



# Aid for Women

Empowering Women to Choose Life Since 1978

8 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1100, Chicago, IL 60603 • Telephone: 312-621-1101 • Fax: 312-621-1972  
E-mail: [info@aidforwomen.org](mailto:info@aidforwomen.org) • Website: [www.helpaidforwomen.org](http://www.helpaidforwomen.org)  
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## Bonanza Boutique 2008

Anticipating fast approaching due dates, participants in the Client Bonus Program who were in their final trimester of pregnancy did some significant shopping for their babies at our annual Bonanza Boutique, on Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup>. With the conference room in our building decorated in baby-shower-style and set up like a store for the event, they enjoyed selecting items from an exceptional variety of new, beautiful infant clothing and blankets (some hand-made), practical equipment (Pack n Plays, strollers, baby monitors, etc.) and very special accessories.

As always, generous Aid for Women donors provided the monetary and



material gifts that made it possible for us to offer our clients such a remarkable opportunity. In particular, members of the Illinois Club for Catholic Women Auxiliary and parishioners from Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Glenview deserve our greatest appreciation for their magnanimous, outstanding contributions.

The clients, benefiting by making purchases with a combined total of “\$1,350” in “bonus bucks” that they earned through the incentive program, expressed their gratitude over and over to the fortunate ones assisting them at the boutique. To effect the satisfaction and happiness that comes with being prepared to care responsibly for precious newborns is certainly an amazing blessing.

Special thanks to all those who worked with Sandy Hildebrand, program coordinator, to make the boutique the wonderful success that it was: Sharnina Starling-Buford, Julie Cooper, Mary Cooper, Beth Georgopoulos, Peg Hanlon, Dave Hildebrand, Frances Jimenez, Lia Landis, Estrella Mancini, Mickey O’Connell and Veronica Pierce!

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## 30th Anniversary Dinner

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, Aid for Women celebrated 30 years of saving women and children from abortion. The Anniversary dinner celebration was held at the Union League Club of Chicago with nearly 250 people in attendance.

The evening began with a cocktail reception and book signing by renowned authors George Weigel and Jeff Cavins. Guests were invited to purchase tickets for the raffle which included a two night stay at a hotel in downtown Chicago and symphony tickets. In addition to the raffle, guests

bid on items at the silent auction. The highest bids were garnered for priceless items, including dinner with Cardinal Francis George, 5<sup>th</sup> row Chicago Bears tickets and a catered party at the Aid for Women office building for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks.

Jeff Cavins acted as emcee for the evening. He began with humorous anecdotes of his encounters with Mother Angelica on the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN). He then segued into a more serious tone when he compared the work of Aid for

Women with the gospel of the loaves and fishes. Jeff's message was clear: with faith and trust in the Lord, we are able to take seemingly meager scraps and transform them into a beautiful tapestry for life.

Jeff Cavins's speech was immediately followed by a video collaborated by Brian Brach of the Archdiocese of Chicago. It depicted a testimonial from a previous client of Aid for Women, sharing her deep appreciation for the services offered to her. After several troublesome visits at a local hospital



*Barbara McNabola*



*Aid for Women client, Annika Frazier-Muhammed and her son, Ajani*



*Colette Buckley, Susan Couri & Joan Basola*



*Joseph and Joella Cramblit*

she turned elsewhere to deal with her pregnancy dilemma. Subsequently, she came to Aid for Women. She claimed that the most important element of her visit was the ultrasound. It showed her the life in her womb and was the reason she changed her mind about terminating her pregnancy.

After our client's powerful testimony, George Weigel followed with his message of responsibility to those who stand for life. He too began with a humorous story involving Pope John Paul II and how, as pope, he found a way to

relate to the ever-changing culture and its many facets. But one thing remains amidst the current changes, especially during these times of political uncertainty, that truth and life are essential factors in the decisions our country will face in this coming election. He compared *Roe v. Wade* to the Dred Scott decision of 1854, where inherent human dignity and value were called into question, and like the unborn, denied by the general populace and ultimately the Supreme Court. Weigel acknowledged these blemishes in U.S. history as a

means to open our eyes to the very same harm that abortion is doing in our society. Ultimately, it is our duty as Americans to stand for life. After his discourse, he was met with generous applause and a standing ovation.

