

## *I Remember Mama® luncheon to honor elderly women*

A mother should not be alone on Mother's Day.

Being alone is hard enough. For a mother, being alone on Mother's Day is especially difficult. That is why Volunteers of America will host its annual *I Remember Mama®* luncheon events on Sunday, May 4 in Harrisburg and in Pittsburgh.

Our staff invites several hundred women who would otherwise be alone or without family on Mother's Day, and lifts the spirits of each woman by providing an unforgettable day of fine dining, flowers, gifts and companionship.

Imagine several hundred elderly women, who would otherwise be alone on Mother's Day, dressed in their Sunday best, arriving at the city's finest hotel. They get to enjoy a beautifully decorated ballroom, tables bedecked in flowers, music happily playing, and a lovely spring lunch prepared in their honor. The scene is completed with entertainment, gifts for each lady, and Mother's Day cards made by school children.

Joining us for this special day in Harrisburg is Former First Lady of Pennsylvania **Michele Ridge!** Mrs. Ridge will reminisce about her mom and reflect on her role as a mother.

The event also raises vital funds to help Volunteers of America provide more than 20 vital human services in Pennsylvania.

*continued on page 3*

## *Eagles Coach Andy Reid to speak at Celebrity Dinner*



**Philadelphia Eagles** head coach, **Andy Reid**, will be the keynote speaker at the 5th Annual Volunteers of America Celebrity Dinner. The dinner will be held on Thursday, May 15th at **Genetti's Best Western** in Wilkes-Barre.

The popular coach is expected to draw a large crowd. Reid has been one of the most successful coaches in recent NFL history. He led the Eagles to four NFC Championship game appearances and to Super Bowl XXXIX in 2004.

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*Chauncey Smith (left), representing sponsor H. J. Heinz Company, Bernice Smith, and honored guest Kathy Slencak (right) at 2007 I Remember Mama® luncheon in Pittsburgh.*

## *ALL of Us Care Youth program joins Volunteers of America*



**ALL of Us Care**, a non-profit community organization that provides positive programs for at-risk youth in Pittsburgh, has recently merged with Volunteers of America of Pennsylvania.

The new alliance allows both organizations to expand services to help children and teens who need guidance and positive direction. "We are excited to join Volunteers of America," says **Janice Barbus**, director of ALL of Us Care. "Together we will develop the long-term capacity to better serve more youth."

"As a new program of Volunteers of America, it fulfills a critical need for the youth in Pittsburgh," according to **Alan Garner**, president and CEO of Volunteers of America of Pennsylvania. "The program is a wonderful fit with our mission to reach and uplift all people."

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## From the President



*Alan R. Garner*

My first business venture began a little over 50 years ago when I began selling greeting cards door to door as an eight year old. (Times were different then.)

The business plan was simple and my Mother and Dad were the sales trainers. They helped me develop what I was going to say when someone came to the door.

This past week I was talking with Hanna, a client at our Working Order office who was working on her business plan. She had come for assistance to establish her own business as an accessibility consultant. She has the knowledge, the skills, and both the personal and professional experience. Her challenge is turning it all into a business that will support her.

Hanna's goal is what we hope for everyone we work with – to learn to be as self supporting as possible.

Likewise, a young man we'll call Seth, after six years in our foster care program, graduated from high school, then trained to become certified in electrical work. He is now 23, has his own apartment, and is gainfully employed as an electrician.

For 112 years Volunteers of America has been helping people take responsibility for their own lives, people who have needed help in bettering themselves, earning their own way in life.

Our mission is broad. So are the challenges the people we serve face.

Our programs serve all ages, from infants to elderly – as people in need are of all ages.

Our volunteers are as diverse as the people we serve – men, women, and children of all ages.

Our donors give in many forms – cash, property, automobiles, appreciated assets – and they remember us in their will.

Your generosity makes it possible for us to help some of the most vulnerable people among us live productive and self-sufficient lives. Thank you for helping Volunteers of America continue 112 years of providing help and hope to communities across Pennsylvania and our country.

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This annual corporate fundraiser has been a great success across the nation in many cities represented by Volunteers of America.

