are deeply grateful to all those who have helped the children in any way.**

*Those who give to the poor, give back to God and store up heavenly riches for themselves.*



*Sayda and Ashley  
enjoy their time together.*

## Summer School Is Cool, It's Fun, We Like It!



*Claire counts with Giovanni.*

For three whirlwind weeks from June 28 through July 17, Caroline House hummed with more than 30 elementary and middle school students. The youngest camper was a pre-kindergartener, Giovanni. Most children were from local public elementary schools in Bridgeport. Many kids, like Steven, a hip eight grader who returned to study with his friend and mentor Lucas, were comfortable old-timers. Romeo was an ultra-cool but occasionally uncertain 6th grader who arrived in the United States from Jamaica just last November.

On the first day of camp Bill Finch, the Mayor of Bridgeport, paid Caroline House a surprise visit. A thicket of hands shot up when he asked star-struck students how many countries they represented. "In America we are all equal, I get one vote, you get one vote," he informed them in a quick civics lesson.

The camp that ran from 9 am until noon everyday quickly fell into a regular routine. Students rotated between journaling, English and math. In the journaling room, Marie-

Paule encouraged students to express emotion in words, pastels and watercolors, and ultimately edited an impressive Caroline House Summer Journal comprised of the students' thoughtful work. Children were encouraged to read and then take home literature generously donated by First Books. They studied phonics on brand new laptops. Often, they pulled out word and strategy games. Spy Alley was a favorite. Sleeping Queens was a big hit with the smaller girls. At recess, the backyard of Caroline House was a blur of jump ropes and soccer balls.

Of the young adults who gave up many hours of their summer to help at Caroline House, some preferred to help in a particular subject, while others grew attached to a particular student. They learned or were reminded of the tremendously satisfying light in a young child's eyes when he or she finally understands something a teacher is trying to impart. Anna mentioned she is now thinking about a teaching career after she graduates. When little Luis was asked to make up a sentence using the word "dream," he stopped wiggling for a nanosecond and wrote: "Every night I dream of my tutor." These tutors, mostly high school and college-aged volunteers, deserve acknowledgement for the program's success and are grateful for the enrichment they received from the kids.



*Nay'sha enjoys Margaret's help.*

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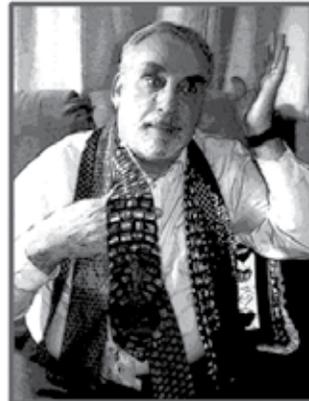
## Greetings from the Executive Director, S. Ann Moles, SSND

*Dear Friends,*

*As we begin to celebrate Christmas, with prayers and hopes for a wonderful New Year, I would like to take a moment and offer a simple and sincere thank you to all of you who have done so much for Caroline House and its family. We are truly grateful for your prayers and support through our fifteen years here in Bridgeport. Your time, talent and resources have allowed our family to grow and our mission to succeed.*

*From our family to yours, may you have a peaceful and loving Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.*

*May God's love be with you,  
S. Ann Moles, SSND*



Does your Uncle Fred really need another Christmas tie?

Give him a gift he would be proud to display.

Make a donation to Caroline House in Uncle Fred or Aunt Mary's name, and they will receive an acknowledgement of your gift to them.

We hope you like our  
"Changing Lives through Literacy Booklet"  
you received in the mail.

