



**ANGELS' PLACE INC.**  
A PLACE TO GROW

# Crib Notes

Winter 2009

FORMERLY MOM'S HOUSE OF PITTSBURGH

Issue Number 99

Dear Friends,

Here at Angels' Place, we're gearing up for a fun-filled holiday season! Anticipation is building for our beloved traditions and we look forward to celebrating the joys of giving and receiving with the families in our program. We hope your family enjoys much happiness this season too!

With the end of the year around the corner, I kindly ask you to remember Angels' Place as you make out your shopping lists and consider helping us meet some of the most pressing needs, such as purchasing items on our wish lists (back page).

Could you also consider, for 2010, joining the friends of Angels' Place who make a monthly donation that will be put to wise use for our operating expenses? These days, it would be such a comfort to know your support - and it doesn't have to be a large amount - will be coming on a regular basis.

Have you ever wondered why parents at Angels' Place have never had to pay for any of our help as they pursue better lives for themselves and their children...why even their children's diapers and food are supplied? It's because your generosity is helping families with true need; only a very few of our families, including those with more than one child, have an annual income exceeding \$15,000.

The moms and dads have always given what is required: an hour at weekly parenting classes and two in volunteer service at our centers, and the hard work and persistence to pass their classes - in many cases with enviable grades. Deeply appreciative of this chance of a lifetime and the many ways you show you care for both them and their children, they're not going to let you down.

They, as well as staff and Board members, are touched by the kindness shared throughout the year. We fully recognize that what we do wouldn't be possible without caring hearts in our community who help us make a positive impact by joining in the effort to fulfill a worthwhile mission.

Thanks to your generosity, the fall semester of our 26th year is about to wrap up. More than ever, we need your help to ensure our services are available for the many more families who will need us in the coming year. Let's continue being the support they need to finish school and accomplish dreams.

All of us here wish you and your family all the blessings of this season and a New Year filled with much joy.

Gratefully,

Michelle Smith Tipton

**YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT ANGELS' PLACE PARENTS AND CHILDREN**

- Here is my year-end gift to Angels' Place in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- I'm pledging \$ \_\_\_\_\_ a month in 2010 to support Angels' Place

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

For credit card holders:

Please charge my donation: \_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_ AMEX

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to ANGELS' PLACE, INC. 2515 Norwood Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15214

THANK YOU!

**ANGELS' PLACE**  
A PLACE TO GROW

**NORTH SIDE**  
2615 Norwood Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15214  
412.321.4447

**BROOKLINE**  
600 Fordham Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15226  
412.531.6667

**SWISSVALE**  
2538 Woodstock Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA. 15218  
412.271.2229

[info@anglesplacepgh.org](mailto:info@anglesplacepgh.org)  
[www.anglesplacepgh.org](http://www.anglesplacepgh.org)

## Brookline Update by Andrea Schachner

Time for the Holidays: It seems like yesterday that the school year started and now we are already looking at the end of the semester!

Halloween this year was very fun and celebrated twice, (to our kids' great enjoyment). The first time, we dressed up and went trick-or-treating at the Devonshire of Mount Lebanon. It was so nice of Lois Murphy and her assistants to organize this event for our little ones. The children really enjoyed the magician and are still talking about "Rocky the Raccoon". We had scrumptious cookies with milk and the children got bags and bags full of treats to take home! The second time we celebrated Halloween was at the center on Friday the 30th with a day filled with fun Halloween activities. The children carved and painted pumpkins, made spider webs, and played in a spooky obstacle course.



Painting a pumpkin on a pretty fall day

For Thanksgiving the Ladies of Charity of Saint Anne Parish once again organized our annual dinner. Bea Fink and her fellow Ladies provided the turkey (donated by Bea Fink's son), the potatoes and all the "trimmings". All we had to do is bring some side dishes and treats and "add the fun"! It was so nice of them to think of us at this busy time of year and really "spoil" us. We felt so appreciated and enjoyed the get together of the Ladies, our client families and our staff! What a blessing!