We wish to express our many thanks to those who helped to make the evening so special. It is truly a joyous occasion when we can celebrate three decades of the blessings that God has bestowed on us for helping to protect those who cannot protect themselves.



*Virginia Thomas, Laurette M. Froelich, Laurette A. Froelich and Tommie Romano*



*Bishop Francis Kane, Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I. and Rev. Raymond Baumhart, S.J.*



*Julie Cooper, Monica Cassidy and Lloyd Cassidy*



*George Weigel*



*Jeff Cavins*

# Gardeners Who Plant the Seeds of Love

On August 9<sup>th</sup>, Aid for Women showed its sincerest gratitude to our volunteers with an afternoon luncheon. It proved to be a time of fun, merriment and a renewed sense of purpose to the mission for life. They were allowed to share their struggles as well as triumphant success stories which proved to boost their self confidence. They could see they were not alone in their fight for the unborn.

Our Director of Client and Volunteer Services, Sharnina Starling-Buford began with a beautiful address to the volunteers thanking them for all that they do for Aid for Women. Without them, we would not be able to keep



our doors open. Following Sharnina, were very heartfelt words by our Mentor Program Coordinator, Sandy Hildebrand. Everyone was sincerely touched by the sentiment she expressed.

Following lunch, each volunteer received a bamboo plant. They represented the work each volunteer offers our clients. By planting the seed of love in our clients, we hope to see the fruits of their labor in the children we see at our center.

No duty is too small, no task unnoticed. We wish to give special recognition to Susan Couri for contributing the most time for face-to-face counseling. To all those who volunteer and contribute to Aid for Women, we express our deepest thanks.



*From left to right: Sharnina Starling-Buford, Beth Georgopoulos, Stephanie Klatt, Mary Kathryn O'Connell, Elizabeth Blanke, Therese Carroll, Katie Downes, Joan Delisi and Sandy Hildebrand.*



## Letter from the Director

Beth Georgopoulos

There are so many changes occurring behind our doors that we cannot contain our excitement! As affiliates of Catholic Charities, our partnership is finally reaching the apex of its initial purpose. All of these changes will take place in the coming months.

The first significant change is that members from the maternity department will host a series of classes for our clients called *Nurturing Parenting*. This will allow clients to earn "bucks" in our Bonus Program while learning the skills necessary to raise a healthy child in a loving environment. The second significant development involves a volunteer from our building, Dr. Eva Krawczyk who specializes in business administration. Dr. Krawczyk has graciously offered to teach our clients about financial responsibility as well as help them to find the best

resources Chicago has to offer. These changes directly affect our approach to each client by not only addressing the pregnancy but the many facets of the woman's life.

My last bit of news is the most exciting! As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, Aid for Women will offer ultrasounds onsite for our clients. This is a goal that we have been working toward for a long period of time. We have always had the support of Accurate Diagnostics, but to have the ability to escort our clients to their appointment will dramatically affect the woman's final choice. It will also give the counselors the opportunity to experience that amazing moment when the mother sees her child for the first time.

Without the optimism of our supporters and contributors, these changes

would not have been possible. In the spirit of appreciation after 30 years of progress and hope, I thank all who helped Aid for Women arrive at this monumental day. We hope to contribute to many more advancements toward the culture of life in the coming years.

### Memorial and Honor Gifts

A special gift is a meaningful way to remember a friend or a loved one at the time of his or her death – or in life by honoring that person's accomplishments and character.

#### *In Honor Of*

**Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ecklund**

*Dr. and Mrs. A.J. Crowley*

**Madison Hope Gergits**

*Ruth W. Goldboss*

#### *In Memory Of*

**Laura Matthew & Mary Teresa**

*Christine Breese*