

Everyday Miracles

Volunteers
of America®
Greater New York

Celebrating Individuals Who Make a Difference

Donor Newsletter: SPRING/SUMMER 2010



**OPERATION
BACKPACK 2010**
Help a Child Prepare
for School!



MEET PAIGE DAVIS
Volunteer
Extraordinaire



BURT & BARBARA
25 Years Later...



VISIT OUR PROGRAMS!
See How Your Support
is Changing Lives



DONOR STORY
“Changing Lives One
Penny at a Time”

+ PRESIDENT'S LETTER / 2009 ANNUAL GALA / HOW TO HELP / REVIEW YOUR ESTATE PLANS / 114 YEARS OF SERVICE

Ziegfeld Girl and Husband Leave a Lasting Legacy

The legacy of the late Marion Beard Hutner and her husband Bernie Hutner will long be remembered by those whom their generosity touched, including the 40,000 men, women and children that Volunteers of America—Greater New York serves each year. Between 2007 and 2009, we were honored to learn that both Mr. and Mrs. Hutner had chosen to include Volunteers of America in their wills with bequests totaling over \$440,000. Having no previous knowledge of the Hutners' interest in our cause, we were deeply moved by what we learned of the couple's lives and their tremendous spirit of giving.

Born in 1909, Marion Beard moved from

Cleveland, Ohio, to New York City at 16 years old with hopes of stardom. A stunning and talented young woman, Marion (under her stage name Marion Santre) soon had her Broadway debut in *Sons O'Guns* (1929), followed by performances in Broadway's *Princess Charming* (1930), *Hot-Cha!* (1932), and *The Dubarry* (1932).

However, Marion is perhaps best known for her historical role *(continued on page 3)*



Marion Beard Hutner (above) and her husband, Bernie Hutner, were life-long philanthropists, bequeathing over \$440,000 to Volunteers of America through their wills.

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Dear Friend,

As we move into our 114th year of service, Volunteers of America-Greater New York is confident in its ability to meet the growing and ever-changing needs of our community. We are grateful for the support of government agencies, corporate partners and individual friends like you who allow us to keep our 80 social service programs running year after year.

As the economy continues to present challenges, Volunteers of America's work to provide food, shelter and other basic services is increasingly important, as is your support.

On behalf of the entire Volunteers of America family, I would like to express my personal gratitude for your devotion, trust and compassion. Your support and commitment are critical to the sustainability of our programs and the well-being of thousands.

Thank You,



For more information on our services and ways to give, please visit www.voa-gny.org



New and Expanded Programs

Through your support, we have:

- Welcomed 92 older adults into safe, supportive and dignified housing in Manhattan.
- Opened a new shelter in the South Bronx for 80 chronically homeless men.
- Opened 3 new programs for young people about to age out of foster care in New Jersey.
- Added 63 confidentially-located apartments for families recovering from domestic violence in Brooklyn and Manhattan.
- Provided 32 homeless families temporary shelter in the Bronx while helping them look for permanent homes of their own.

Annual Gala Honors Those Who Make a Difference

Each December, Volunteers of America's annual gala gives us the opportunity to honor those who make a difference in their communities. At this year's event, awards were presented to: Amherst Securities Group and JPMorgan Chase, for leading the way in corporate community involvement; The Honorable Scott Stringer, in celebration of those who demonstrate extraordinary leadership and compassion to those in need; and the Germano family, whose son, diagnosed with autism, graduated from our school on Staten Island. The event was chaired by Editor-in-Chief of *More* magazine, Lesley Jane Seymour. Vice-Chairs were President of Saks Fifth Avenue, Ron Frasch, and Roxann Taylor, Senior Managing Director at Amherst Securities Group.

We would like to thank all those who made the event a success.



Guests at our December gala, *a New York Winter's Eve*, enjoyed an evening dedicated to raising money for those in need.

as a “Ziegfeld Girl,” performing in Broadway’s famous *Ziegfeld Follies*, which ran from 1907 to 1931. These popular performances featured the beautiful girls in the chorus line who became known as Ziegfeld Girls and would serve as the inspiration for what we presently know as the Radio City Rockettes.

Offstage, Marion met and married Bernie Hutner, a women’s clothing store owner and investor from Fort Wayne, Indiana. They were married for nearly 50 years. Throughout their lives, the Hutners were dedicated philanthropists. Marion was deeply devoted to children, and until the age of 89 would travel to the Bronx several times a week to volunteer at a day care center there.

Although she led an extraordinary life, Marion never forgot her humble beginnings. According to her dear friend, Danny Madden, Marion never used the front door of her Sutton Place apartment building, always entering and exiting from the service entrance – a

true testament to her humility. In the end, Marion and Bernie would leave nearly everything they had to charity, a surprise to many who had never known them in life, but are now celebrating the generous lives that they led.