The month of November we focused on the concepts of harvest and all the things we are thankful for: the leaves outside, nuts, seeds, pumpkins and the visible change in our outdoor environment.

Now we are supporting our parents through their final exams and getting ready for Santa's visit to our center. Heartfelt thanks go to all the churches and stores that are collecting Christmas gifts for our children and parents once again this year! You will be contributing to a wonderful Christmas experience for these families.

This time of year we are always so blessed with many supporters of Angels' Place whom without their help many of our services would not be possible. In these times of giving thanks we have a lot to be thankful for. At our center we are glad that many of you, our supporters, are still able to give much needed monetary gifts to keep us going. We have also received many donations that help us care for our clients as well as those that we pass on to them. Thank you for thinking of us! We always appreciate initiative and help – be it one time or on a regular basis! We appreciate our volunteers too.

We share special thanks with the juniors from Bishop Canevin who helped with raking the leaves and sanitizing our center from top to bottom. We would also like to thank the Seton La Salle High School, Rebels for Life, for their huge donation of baby supplies.

We are so excited about future projects that are in the making. The Mt Lebanon Junior Women's Club has already started raising money to help us build a new playground. They will have several events over the course of the year to help with our cause. Also the Girl Scouts from St. Elizabeth will be working on a service project to create a new mural on the outside of our building as an addition to our playground.

We are also grateful to Three Rivers Quilters for continuing to provide our children with lovely hand-made quilts; Christ Child Society for offering all of our children new winter coats; Ann Adams for organizing PNC volunteers who continually bless our center with their talents; and Bev Vetere and the Baldwin Whitehall Junior and Daisy Girl Scout Troops for their Birthday Bash that benefited Angels' Place. Our continued thanks go out to Dolores Casali and Barbara Boden who regularly volunteer with us and to all who support our efforts!

Have a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year!

## Swissvale Update by Beth E. Banas

Well into the holidays all of our new families have adjusted to our program and together with our continuing clients have created a rhythm of daily living for our Angels' Place in Swissvale. Our organic produce program ended in November and we will very much miss all of the delicious chemical free fruits and vegetables that the Kretschmann Farm produced. It was a wonderful addition to our lunch program. We celebrated all of the traditional holidays such as: Halloween, Thanksgiving and very soon Christmas. We also had our annual Grandparents Luncheon. It is always a pleasure to meet the extended families of our parents and children. We enjoyed the pleasurable benefits of field trips to the pumpkin farm and the symphony. Special thanks to our parents and staff for successfully raising the funds from our fall fundraiser for the pumpkin farm. Thanks to the generosity of the Pittsburgh Symphony we have experienced a wonderful tradition for the past 19 years that enhances our children's experiences with the arts. We will also have an opportunity to visit the zoo thanks to the kindness of Sharell.

We are very excited to share news of our building improvements. As many of you know we suffered ill effects from the summer storms in the way of flooding and roof leaks. We were able to address those concerns and now our center is finally back in order. Three of our staff were the recipients of full scholarships for the annual PACCA conference. The opportunity provided for a wealth of education during this three day event. Getting the most from our resources, the information will be shared with the rest of the teaching staff to enhance everyone's level of knowledge.

Throughout the years our children have always received a keep sake quilt when they enter the program and when they graduate they take this handmade heirloom with them. I know many grown alumni who still have their quilts. Thanks to the generosity of the Three Rivers Quilters Guild our quilts have been replenished and all of our new children will reap the benefits of their time and talent.

We would like to thank everyone for their continued support of our organization. During the holidays we see so much generosity and kindness it warms the heart especially during the recession. At Angels' Place we are fortunate to have the support of good friends who also remember us throughout the year. Our organization is blessed to have so many who care so much. We wish you all a very Merry Holiday season full of good wishes and good health.



