The Founding of the JLC

In 1911, a young woman of some background had the time and money to get a first-rate education, travel around the world, and meet the heads of state, art, and business. Around the age of fourteen she might study at a convent-run school in Paris, spend her free time drawing with fashionable Bohemian artists, and eat meals at outdoor cafes. Her worldy parents collected Impressionist paintings and entertained glamorous opera stars and actresses who seemed to live on nothing but lobster and champagne. Families met royalty, and the *Chicago Tribune* regularly featured articles like "What an American Beauty Heard and Saw as the Sultan of Zanzibar's Guest."

When a privileged young woman returned to the States, she might complete her education at a sophisticated finishing school in the East. Sometimes she stayed on for a few years at Bryn Mawr where leaders of the women's suffrage movement urged her to get involved in public life. Following school, her parents threw a lavish debut party at one of Chicago's glittering hotel ballrooms.

Then the adventure ended. Fathers reminded daughters, as one gentleman put it, "that men did not care for women who go hustling through the world." Mothers put out a list of "don'ts"—don't drink wine, don't dance the Turkey Trot, don't talk to girls from the west side. If a girl wanted to "do something" with her education and experience, why didn't she play the organ at Sunday School classes? Surrounded by roadblocks on every side, a girl usually folded her wings and waited for a marriage proposal.

Lucy McCormick Blair Linn didn't see things that way. Fresh and energetic, she spent the months following her debut working in the tenements in an area known as "Little Hell." Most of the buildings were without gas, light, or sewage systems, the streets were filled with decaying fruit and dead animals, and the neighborhood had 65 liquor stores within a quarter square mile.



During the early years, the JLC supported a visiting nurse, who in 1915 made 3,564 house calls to treat scarlet fever, measles, and diphtheria.

"I was up at 7 a.m. and onto the Elevated to the far northwest side near Goose Island," Lucy recalled. One morning she, who had never washed more than a pair of stockings, found herself bleaching sheets with lye that took the skin off her hands. Later that day, her future husband suggested that $50 to a neighborhood lady would have meant so much more and the sheets would have been so much cleaner.

"I practically cried from rage and mortification," she remembered, "and felt there was something wrong and futile about it all."

What was wrong, she decided, were not her good intentions but her untrained solo efforts. So she responded eagerly to the suggestion of an eastern friend that she start a Chicago branch of the Junior League, a service organization of New York debutantes which had achieved startling successes in its ten year history.

As is now well documented, on November 1, 1911, Lucy gathered a group of good friends together in the fourth floor ballroom of the Hamilton McCormick mansion (now Lawry's Prime Rib) and the Junior League of Chicago was born. As she described it to Madame X, a reporter at the *Chicago Tribune*, "It is to be a sort of clearing house, an institution where girls can learn what work needs to be done and where, so that each Leaguer can find work that best suits her tastes and capacities."

The first committee action was a visit to a St. Luke's matron who, when asked what the League could do for the hospital, immediately signed up one girl to return before week's end

slice of life 1910s

sources: Wikipedia, discoveryeducation.com

Must-Have Appliances

- Hamilton Beach cyclone drink mixer
- Toaster
- Waffle iron

Hit Songs

- "By the Light of the Silvery Moon"–Bill Murray and the Haydn Quartet
- "Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland"–Henry Burr



JLC members collaborate with the Olivet Mission to establish a home for girls who moved away from their families to work in the city.

and read aloud to blind patients.

The projects multiplied—the Waitresses Rest Room, the Olivet Home for Working Girls, the provision for a visiting nurse who cared for hundreds of children with diphtheria and scarlet fever. They mushroomed in size, required more manpower and money, more training and time. Why were they so effective when most fledging civic groups fell apart after a season or two?

A good part of their early success was because they were a like-minded group, and they had many hours to spare, with little other than teas and dances and trips to the dressmaker to compete for their leisure time. There were no carpets to vacuum, no diapers to change, no demanding office supervisors. As a matter of fact, in the very beginning years, it was even felt that the organization should be restricted to unmarried women, with the thought that "older girls" of 25 or more would be too busy to participate.

The projects were also effective because the disadvantaged people they dealt with liked and trusted Junior League members. "Have-nots" were often suspicious of reformers and do-gooders, but the support of these young women seemed genuine and sincere. (By way of contrast, an old-timer remembers the story of the head of an old Chicago family who, in a fit of altruism, opened the doors of his Astor Street mansion to a whole neighborhood of families from "Little Hell." Despite the steaming chickens, fresh flowers, and soft candlelight, the guests mistook the host's generosity and assumed he was running for public office.)

