



SISTER CIRCLE

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2

SPRING 2011

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NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings,
I am excited to greet you in the last half of this administration. Wow, it has been filled with many opportu-

nities to share our story and make others aware of the fabulous ladies of Las Amigas, Incorporated. When you love something as I do Las Amigas, Incorporated, the story is easy to share.

The trip to Haley Farm in Tennessee in December 2010 was eye opening, informative and inspiring. It was my first experience encountering a place in history where a film had been made. There were evidence of

“Roots” on the farm. The Langston Hughes Library was overpowering with our history. To be amongst other leaders wanting to secure that our children are taught what is needed for endurance in this world, was astounding. I thank the organization for allowing me to serve and I await my time to share with you about the Freedom Schools, started by the Children Defense Fund with Marian Wright Edelman.

Orchids to each chapter who adhered to the deadlines. It is my hope that the upcoming deadlines will be met as well. Remember it is important

for the planning process.

Conclave 2011 is upon us and as final preparations are being made, I feel sure you will be satisfyingly honored with the organization. Forestville Maryland, the host chapter is working to make your visit with them a noteworthy one. I thank them for working with National to welcome our sisters to another Conclave. Prepare to come and experience some new things.

Please prepare to arrive at Conclave with a spirit of sisterhood, inspirational and renewal. National and the host chapter Forestville Maryland looks forward to making this Conclave like none other. Sisters, thanks for the opportunity to serve you and we all should be reminded of our motto: “Those who apply themselves too closely to little things, often become incapable of accomplishing great things.”

I remain Sisterly Yours,
Joann W. Williams
17th National President

NOTABLE '10-'11 HAPPENINGS:

- Significant progress continues with the US Patent and Trademark Office to obtain an official trademark of the Las Amigas, Incorporated logo (shield); It is expected that Las Amigas, Incorporated will receive a registered trademark by Conclave 2011;
- Conclave 2011 will be held in Bethesda, MD, June 22-26; Conclave will be hosted by the Forestville MD Chapter and the Northeast Region; Be there!
- This is an election year for national officers. Be prepared to cast your vote at Conclave 2011!



National President Williams with Marian Wright Edelman Founder of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) at the 2010 Children's Defense Fund BCCC Conference at Haley Farm in Tennessee.

NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings Sisters,
I greet you in love and in the spirit of a common bond that's binds us as sisters in this awesome organization called Las Amigas.

I salute each of you for staying the course in this fine sisterhood that has built a solid foundation for those that follow us. It is my belief that loyalty, dedication and a commitment to public service, with each of us focusing on the betterment of our communities will sustain us.

You are to be commended for upholding and supporting the mission, goals and ideals for which we were founded. This sisterhood has stood the test of time, our legacy of service started with the inception of Las Amigas. The partnerships we have developed with

other organizations are evidence of our true commitment to service. We have stood on the shoulders of our late founders that had the wisdom and fortitude to organize such an organization.

We are in control and we define our own destiny. As we continue to build and grow, we must remember to continue to deliver the "good news" of how we have directly impacted and contributed to the betterment of others. The vision of our founders paved the way for what we are today. I encourage you to step out on faith and continue to grow in Las Amigas.

There are true benefits to being a Las Amigas woman. The training is rewarding, the friendships fulfilling, the comraderey of liked minded women is immeasurable

and the blessing are endless. We have continued to contribute to the growth of leaders, effectively empowered and strengthened their lives in ways untold. It's truly amazing the things we can do when we put our minds to it.

As my terms ends as Vice President, your cooperation and support have made my life better just by being allowed to call you my sisters. It has been a pleased serving as your Vice President and sincerely thank you for the opportunity.

Again, congratulations on your many accomplishments and they have not gone unnoticed.

With much sisterly love,

Frances S. Robinson

Vice-President

NATIONAL REPORTER'S MESSAGE



Sisters,
As we draw to the close of another year of extraordinary service and significant accomplishments in our public service quest, we

pause to reflect on the great work that we are doing in our communities.

Las Amigas, Incorporated - chapters and as individuals - is leaving an imprint on the lives we touch. Orchids to everyone for efforts to make a difference!

This issue of *Sister Circle* salutes those Sisters who are giving a voice to making

a difference in their respective communities and nationally for our Sisterhood.