*Swissvale friends enjoying the cool air.*

## Don't Forget to Recycle with the Swissvale Site



PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR NEWSPAPER, JUNK MAIL, PAPERBACK BOOKS, CATALOGS, MAGAZINES, ETC. TO THE SWISSVALE SITE FOR RECYCLING. OUR GOAL BY THE END OF 2009 IS TO REACH 10 TONS . SO FAR WE HAVE COLLECTED OVER 8 TONS, SAVED OVER 23 TONS OF LANDFILL SPACE AND SAVED OVER 31,000 OF KWH OF ENERGY. WE OF COURSE NEED ALL OF YOUR HELP. THANKS IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR CONTINUED EFFORT AND TIME.

## North Side Update by Jennifer Leck

Autumn is always a wonderful time of year because it offers us the chance to appreciate the beauty of nature. At Angels' Place, we strive to encourage that same appreciation in our children by providing them with lots of opportunities for learning. We enjoy seeing trees painted with fall colors, while pumpkins and leaves decorate our center. The Toddlers were learning about fall and the harvest and preschool children enjoyed tasting different kinds of apples and exploring pumpkins.

September was an exciting and busy month for our center. We welcomed two wonderful teachers into our organization. Jacquelyn Pyrdek, a graduate of Mercyhurst College, comes to us through the Change A Heart: Franciscan Volunteer Program. She is working with our Older Toddler children and has been keeping them busy with many wonderful and creative activities. Our new Preschool teacher is Stephanie Cullen, a graduate from Carlow University. Stephanie brings to Angels' Place a wealth of experience in working with young children. We are truly blessed to have both of these ladies as members of our team. Also in September, our center hosted the organizational in-service training. We celebrated staff appreciation day and enjoyed visiting "appreciation stations" for pampering and wellness. We would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to everyone who helped to make that day so enjoyable for all staff members.



Miss Jackie talking with children about growing pumpkins.

In November, we celebrated Thanksgiving with our families during our annual Thanksgiving dinner. It is truly a family celebration with everyone contributing a special dish or dessert for all to enjoy. Throughout the month, children hear about Thanksgiving and what thankfulness means. A favorite tradition at our center is to create an artful display with all the children's thoughts on thankfulness. This year, the teachers created a turkey and on the feathers were the children's words of thankfulness. The children were thankful for their moms, their families, their toys and each other. It was very heartwarming to read the children's thoughts and was very much enjoyed by the families who joined us for Thanksgiving dinner.



Miss Stephanie and Preschoolers making lovely music.

The preschool children also learned about community helpers this month. They talked about fire fighters and police officers. Officer Rupert of the Pittsburgh Police Department came to talk to the children about safety and we practiced fire safety at our center. The children enjoyed the first Tiny Tots Symphony of the year at Heinz Hall. It is always a wonderful experience for them to go into the city and to hear the wonderful music created by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

As we have moved into December, everyone is becoming very excited for the holidays. Our center is decorated and children are creating special presents for their moms and other family members. Christmas is a magical time for children and our hearts are filled with happiness to see them truly enjoying the holiday season. Thank you to those who have been so generous to our organization this year. Without you, so much of what we do for the children would not be possible. We are sincerely grateful for your support. We wish for you, and your family, a wonderful holiday season and a blessed New Year.

## OUTREACH UPDATE

*Our annual Halo Award Dinner on September 23 was a huge success! We had the pleasure of meeting many All-Pak employees who came out in full force to honor their CEO, our 2009 Halo Award recipient – Mr. Dennis Sipe. Many thanks to Linda Merlino who chaired the event and went well above and beyond to ensure its success. Thanks, too, to Mr. Lanny Fratara, whom everyone enjoyed emceeing, and to all of the dedicated committee members and staff whose dedication to the mission of Angels' Place, as evidenced by their tireless efforts, was most apparent! We also greatly appreciate everyone who came out to support Angels' Place that night – despite rumors of potential traffic nightmares due to it being the eve of the G-20 Summit. Apparently there's not much that can hold back an Angels' Place supporter – and for that, our client parents and children are forever grateful!*