But the biggest reason for the Junior League's overwhelming success lay in the fact that its activities proved to be a superb outlet for the talents and aspiration of all those women who had, as girls, been exposed to the noise and color of a larger world. The League offered a path into that world, one where they could take small tentative steps and experiment with a more assertive style that wasn't encouraged by grandmothers or protective beaux. As **Bobsy Goodspeed Chapman**, who joined the League in 1913, remembers it, "The Junior League is where we all learned to try new things and see if we could succeed." And succeed they did. ❖

Adapted from a 1977 topics *article by Celia Hilliard.*

We Love Lucy



Founder Lucy McCormick Blair Linn around the time of the founding of the JLC.

Throughout her 92 years, **Lucy McCormick Blair Linn's** activities were well documented in the city's newspapers. A quick look at the Chicago Public Library's archives reveals a intriguing look at a life well led.

Her wedding to aviation pioneer Howard Linn was detailed not on the society pages, but in the middle of the front page of the Sunday *Chicago Examiner* with the headline "Blair-Linn Nuptials Held Before 2,000." The article went on to reveal details of the day: *Guests assembled to witness the smartest wedding of the Springtime. Around [Miss Blair's] white throat was a single string of perfectly matched pearls, the gift of the bridegroom. Her bridal gown was an exquisite weave of white satin, fashioned along the simplest lines and falling in a semi-train. The bride established precedence by being gloveless on this occasion.* — *Chicago Examiner*, Vol. 14, no. 45

Her obituary states: *She was an accomplished equestrienne and golfer, an amateur actress, founder and honorary president of The Junior League of Chicago, The Casino, and served 37 years on the board of directors of the Chicago Maternity Center.* — *Chicago Tribune*, November 17, 1978

Chicago Tribune society columnist Eleanor Page reflected: *The late Mrs. Howard Linn once said "Money has nothing to do with gaining social position. In a democracy such as ours, society means nothing, and any old-fashioned notions about society are stuffy and show lack of leadership. Like attracts like, and people look for quality."* — *Chicago Tribune*, June 3, 1979 ❖

By Jen Luby, *topics* Editor

Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $5,800
- Cost of a car $950
- Salary $538

National Figures

- Irving Berlin–Musician
- Charlie Chaplin–Entertainer
- Ty Cobb–Baseball
- Pablo Picasso–Artist

Reading Material

- *O Pioneers!*–Willa Cather

Follies!



Follies often included elaborate costumes, such as those used in this undated can-can production.



The Junior League Follies lasted well into the 1950s. Seen here is a dance number from a 1940s production.

Many current members of the JLC weren't born when "follies" exited stage left from popular culture, but at one time, these musical revues were the apex of celebrity.

Follies productions often included multiple elaborate dance numbers, songs, and skits, and were considered a high-class version of the Vaudeville variety shows common in the late 1800s-1930s. The Parisian music hall Folies Bergère served as the starting point and eventual inspiration for follies productions worldwide, including the Junior League of Chicago's.

Throughout the 1920s, the JLC Follies showcased the many talents of our members. The *Chicago Tribune* even stated, "Tonight's the night of the much talked about Junior League Follies, so, of course, nothing else of importance is on society's calendar." Following in the footsteps of Florenz Ziegfeld, the Broadway producer of a Follies show in New York City, the JLC Follies were a glamorous affair full of enough jazz and dance to satisfy any flapper. It didn't come without a cost though; the entertainers, both women and men alike, put in countless hours of rehearsal to ensure that everything lived up to the reputation it garnered.

> *The last three weeks have been busy for the members of the Junior League, but this week will be even busier for the annual entertainment, the Junior League Follies, take place Friday night. From now until then no one connected with the entertainment will know a minute's peace, except when she is taking her well-earned rest at night, and then her dreams will probably be of jazz weddings and the like.*
>
> —*Chicago Tribune*, April 21, 1924

With *Ziegfeld's Follies* at the height of its own popularity on Broadway, the JLC knew that it had to really shine in order to compete. A February 1923 *Tribune* article reported, "The Junior League is planning to outshine its former successes with this year's benefit and is making elaborate plans to compare favorably with Ziegfeld's institution." With all the work and effort the JLC put into the affair each year, it was no surprise that the show was a raging success for many years. At one point, the Junior League of Chicago's Follies were even thought to rival professional productions.