*I Remember Mama<sup>®</sup>* is made possible through individual donors and corporate sponsorships including **Karns Quality Foods**, **Harrisburg Hilton**, **abc27**, and **Saul Ewing LLP** in Harrisburg. **H. J. Heinz Company** is the major sponsor in Pittsburgh.

Many who sponsor a mom do so in memory or in tribute of their own mom, grandmother or a loved one. (See enclosed *I Remember Mama<sup>®</sup>* flyer.) You or your business can help us honor the Mamas! Sponsorships, available at many levels, range from \$25 and above. For sponsorship information, call 717-236-1440 (Harrisburg) or 412-782-5344 (Pittsburgh).

Making a special appearance at *I Remember Mama<sup>®</sup>* in Harrisburg is Elvis impersonator Brad Crum. **Coz Serrapere** as Dean Martin and **Nick Fiasco** as Frank Sinatra will entertain in Pittsburgh.



*Elvis impersonator Brad Crum*

## *Caring Alternatives: a resource for women and their families*

Families or single women who are facing an unplanned pregnancy will find a warm, friendly environment in **Volunteers of America's Caring Alternatives** program. Based in Northeast Pennsylvania, Caring Alternatives is a crisis pregnancy and family support program offering help and hope.

**Crystal Parker**, program supervisor, says "We provide life affirming, comprehensive guidance, support and encouragement. All our services are free and confidential."

Comprehensive services include factual information on

- pregnancy, fetal development and alternatives to abortion
- pregnancy tests



*Crystal Parker, Caring Alternatives program supervisor, prepares pantry supplies for young moms and their newborns.*

- parenting education
- nutrition information
- and budgeting/life skills.

Caring Alternatives also provides access to other community services and resources such as medical aid, social services, financial aid, legal assistance, adoption agencies, and professional counseling.

Caring Alternatives offers a pantry to support the material needs of limited income and at-risk families. Last year more than 140 families received pantry supplies, including diapers, maternity and baby clothes, wipes, baby furniture, formula and car seats.

"With our new location in downtown

*continued on Page 4*

## *ALL of Us Care Youth program joins...* continued from Page 1

ALL of Us Care is in the same building as **Working Order**, a Volunteers of America program that helps people with disabilities or other obstacles to employment create meaningful work for themselves through entrepreneurship.

ALL of Us Care's activities are designed to prevent juvenile crime and substance abuse by promoting safe schools and communities through programs such as drug and alcohol awareness forums, supervised computer lab, after school activities and parenting workshops in the Fox Chapel Area School District.

Supervised activities promote self-esteem, develop new skills, make learning fun and exciting, motivate students to study harder, improve their grades, as well as transform and empower the students to succeed.

"Our objective is to help young people make better choices that lead to healthier, successful futures," said Barbus. "Our future as a community depends on today's youth. We aspire to carry our local neighborhoods into a safe and healthy future."

In the words of Kendra, an eighth-grader, "When I walk through the doors of ALL of Us Care, I feel like I'm hugged. The staff and volunteers have given me lots of encouragement to do well in school. I know I can succeed!"

To learn more about the programs or become involved as a volunteer, mentor or contributor, go to <http://www.allofuscare.org/> or call Jan at (412) 782-6855.

## *FHLB Supports New Housing*

*Ralph Papa (left), president of Citizens Bank, and Pennsylvania Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. (third from left) present Alan R. Garner, president/CEO, and Bill Jones, vice president/chief operating officer, with a \$250,000 check from the Federal Home Loan Bank. The contribution will be applied toward the construction of the new Volunteers of America affordable housing apartments in Dauphin County.*



## *Wachovia Foundation Supports Homeless Housing*

*Tom Capone (right), Wachovia Foundation senior vice president/area executive officer, presents a \$15,000 check to Bill Jones, vice president and chief operating officer of Volunteers of America, to help support Manna House Apartments in Wilkes-Barre, a transitional living program that serves homeless young adults ages 18-25.*

*“The primary goals of the program are to assist individuals through the recovery process to obtain and sustain permanent housing. We are truly grateful to the Wachovia Foundation for its meaningful support,” Jones said. Services provided include case management and life skills education.*



## *Eagles Coach Andy Reid to speak... continued from Page 1*

Reid earned Coach of the Year honors twice since 2000. He has compiled the best win total (96), winning percentage (.608) and playoff victory total (8) in Philadelphia team history.