Some Sisters are volunteering sharing their talents to help others. Some Sisters have embarked on a personal journey to leave their mark and touch lives.

Whichever path chosen, our Sisters are blazing trails, reaching out, taking a stand, impacting lives, and making a difference.

Our Sisters continue to do great work. So, tell them! That's what we do in our *Sister Circle*.

Let a Sister know that her efforts are appreciated. Let

a Sister know that she is bringing a smile to faces that she may never see. Let a Sister know that her work is not in vain. Tell a Sister in words or hugs how much she is making our circle stronger and expanding the vision of our Founders.

Remember that we have to tell our story. Many thanks to those who have shared with *Sister Circle* so that highlights of what is being done can be shared with the membership. This is but a glimpse of "the Friends" in action...

With Sisterly Affection,
Brenda C. McCaskill

National Reporter

Las Amigas, Incorporated

National Officers

Joann W. Williams
President

Frances S. Robinson
Vice President

Betty A. Crawford
Recording Secretary

Marilyn Bracey
Corresponding Secretary

Zeler Raspberry
Financial Secretary

Brenda Brunson
Treasurer

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Mary Wren
Conclave Treasurer

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Pearl Owens
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Angela Moore
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Norris Wilson
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Regional Directors

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Katie Moore
Southeast Region

Yvonne Cooley
Southwest Region

Evelyn Patterson
Tidewater Central Region

2010 MOST OUTSTANDING MEMBER COMMUNITY OUTREACH

P.L.A.Y.

Pursuing Learning All Year



A School Supply Drive

The current climate has many wondering what the future holds. The change in job status and security has left many families limited in providing their child with something to “PLAY” with and many children are showing up at school empty handed. Parents are struggling and are unable to provide the basic school supplies their children need to be effective. Schools across the country are facing

severe budget cuts and lack the funding to purchase necessary supplies. After the holidays and at the beginning of the second half of the school year, many students are not prepared with the tools they need for learning. Children living in poverty have many obstacles to overcome; not having school supplies should not be one of them.

The 2010 Most Outstanding Member, **Lizzie Miles Williams**, invited all chapters in Las Amigas to participate in the second Most Outstanding Member Community Outreach Initiative. In pursuit of expanding our sisterhood’s community outreach, organization awareness in our respective communities, to fulfill the membership directive, and service to help many during this economic downturn, 100% of the chapters agreed to P.L.A.Y. (**Pursuing Learning All Year**) by collecting school supplies for children and/or schools in need.

Summary Reports are coming in sharing the success of this project and a final report will be given at Conclave 2011. Said Lizzie Williams, “Thanks for **PLAYing** and I hope you had fun doing it!”

SAVE THE DATE: CONCLAVE 2011 IN BETHESDA, MARYLAND



Don’t miss the 53rd Annual Conclave in Bethesda, Md, June 22-26, 2011. Conclave will be hosted by the **Forestville MD Chapter** and the **Northeast Region**. Plans are underway for an exciting and memorable experience including White House and U.S. Capitol tours! And of course, we’ll be taking care of the business of Las Amigas, Incorporated to further our public service. For more information, see the Call to Convention (page 8). Plan to be there! You don’t want to miss this!

“IN THE NEWS” HIGHLIGHTS

Las Amigas, Incorporated chapters and sisters are making a difference in their respective communities. Orchids to all! Here are a few highlights since Conclave 2010:



Numerous awards and recognitions were awarded at the Las Amigas, Incorporated Conclave 2010 in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina including:

- **Deni-Antoinette Mazingo**, Forestville MD Chapter was crowned the Las Amigas, Incorporated 2010 National Queen. Her national project is spearheading an effort for chapters to Adopt a Kidney Center in their local communities;
- The 2010 Most Outstanding Member was awarded to **Lizzie Miles Williams** of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Chapter. She is spearheading a national school supply drive effort called P.L.A.Y. (Pursuing Learning All Year);



Greenville, S.C. Chapter participated in building a playground.

In Fall 2010, the **Greenville Chapter** made a donation and volunteered hours of service developing the playground for A. J. Whittenburg Elementary School of Engineering in Greenville, South Carolina. “On behalf of A.J. Whittenberg Elementary School of Engineering, I would like to thank you for your generous contribution of \$250 towards AJ’s Playground.” said W. Ansel Sanders, Director of Programs at the school, in a letter of thanks to the chapter. “Your donation was immediately applied toward the purchase of playground components and materials so that, beginning September 29th, construction of AJ’s Playground could begin.” AJ’s Playground was built entirely by volunteers over a 5-day Build Week period and the Greenville Chapter lent a helping hand—financially and physically!