*Angels' Place participated in a volunteer fair at Duquesne University on September 3rd. As a result of this event, we were able to update our list of volunteers available to tutor our student parents on an as-needed basis. We also acquired three wonderful new volunteers – Matthew D'Eramo, Emily Haught and Jere'l Lewis. All three are seniors at Duquesne, and are spending 3 hours/week volunteering at both our Brookline and North Side centers doing tasks such as yard work, organizing donations and a children's library, building shelves, changing lightbulbs, etc. It appears that their favorite part of volunteering at Angels' Place, though, is playing with the children! The children look forward to them coming each week.*

*Angels' Place was honored to participate in Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Charity Fairs at federal workplaces this fall including several Veterans Affairs facilities and the State Building downtown. Through this campaign, federal employees can donate to the charity of their choice, directly out of their paycheck. If you or anyone you know are a federal employee and would like to designate Angels' Place as your charity of choice – please contact either your campaign manager or human resources department. Our CFC Code is # 44139. Similarly, Pennsylvania State employees can contribute to Angels' Place through the State Employee Combined Appeal using Code #5000-0017. Angels' Place also receives funds through the United Way – through the Contributor's Choice Program. If you donate or are able to donate to the United Way and would like for your contribution to go to Angels' Place, please use the following numbers on your United Way Pledge Form - #1200 (North Side), #3977 (Swissvale), #7193 (Brookline). Every contribution made to Angels' Place goes towards helping two generations of young people overcome obstacles and ultimately live safer, healthier, happier lives. Thank you for your support.*

*The Mt. Lebanon Junior Women's Club has chosen Angels' Place as the beneficiary of their next big fundraiser, to be held on Saturday, March 6, 2010 at the Heinz History Center. All proceeds from "A Night at the Museum" will go toward creating a natural playground at our Brookline center. Our families and staff could not be more thrilled to receive much-needed updates to the playground! Once we get the needed materials and supplies, we are hoping to round-up volunteers in the Brookline community who are willing to help with building, landscaping, planting, etc. Our natural playground will be a place for our children and families to run, explore, climb, dig, socialize, play and nourish their souls! Thank you MLJWC!*

*SAVE THE DATE! Graphic here (maybe a calendar)*

*Saturday, March 6, 2010 – "A Night at the Museum" at the Heinz History Center  
Sunday, March 21, 2010 – Angels' Place Fashion Show at the LeMont Restaurant  
Saturday, June 5, 2010 – Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community*

*By April Scassera*



*Exec. Board President, John G. Arch, Esq. presents Halo Award to Dennis Sipe.*

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### **1. What brought you to Angels' Place?**

When I retired from classroom teaching I knew that I wanted to do something valuable and worthwhile with my time. Angels' Place was always on our list of charitable contributions but time is the most valuable commodity of all. I was familiar with the mission of Angels' Place and was committed to the idea of helping two generations and subsequent generations at the same time. Mary welcomed me with open arms, invited me in, made me a cup of tea and we discussed the many ways I could help out at Angels' Place. I have always been warmly welcomed by the entire staff and have been treated as such. I feel very appreciated here at Angels' Place and it has been a fulfilling opportunity for me to give back.

### **2. How long have you been an Angels' Place volunteer?**

I have been a volunteer since June of 2005.

### **3. What do you do as a volunteer at/for Angels' Place?**

I do a bit of everything and anything that is needed. I have archived photos, worked in the classroom, provided butterflies for hatching in the classroom, cleaned out closets, stuffed envelopes and have served on several committees for the Halo Awards and one for hiring a consultant and making some of the buildings "greener". There is a great need in this organization for extra hands, it is easy to find your niche here at Angels' Place. My husband has recently retired and he accompanies me on errands to deliver books, hang pictures and making centerpieces for various functions.