Volunteers of America is privileged to have been part of the distinguished list of causes that mattered to the Hutners. We will honor their legacy by continuing to help those most in need, as Marion and Bernie did, offering a path for the men, women and children we serve to live safe, healthy, and independent lives.



Married for over 50 years, Marion and Bernie Hutner would leave nearly everything they had to charity.

“Few experience high society, and even fewer experience high society and remain sincere to their friends and their upbringing. A young, beautiful girl from Cleveland came to New York and conquered it.”

– Daniel Madden, close friend of Mrs. Hutner

LEAVE A LEGACY

IF YOU WOULD LIKE CREATE YOUR OWN LEGACY, AS MARION AND BERNIE DID, PLEASE CALL RACHEL WEINSTEIN, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT, AT (212) 496-4305.

There are almost as many ways to create a legacy as there are needs to be met. We are here to answer any questions you might have or to discuss in depth your charitable gift options for you and your family. You can contact us, without any obligation, and we will be happy to speak with you or send information that you can discuss with your estate planner or accountant.



Volunteers of America Earns Highest Rankings

Volunteers of America has again received the top four stars rating from Charity Navigator, America’s largest independent evaluator of charities, for successfully managing our finances in an efficient and effective manner.



We have also been approved to display the Better Business Bureau National Charity seal, assuring the public that we demonstrate the ethics and integrity required to meet the standards established by the BBB Wise Giving Alliance.

Help a Child Prepare for School!

Do you remember your first day of school?

The excitement of meeting your new teacher, seeing friends after a long vacation, and sharing stories of summer adventures?

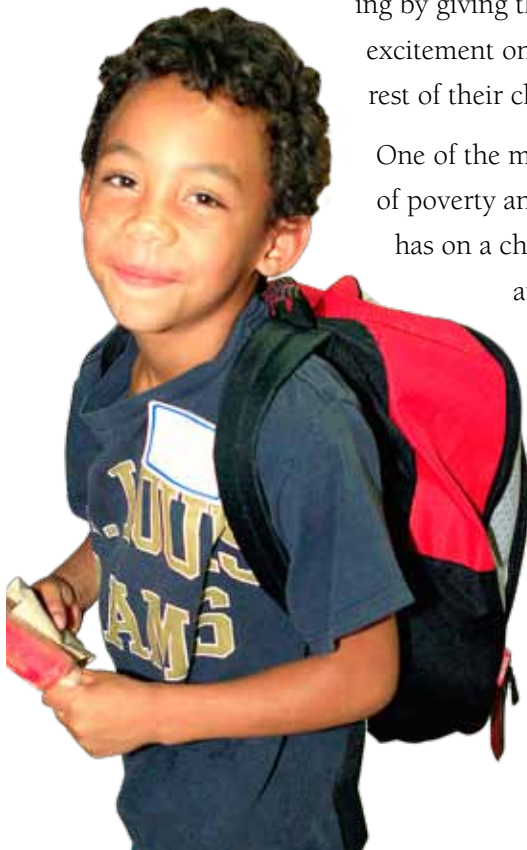
For most children, these are the thoughts running through their heads. But, for thousands of other children who are unable to afford basic school supplies, their thoughts are much different: Will the other kids make fun of me for carrying my books in a plastic bag instead of a backpack? How will I make friends if I don't even have a house to invite them to? Why do I even bother coming to school in the first place?

While Volunteers of America-Greater New York is still helping these children and their families find homes, we are immediately helping by giving them a chance to feel the same excitement on the first day of school as the rest of their classmates.

One of the most devastating consequences of poverty and homelessness is the impact it has on a child's education. These children

are at great risk of failing and dropping out of school. But, with a fresh outlook and new supplies, a child's likelihood of success increases exponentially, not just in school, but in life. When you give to Operation Backpack, you are not just giving backpacks, but helping thousands of children start the year off right – prepared, confident and ready to learn.

Through the support of friends like you, Operation Backpack distributes over 6,000 backpacks each year to children in need.



Operation Backpack gives thousands of children the chance to go to school prepared and ready to learn.

YOU CAN HELP!

DONATE BACKPACKS AND SUPPLIES

Visit OperationBackpackNYC.org to find out how!

VOLUNTEER DURING SORT WEEK

See all the action and help us pack thousands of backpacks for kids in need! Call (212) 496-4312 for more information.

HELP UNDERWRITE THE CAMPAIGN

We rely 100% on the generosity of the public to underwrite the costs of Operation Backpack.

DONATE ONLINE: Make a donation online at OperationBackpackNYC.org.

DONATE BY MAIL: Send a check or cash using the enclosed envelope.

CLICK YOUR MOUSE TO HELP OPERATION BACKPACK WIN \$250,000!