> *If all the numbers in the Junior League Follies to be given Saturday night, April 14, at the Auditorium, are as well done as the Rosy-Posy number, the revue will justify the boasts those in charge are making for it. … The same revue was given in Kansas City a year or two ago [and] it is as entertaining as any of the professional revues.*
>
> —*Chicago Tribune*, March 26, 1923 ❖

The Follies, as successful as they were, were the biggest success for local charities supported by the JLC. For instance, the Follies of 1924 raised more than $10,000 total, with $1,000 going to United Charities, $2,500 to the Infant Welfare Society, $1,500 to the Visiting Nurses' Association, and more than 10 additional local charities receiving additional stipends. By any standards this is wonderful news, but almost 90 years ago, each of those organizations saw huge benefits from the contributions made by the Junior League Follies. ❖

By Berit Gemar, *topics* Staff Writer

slice of life 1920s

Favorite Radio Shows

- *Amos n' Andy*
- *Grand Ole' Opry*
- *The Housekeeper's Chat*

Must-Have Appliances

- Iron
- Refrigerator
- Washing machine

Hit Songs

- "Ain't Misbehavin"–Fats Waller & Louis Armstrong
- "St. Louis Blues"–Bessie Smith
- "Swannee"–Al Jolson

Children's Theater Movement Is No Child's Play



The JLC's Children's Theater played to thousands of area children for over 40 years.

Prior to World War I, little attention was paid to a child's interest in the arts, and even less was done to promote it. The JLC wanted to change this, and in 1921 announced plans to launch a new venture—a theater company designed specifically for children, the first of its kind in the world.

JLC members performed plays every Saturday morning at The Playhouse Theatre, with the mission to expose all children in the city to the arts, regardless of their ability to pay for the shows. To that end, free tickets were distributed to settlement houses throughout the city. The first production was *Alice in Wonderland*, and was met with great enthusiasm by the public. In her December 18, 1921 piece, *Chicago Daily Tribune* society columnist "Mme. X" declared it "a delightful performance given with spirit and dash." As ticket sales of subsequent productions soared, the JLC expanded its efforts to perform one-act plays in hospital children's wards.

The success of the JLC project spawned a children's theater movement in other Junior Leagues across the nation. They turned to the JLC for guidance, and eventually the Association of Junior Leagues of America chose the Chicago League to maintain nationwide records of play stage designs, scripts, costumes, and music in order to assist others when developing new plays for their communities.

By the late 1930s, JLC officers realized they could reach a wider audience if they presented plays in schools. This traveling troupe continued into the 1960s, and eventually planted the seeds for today's Mad Hatters project. ❖

By Whitney Dawson, *topics* Staff Writer

Fundraising in the Early Days



The 1920s was a flurry of fundraising activity for various programs, including those that had begun in years prior, such as this 1917 "Milk Ladies" initiative to attend to the nutritional needs of Chicago's children. Pictured are Olive Farwell Boston, Marion Forgan Freeman, Dorothy Leslie Keith, and Lucy McCormick Blair Linn. *Photo credit: Courtesy Chicago History Museum, ICHI 14058.*

In the 1920s, countless events were held in an effort to raise money for dozens of charities. One such creative effort was from **Mrs. Raymond Smith** in 1926. "Heed the latest stunt for replenishing a dwindling budget! The Junior League has embarked upon a new and amusing quest which is to net its charities over $4,800, if it pans out right."

Mrs. Smith's scheme is known as "children's hours." To start the financial ball rolling, she contributes $5 and procures the services of twelve assistants known as the twelve months of the year...These workers in turn get four, who act as weeks, contributing $2 these enlist help from friends representing the seven days of the week. Each of these gives $1 and gets in...with twenty-four friends, representing the hours of a day, who gives 4 cents each...The idea is to obtain all the various "times" within a fortnight—a formidable task which only such ambitious and efficient young ones could attempt.

—*Chicago Tribune*, March 26, 1926

This type of innovative thinking is one of the reasons that the JLC is still a leader in community service in the greater Chicago area. ❖

By Berit Gemar, *topics* Staff Writer

Cost of Living	National Figures	Reading Material
• Cost of a home $8,094	• Joan Crawford–Actress	• *The Literary Digest*
• Cost of a car $575	• Albert Einstein–Scientist	• *Reader's Digest*
• Salary $1,116	• George Gershwin–Musician	• *Winnie the Pooh*–A.A. Milne

Chicago's World Fair and the JLC



The JLC worked with the 1933 Century of Progress World's Fair, designing and operating the Enchanted Island, a children's center with performances, train rides, a game field, and crafts.