“Coach Reid is a class act and we are certainly looking forward to his appearance,” says **Bill Jones**, vice president and chief operating officer of Volunteers of America of PA.

“There are a huge number of Eagle fans who respect what Coach Reid has done. Though he has faced a great deal of adversity on and off the field in recent years, he’s handled these challenges with class. I know the fans in our area will definitely want to come out to support him,” added Jones.

Lead sponsors for the event are **Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, Fox 56 TV, Penn Star Bank, and McCarthy Tire Service Co., Inc.** Additional sponsorship opportunities are available!

The Celebrity Dinner is open to the public. Tickets are \$100 for adults and \$50 for students when accompanied by an adult. In addition, a Silent Auction of Eagles items and a VIP reception with Reid is planned.

For ticket reservations and sponsorship opportunities, call (570) 825-5261 or toll-free (888) 350-4862.

## *Caring Alternatives: a resource... continued from Page 3*

Wilkes-Barre, we are much more visible and accessible.” Parker explains. “Every day families walk into the office and are in need of help. This year, we expect the number of families receiving assistance will increase by 30%.”

The Caring Alternatives program provides between

\$10,000 to \$15,000 per year of items to families in need. The funds for these items come from monetary donations, in-kind donations of items and grants. Parker said the items are given free of charge to the families they work with.

Call 570-825-5261 for more information.

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We at Volunteers of America of Pennsylvania appreciate the generous contributions from our many donors—individuals, organizations, businesses, corporations, community groups, churches, and foundations. We look forward to working with our donors to make a meaningful, lasting difference for children, youth at risk, the elderly, the homeless, and people with disabilities.

Listed on the following pages are the donors who made gifts of \$25 or more between September 1, 2007 and December 31, 2007. If an error has been made, please accept our apology and call us at (717) 236-1440 to correct our records.

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*And now abideth faith, hope,  
charity, these three; but the greatest of  
these is charity.*

*-- I Corinthians 13:13*

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# Foster Parenting: Building bridges, fostering futures

Providing stability, permanency and a safe, nurturing environment are the key goals of the **Volunteers of America Foster Care** program in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

“Our program provides loving homes for infants, children and adolescents who are not able to live with their families,” says **Margaret Andrews**, program director. “Some placements are short term, but we also find permanent homes for children whose parents lost parental privileges.”

Children are placed in foster care for reasons such as lack of housing, serious neglect, abuse, or severe family situations. Foster care offers a substitute family life experience for a child at a time of crisis or necessity, according to Andrews.

Serving 100 children each year, **Volunteers of America Foster Care** works to reunite families when possible, and to provide the best care to the children while they are in placement.

Social work services are provided to help the family identify its strengths, using them along with community supports as permanency goals are achieved. Foster Parents are trained to care for the child’s day to day needs, including therapy and doctors appointments.

A growing number of children who cannot live with their parents are being raised by an “extended family” member or another adult who has a bond with the children or their parent(s).

This arrangement is known as Kinship Care. Through **Volunteers of America Kinship Care** program, children placed in the home of “extended family” care-givers receive social work services and support to provide a safe, nurturing, temporary home for the children. The primary placement goal is reunification of the children and parents, however, at times, various placement alternatives are explored and obtained.

Would you like to open your heart and home to a child? You can be the hope for a child’s future.

“Foster families must be able to provide a warm, loving home which promotes the healthy growth and development for the child,” Andrews says. “Children develop best in a family setting, and foster parents make a huge difference by sharing their homes and family experience.”

Have you thought of being a foster parent? Many people find it a meaningful way to have a lasting impact for a child while finding a new, personal fulfillment in their own life.

If you live in Southeastern Pennsylvania and would like to open your heart and home to a child in need, call **Donna Windham Wright**, recruiter/trainer, at 215-930-0129. Learn how you can be a foster parent and change a child’s lifetime!



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