Visit refresheverything.com/operationbackpack to cast your vote throughout the

month of July!

Each month, Pepsi donates millions of dollars to causes that change lives, and Operation Backpack will be in the running for \$250,000!

To learn more about Operation Backpack, visit OperationBackpackNYC.org.

A Reason to Celebrate: 25 Years of Love

The Willowbrook State School on Staten Island, an institution built in the 1930's for children with mental retardation, was home to Burt Petrone and Barbara LaRoy for over half their lives. The school, which was equipped for 4,000 people yet housed over 6,000, became known as a "place of horrors" where some residents were physically and sexually abused, and others were left unfed, unwashed and unattended to for days on end. Public outrage eventually led to Willowbrook's closure in the 1980's and the passage of civil rights legislation to protect the handicapped.

For over three decades, Volunteers of America's Community Residence on Staten Island has provided housing and care for adults with developmental disabilities. Many former Willowbrook residents came to live in Volunteers of America housing after the school closed permanently, including Burt and Barbara.



Although they spent over half their lives as residents of the Willowbrook State School, Burt and Barbara Petrone met for the first time after moving to Volunteers of America's Community Residence on Staten Island.

After moving from Willowbrook in 1978, and even though they had lived most of their adult lives there, Burt and Barbara met for the first time on the bus that took them to their respective jobs at a sheltered workshop. Almost immediately, they fell in love and wanted to marry. It took seven years, with Volunteers of America advocating on their behalf, for the state to grant them permission to wed, and on June 8, 1985 they did just that. The groom was 59 and the bride 42. The couple has since retired and now live in their own apartment, rising early each day to spend time doing crafts and laughing with friends at their neighborhood senior citizen center.

Burt and Barbara Petrone celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary with a party attended by close friends, family and staff, some of whom have been by their side for nearly two decades.

On June 8, 2010, the Petrones celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary, a milestone that Volunteers of America commemorated with a special party where friends, family and staff – some of whom have spent over 17 years by the couple's side – gathered to share in Burt and Barbara's happiness. Lavender is Burt's favorite color and he calls Barbara "my Sunshine," so those elements were woven throughout an evening that included a slideshow of the couple's life together and all they have accomplished.

For individuals like Burt and Barbara who spent decades at Willowbrook and were expected to accomplish nothing in their lifetimes, Volunteers of America has afforded them the opportunity to gain their much-deserved independence and to enjoy a life underscored by dignity, richness and in their case, love.

Meet Paige Davis, *Volunteer Extraordinaire*

We would like to introduce you to Paige Davis, an invaluable Volunteers of America-Greater New York volunteer and the newest director on our board!

Most of you probably know Paige as the host of the hit show *Trading Spaces*, TLC's ground breaking design-reality show. You may also know her from her recent performance in the Broadway revival of *Boeing Boeing*, playing the title role of *Sweet Charity* in the show's Broadway tour, or as Roxie Hart in the Broadway musical *Chicago*.

As an actress, singer and dancer, Paige has generously used her celebrity to spread the word about **OPERATION BACKPACK**, our annual back-to-school campaign that invites individuals and companies to donate new backpacks and school supplies for thousands of school-age children living in the New York City shelter system.

Through Paige's tremendous support we have been able to expand Operation Backpack so that children in 60 shelters across the city receive new,

"I know that every backpack I hold will be put in the hands of a child who needs it."



Get Involved *today!*

SHOWING YOUR SUPPORT HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER!

- **DONATE** at voa-gny.org or send a donation using the enclosed reply form.
- **SIGN UP** for our e-newsletter at voa-gny.org.
- **ASK** your employer if they will match donations you make to Volunteers of America.
- **ATTEND** a Donations in Action program tour! (*see page 7 for details*).
- **VOLUNTEER** during Operation Backpack. Visit OperationBackpackNYC.com for details.

filled backpacks in time for school. "It is the success stories that spur me on," Paige says. "Hearing about a young lady who credits receiving a backpack for propelling her to the honor roll and on to college is what makes this campaign so important. I know that every backpack I hold will be put in the hands of a child who needs it."

We are grateful to Paige and to all of our volunteers who work tirelessly to help Volunteers of America fulfill its mission of helping those most in need.

Tell Us Your Story!

What inspires you to support Volunteers of America? Please contact us at (212) 496-4312 or njonsson@voa-gny.org. We would love to share your story in the next issue of *Everyday Miracles!*

You're Invited!

Visit Our Programs to See How Your Support is Changing Lives

By supporting Volunteers of America-Greater New York, you are putting your faith in us and our ability to deliver services to the men, women and children in our community in greatest need of guidance, support and comfort.

To thank you for your generosity, we would like to invite you to a Donations in Action program tour!

These tours are not fundraisers, but rather a way for you to see firsthand how your belief in our mission – to reach and uplift all people – is changing lives.