The **Morven Chapter** of Las Amigas, Incorporated, collaborated with a local community organization called HOLLA (Helping Our Loved Ones Learn and Achieve) to present monetary awards to local elementary students. The chapter sponsors an annual essay contest in recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday during the months of January and February. Students at Morven Elementary School are given a topic related to some aspect of Dr. King’s life and legacy and are required to write an essay or poem on the subject. Three winners are selected. This year HOLLA made it possible to increase the amount of the financial award each student received.



The **Baltimore Chapter** of Las Amigas, Incorporated, and Chapter President, Mary C. Wren, received certificates of Recognition (pictured left) from their adopted school, Lockerman-Bundy, for their continued support of the school. Over the years, the chapter donated school supplies, coats, hats, mittens and Easter baskets on a regular basis to the students.

Marilynn Bennett, of the Morven Chapter, currently serves her chapter as Treasurer and has served in many capacities in the local organization including President, was elected to the Anson County School Board. Marilyn taught for many years in the Anson County school system before being appointed as Vice-Principal of the local high school and then later was appointed as principal of Morven Elementary School.

“IN THE NEWS” HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)



Rosemary McNeill Hemingway, member of the Lumberton Chapter and 15th National President of Las Amigas, Incorporated, has taken her role as senior counselor at Red Springs High School to a different level. It is through her strength as a “*Visionary Leader*”, her dedication and love for her students that has resulted in over \$220,000 in grants and scholarships to members of the graduating class of 2011. The students are quick to tell you that it is her extraordinary guidance; mentorship and persistence that has afforded them the opportunity to realize their dreams. Among those are a West Point Cadet; a North Carolina Teaching Fellow; a semi-finalist for the Gates Millennium Scholarship; and a SAMMY Scholarship Regional Finalist. Some of the students are first generation high school graduates; others are first generation to be accepted to major colleges and universities. Rosemary is expanding dreams and more importantly, building futures.



Brenda Gilliam

Brenda Gilliam, President of the Forestville MD Chapter, became the first Lifetime Member of Las Amigas, Incorporated. She also received "The Presidential Award" from the Hemingway Memorial A.M.E Church Ushers Ministry. The Award is given to a member of the Hemingway Memorial A.M.E Church's Ushers Ministry who has consistently promoted Christ-like traits over an extensive period of time. The recipient has unselfishly demonstrated the willingness and cooperativeness to promote the Ushers Ministry internally as well as externally of Hemingway Memorial A.M.E Church. The individual has normally gone the "extra mile" without being asked to do so.



LaTanya Pattillo, member of the Whiteville Chapter, launched ***Our Village (OV)***, a multicultural lifestyle magazine dedicated to connecting real people with real information. The first issue was published in October 2010. Circulation is primarily in North Carolina, and OV writers are from across the east coast. To purchase individual issues, subscribe, or learn more about OV, visit www.ourvillagemag.com.



Brenda C. McCaskill, current National Reporter of Las Amigas, Incorporated, expanded publication reach of the grassroots webzine, **AboutGreaterCincinnati.com**, which focuses on informing, inspiring, impacting, and uplifting by showcasing stories about the inspiring, motivating, and notable occurring across Greater Cincinnati. She founded and started the webzine in 2008 to showcase the positive in the Greater Cincinnati (Ohio) community. Now, the webzine—which highlights local and national inspirations—has been viewed by over 25,000 visitors from 46 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, and 50 countries. In 2010, **AboutGreaterCincinnati.com** launched on Facebook and is growing. To learn more, sign up for frequent interactions, get monthly updates, or join in the Facebook conversation, visit www.AboutGreaterCincinnati.com.

“IN THE NEWS” HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)



*Kimberly L. Pate (far left)
Pearl Burris-Floyd (far right)*

Kimberley L. Pate and **Pearl Burris-Floyd**, both members of the Gastonia Chapter, were installed as Trustee’s of First Baptist Church in Dallas, North Carolina.

The Black Political Caucus community affairs chair, **Diane Phifer**, a member of the Gastonia Chapter, was presented the President’s award for her dedication and exemplary service as community service chair.