In a time of economic unrest, Chicago's 1933 World Fair—the Century of Progress International Exhibition—came to symbolize hope not only for the future of Chicago but also for the United States. During the 1930s the country was in the midst of the Great Depression, and because Chicago was heavily dependent on manufacturing, the city was hit especially hard. The Fair was meant to celebrate the city's centennial, but it also instilled confidence in the city and helped rebuild it after the Great Depression. In a time when many people were struggling to find work, the Fair was a way to bring not only entertainment and education, but also employment for many. The World's Fair ended up being so successful that the Fair reopened again in 1934 from May through October.

Although the inclusion of women was mandatory by federal legislation during the Chicago's 1893 World Fair, the Columbian Exposition, the Century of Progress showed few contributions and little participation by women. There were no women's buildings and few exhibits showcasing the partnership with women.

In an effort to attract a multitude of patrons, the Fair operated a variety of entertainment and exhibits geared towards different groups of people. One of the few places where women were present was the Enchanted Island, a children's center. The Junior League of Chicago was very involved in the Enchanted Island, with members assisting Fair leadership in designing and operating the area. It included a train, crafts, a game field, and a variety of performances.

JLC Sustainer **Peggy Carr** was 18 years old when she played the role of the dog-nurse Nana (wearing a costume made entirely of cedar mops) in the Junior League's production of *Peter Pan*, the first of several plays the JLC performed at the Enchanted Island. "We played a whole month and it was a wonderful, nifty production." She recalled the challenges of rehearsing during the construction of the theater, "Rehearsals took place while the theater was being built. It rained once, and the theater filled up with water, but we still rehearsed anyway."

The close of the Century of Progress didn't leave any permanent buildings in the city, but according to Peggy, the Fair demonstrated advancements in automotive and home technologies, and paved the way for what the future might look like for ordinary citizens. "It was a very exciting time." ❖

By Erin Morrison, *topics* Staff Writer

slice of life 1930s

Favorite Radio/TV Shows

- *Bob Hope Radio Show*
- *Painted Dreams*
- *The Ziegfeld Follies of the Air*

Must-Have Appliances

- Dishwahser
- Electric cooking range

Hit Songs

- "God Bless America"–Kate Smith
- "If I Didn't Care"–Ink Spots
- "Strange Fruit"–Billie Holiday

Newspapers Feature JLC Doings

Our 1930s JLC counterparts were a busy bunch, and newspaper headlines of the day often trumpeted their successful endeavors. Some of the most interesting pieces reveal an industrious group that regularly took on ambitious projects.



A 1931 JLC rummage sale was so popular that it caused a near-riot on Michigan Avenue.

Women Storm Junior League Clothing Sale. In the early part of the decade, the JLC conducted semi-annual clothing sales of fine clothing sold for 90% off. The October 1931 sale led to chaos when crowds of women stormed the rented space at 313 Michigan Avenue. When the doors opened at 8 a.m., the well-organized operation turned into a riotous mob scene.

> *A flivver squad, three mounted policemen, and a dozen patrolmen tried in vain yesterday to maintain order at the annual Junior League fall sale of second hand clothing. The morning's casualties included crushed hats, a couple of purses lost in the crowds, a dress torn beyond repair when two women fought to claim it, several bruised policemen, and general exhaustion on the part of the Junior League members.*
>
> —*Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 16, 1931

Junior League to Run Drake Hotel Today. In the fall of 1935 and 1939, JLC members managed operations of The Drake Hotel for one day, and gained revenue from all food and drinks served, plus all rooms rented. The 1935 event raised $12,000, and the day's activities included lectures, a bridge luncheon, a "tea and cocktails" hour, and a dinner dance party.

> *Just one look at the announcement makes one certain the reader should plan to spend that day at the hotel enjoying the many things that the league is planning to give a ticket purchaser, all for $9.85.*
>
> —*Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 17, 1935

Junior League Invites Men to Fine Arts Show. The Fine Arts Show was an annual event for the JLC, and in 1939, the organizers specifically implored "husbands and beaux" to attend. JLC members and their female guests were required to pay one dollar for admission, while men got in for free. Admission included tea but as the invitation remarked, "cocktails, we deeply regret, are not on the house."