Join a small group of other Volunteers of America supporters for a 90 minute program. Enjoy refreshments, meet key staff and board members and catch a special glimpse into the work that your donations make possible everyday.

We are currently offering 3 Donations in Action program tours. Future tours will take place throughout the year. Check your next newsletter for dates!

TO RSVP TO A "DONATIONS IN ACTION" PROGRAM TOUR:

Call or email Natalie Jonsson at (212) 496-4312 or njonsson@voa-gny.org.

For information on arranging a **PRIVATE VISIT**, please call Rachel Weinstein, Director of Development, at (212) 496-4305.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO INVITE FRIENDS & FAMILY!

MANHATTAN: REGENT FAMILY RESIDENCE



Homelessness can strike anyone, even entire families.

Learn more about how homelessness affects families in New York City. Visit the Regent Family Residence during Operation Backpack 2010 and witness the joy as children get to choose their own backpack filled with supplies for the upcoming school year.

WHEN: TUESDAY, AUGUST 24 AT 10:00 AM

WHERE: BROADWAY AT 104TH STREET, MANHATTAN

BRONX: BRONX EARLY LEARNING CENTER



Classes for children with developmental delays meet a critical need in low-income neighborhoods where these issues might otherwise go untreated.

Visit the Bronx Early Learning Center, our no-cost pre-kindergarten program that serves 260 children each year, two-thirds of whom have significant developmental delays such as autism, Down syndrome, and neurological and emotional problems. Take a tour during Operation Backpack when each student gets to choose his or her own backpack for the start of a new school year!

WHEN: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 AT 10:00 AM

WHERE: 1166 RIVER AVENUE, BRONX, NY 10452

STATEN ISLAND: STATEN ISLAND EARLY LEARNING CENTER



The first three years of a child's life are an amazing time of development and growth. For children with developmental delays, this time is especially important.

The Staten Island Early Learning Center offers cost-free, comprehensive educational experiences for children with cognitive or language impairments, social and emotional difficulties, or sensory and motor problems. Come experience this inspiring program that promotes growth and development and encourages all students to discover and explore!

WHEN: TUESDAY, AUGUST 3 AT 10:00 AM

WHERE: 10 JOLINE LANE, STATEN ISLAND, NY 10307

Changing Lives *One Penny at a Time*

For 31 years, Marty Wolf has donated the bills and coins she finds on the street to Volunteers of America. Marty shares her inspiring story with you here:

“It all started when an elderly friend and I met as Auxiliary Police trainees and soon discovered that we both had bikes! That year, 1979, we started doing ‘dinner bike rides’ to primarily downtown locations. Pedaling along together we discovered that we’d see coins on the street, so we’d pick them up, pocket them and on we’d go!

At the end of the year we decided that the best way to use the money would be to donate it to a special cause. That first year I biked 1,275 miles and collected a grand total of \$8.43!!

When the time came to donate our findings, we biked to 5th Avenue at Rockefeller Center. Liz put her money in the Salvation Army pot and I put mine in the Volunteers of America Sidewalk Santa chimney.

We continued our annual trips through Christmas 1998. My friend entered a nursing home in 1999 and from that time on, rather than visiting Rockefeller Center, I always wrote checks to Volunteers of America for the exact amount of my found money.

Since 1900, Volunteers of America’s Sidewalk Santas® have been collecting money for those in need.



Over the past 30 years, from 1979 through 2009, I have found a total of \$853.83, mostly on the streets of New York City.

And, as I write this I’ve already found \$8.59, \$2.28 more than my entire 2009 total! So, 2010 is absolutely bound to be better for me and for my favorite yearly donation to Volunteers of America!”



For 31 years, Marty Wolf has donated the bills and coins she finds on the street to Volunteers of America.

Request a Free Estate Planning Guide

Most Americans need to review – and possibly revise – their wills and other estate planning documents on a regular basis. We would like to send you a helpful resource for taking a fresh inventory of your assets. Our new booklet, *The Personal Affairs Record*, is available free of charge by just checking the appropriate box on the enclosed reply form. You can also use the form to share the news of any estate gift you are considering so we can add you to our Myrtle Society member list.

Our History: 114 Years of Service



On March 8, 1896, Ballington Booth, the tall, handsome son of the Salvation Army founders, and his wife, Maud Charlesworth Booth, the refined daughter of an Anglican rector, made a bold announcement. In the Great Hall of New York City’s Cooper Union, they pronounced to a crowd of thousands the birth of a new organization dedicated to serving the needs of the poor and disadvantaged – Volunteers of America. Maud and Ballington envisioned a movement committed to “reaching and uplifting” the American people. Volunteers of America’s outreach efforts have followed this decree ever since and we thank you for supporting this important work.