Ernestine Gaddy

Ernestine Gaddy, a member of the Morven Chapter of Las Amigas Incorporated, completed and received her Masters Degree in Reading Curriculum and Instruction from Grand Canyon University in May 2010 with a 4.0 GPA. She also was recognized by the Anson County School District as Teacher of The Year for Morven Elementary School for 2010-2011 school year.



Pearl Burris-Floyd

Pearl Burris-Floyd, Representative for the State of North Carolina and member of the Gastonia Chapter, was the primary sponsor of HB2 – Law Banning Smoking in Public Places; Her other notable activities and accomplishments included being the speaker and a panelist on “Winning Campaign Strategies” for the North Carolina Federation of Republican Women; receiving the 2010 Service Excellence Award from the North Carolina Republican Women’s Caucus; receiving Legislative Joint Women’s Caucus Service Recognition; and Designated as 2010 “Mentor and Friend “ to the 4-H Clubs of North Carolina.

Sylvia Turner of the Suffolk Chapter was appointed to serve as Church Clerk of the 950 member congregation of Metropolitan Baptist Church. Sylvia is also serving as Chair of the R. T. Hart, Sr. Scholarship Fund, which awards a \$1,250 scholarship each year to a graduating senior of Metropolitan.

Ethel Hart, member of the Suffolk Chapter and 16th National President of Las Amigas, Incorporated, was elected President of the L.T. & M. W. Reid Scholarship Foundation, Inc. This scholarship was set up in 1984 upon the retirement of two prominent physicians who had served the Suffolk Black community for 40+ years. Since inception, the foundation has awarded more than \$150,000 to graduating seniors from Suffolk's high schools .

In September 2010, **Verlean Randolph** of the Chesterfield Virginia Chapter received her Bachelors of Business Administration with a Concentration in Business Management, minor in Security Administration from Strayer University.



Verlean Randolph

This is just a glimpse of our Sisters in action and on the move. Continue to let YOUR light shine. Every where you go...let your light shine...let it shine!

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: PHOTO GALLERY



Las Amigas, Incorporated

Northeast Region

- Baltimore*
- Cincinnati*
- Forestville*
- Philadelphia*
- Seat Pleasant*
- Washington-Metro*

Southeast Region

- Greensboro*
- Lumberton*
- Red Springs*
- St. Pauls/Bladen County*
- Wilmington*
- Whiteville*

Southwest Region

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg*
- Gastonia*
- Greenville*
- Kannapolis*
- Mooresville*
- Morven*

Tidewater Central Region

- Chesterfield*
- Henrico County*
- Newport News/Hampton*
- Portsmouth*
- Richmond*
- Suffolk*

“Those who apply themselves too closely to little things, often become incapable of accomplishing great things.”

Call to Convention 2011

FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

This is your **“Call to Conclave”** and a reminder of things that need your attention.

The 53rd Annual Conclave will be held June 22-26, 2011 in Bethesda, Maryland.

A final agenda of all meetings and activities will be provided at registration. Please act/respond accordingly.

Orchids to the Forestville Maryland Chapter, Conclave 2011 host chapter, for their diligence in assuring that this Conclave will be a momentous occasion. See their previously sent correspondence with suggested attire for all events.

Your surveys revealed that you wanted time away from the site where Conclave is held. We heard you; therefore, several activities have been planned away from the site, the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

In an effort to have less confusion, your cooperation is expected on all bus trips. A guide will be assigned on each bus that leaves for our activities. Please have your ticket ready when you board. The guide will also be responsible for the head count and facilitating the tours. Each member and guest will receive special instructions or a “PASS” for the White House and the Capitol. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me beforehand.

Please adhere to the Safety and Security of the White House and U. S. Capitol Tours. Make sure each member and guest has a copy of the Safety and Security requirements. If you did not receive a copy, please check with your chapter president.

Executive Board will convene at 3 p.m. on June 22, 2011.

Chapters must comply with the deadlines for the end of the year financial report and the LANBF report in order for this administration to close their books. PLEASE do not be the chapter than makes this task incomplete.

Continue to be mindful of our motto: “Those who apply themselves too closely to little things, often becomes incapable of accomplishing great things.”



Sisterly,

Joann W. Williams

Joann W. Williams
17th National President
Las Amigas, Incorporated