### **4. What do you like best about Angels' Place?**

Angels' Place exudes the same commitment to helping children and their parents that I found in 33 years of public school teaching. It really does take a village to raise a child and Angels' Place is the personification of that philosophy. When teaching I was surrounded by gifted, dedicated teachers and staff who were willing to put in long hours, creative thinking, and tremendous determination to help children and parents succeed. I find all of those qualities and more in the staff and the organizations here at Angels' Place.

### **5. Anything you'd like to tell us about your family, pets, etc?**

Well, my husband and I recently found out that we are going to be grandparents for the first time and we are very excited about that. Our only child, Jason is a university professor, as is his wonderful wife, Babli, who is an English professor at Kalamazoo College in Western Michigan. My husband Richard and I have been married for 39 years and he has recently retired from his medical practice as a Pediatrician in the North Hills area.

### **6. What are your hobbies?**

I am currently being trained to be Docent (Educational Guide) at the Pittsburgh Zoo along with my husband Richard. I am a real foodie and enjoy cooking for friends and family and always will to try a new recipe. I'm also crafty so that may be the reason I help Angels' Place with centerpieces, bows and baskets for the Halo Award Dinner

### **7. What might people be surprised to know about you?**

I have been on a photographic safari to East Africa.

### **8. Please answer as many of the questions below as you'd like, regarding your favorite:**

**Book** – This is tough question to answer because I belong to a book club filled with wise and wonderful women who make challenging selections of books. We read classics, modern fiction and non-fiction. Some of my most recent favorites have been: A Patchwork Planet by one of my favorite authors, Anne Tyler; The Color of Water; Bel Canto and To Kill a Mockingbird.

**Movie** – I love Nora Ephron romantic comedies so I always enjoy, When Harry Met Sally, Sleepless in Seattle and You've got Mail apparently I also like Meg Ryan!

**Quote** – "A person who has not traveled has only read one page of the book."

**Food** – Chocolate Chip Pancakes, Chocolate Zucchini Bread, Chocolate Mousse...you get the idea.

**Vacation Spot** – I learned the most from our trip to East Africa, but I will have to say my favorite vacation spot is my next one.

**Thing to do on a Saturday afternoon** – Visiting my mother at St. Barnabas' Assisted Living Facility, taking a walk with our dogs, spending time with friends and family.

**Best Advice anyone ever gave you** – My mom told me, "If you have a choice of pushing your child on a swing or weeding the garden, choose the child on the swing." I have extrapolated that to broader issues to mean that life is short, so enjoy the transient things because the weeding, house cleaning etc is always there but having fun with the people you love is not always a sure thing.

**Music** – Anything by Paul Simon, John Fogerty, Bruce Springsteen and Cindy Lauper.

**Other** – Thank you for this opportunity to share some of my interests. Being a "Spotlight Volunteer" has been an honor plus it gives me the chance to bring to others people the wonderful work being done here, at Angels' Place.




Kathy Yost

***All of us here at Angels' Place are extremely grateful to the many individuals, couples and families who made recent monetary and non-monetary donations, and to the foundations, organizations, and houses of worship for their generosity in support of our parents and children.***

<b>Monetary</b>	<b>Non-Monetary</b>
<p>Our Lady of the Sacred heart Academy, Coraopolis            St. Anne Parish, Ladies of Charity, Castle Shannon            St. Thomas More Church, Respect Lie Committee, Bethel Park            St. Irenaeus Church, Ladies of Charity, Oakmont</p>	<p>St. Bernadette Parish, Ladies of Charity, Monroeville            St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Christian Mothers &amp; Ladies Guild, Finleyville            Word of God Parish, Swissvale            Three Rivers Quilters            Baldwin-Whitehall Junior Girl Scout Troop #50078            Baldwin-Whitehall Daisy Girl Scout Troop #54208            Pregnancy Resource of the South Hills            St. Catherine of Siena Church, Ladies of Charity, Beechview            Church of the Atonement, Carnegie            Girl Scout Junior Troop #50078, Baldwin-Whitehall            Girl Scout Daisy Troop #54208, Baldwin-Whitehall</p>

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