> *"Those neglected gentlemen of the Junior League, husbands and beaux, are especially invited to come (free) to the annual Junior League exhibit of fine and more or less domestic arts on Tuesday, May 16, from 4 to 7 at the Arts club," read the bright yellow invitations the Chicago League is mailing out this week.*
>
> —*Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 5, 1939

By Erin Morrison, *topics* Staff Writer

WJLC Is on the Air!



In partnership with local radio stations, the JLC worked with WBBM for lectures on current events and pieces about Chicago welfare agencies, and with WLS for children's programming.

Throughout the 1930s, the JLC partnered with two radio stations to hold lectures on current events and to raise social awareness about Chicago's welfare agencies. The League also worked with another radio station for programming geared specifically toward children.

In the early 1900s, the Atlass brothers of Lincoln, Illinois started WBBM radio, the first of two stations to partner with the Junior League of Chicago. On WBBM, JLC members lectured on topics including Chicago's welfare agencies and current events.

Competing station WLS was created after Sears, Roebuck and Company continually bought time on another radio station in order to reach their customers in rural areas. The company eventually created their own radio station, WLS (so named for "World's Largest Store"). The station was originally created to reach farmers, and it grew to become one of the world's leading talk radio stations. In the 1930s, the women of the Junior League partnered with WLS in order to broadcast a variety of children's programming. ❖

By Erin Morrison, *topics* Staff Writer

Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $7,543
- Cost of a car $480
- Salary $1,170

National Figures

- Louis Armstrong–Musician
- Fred Astaire–Entertainer
- Lucille Ball–Entertainer

Reading Material

- *Gone with the Wind*–Margaret Mitchell
- *Grapes of Wrath*–John Steinbeck

The League on the Home Front



As gas and tire rationing took effect, Children's Theater trouping stopped. The JLC funded puppet shows starring Burr Tillstrom, creator of *Kukla, Fran and Ollie*, and expanded its radio programming four-fold.



To support the war effort, members staffed the Service Men's Centers in the Loop, taught first aid, and produced defense-themed radio shows, such as *Midwest Mobilizers* and *A Man and His Army*.

The 1940s saw battle on both the European and Pacific fronts, and Americans across the nation were adjusting to a new lifestyle focused on war efforts. While it would have been easy for the JLC to cease operations, our League did just the opposite; the JLC used this world crisis as an opportunity to reevaluate community programs to align their objectives with those of the nation.

The war created a strong national interest in the preservation of values on the home front. The JLC decided to conduct an evaluation of every active community project to determine whether or not it had a direct and positive impact on the war effort. The purpose of this was for the JLC to establish itself as one of the small units in a greater national plan.

The Children's Theater project was one of the programs that the JLC decided no longer needed its administration. The program had become rather self-sufficient and the evaluation process deemed it able to operate on its own. There were more important war-related projects that could use the JLC's time and talent. As the outgoing Association of Junior Leagues of America president said in a speech, "[the war] means that we will have to adjust ourselves more and more to other people's plans, that we can't run our own programs with all the independence we have shown in the past." (*Junior League Magazine*, June 1942)

Therefore, the JLC embarked on a new effort—a weekly radio program used to inform listeners of the JLC service efforts and the effects of such efforts on the community. The program was broadcast every Saturday afternoon on WBBM and reached the greater Chicagoland area. Entitled *That Men May Live*, the project became a signature placement in the JLC and was adopted by other Junior Leagues across the nation.

Prior to World War II, women in the Junior League typically chose placements according to their existing skillset. During the war effort, however, members were challenged to adapt and help in any way they could. A delegate in a day-long meeting of the Junior League Program in Wartime noted, "We are now in a different period. We cannot class war work in one place, and community service in another; for one cannot differentiate between them." (*Junior League Magazine*, June 1942) ❖

By Whitney Dawson, *topics* Staff Writer

slice of life 1940s

Favorite Radio/TV Shows

- *Abbott and Costello*
- *The Orson Wells Show*
- *You Bet Your Life*

Must-Have Appliances

- Automatic washing machine
- Table top radio
- Vacuum cleaner

Hit Songs

- "Sentimental Journey"–Les Brown & Doris Day
- "Take the 'A' Train"–Duke Ellington
- "White Christmas"–Bing Crosby

"Professional" Members?



Members enjoy a lighthearted moment while blowing up balloons for a Valentine benefit ball.
Photo Credit: Chicago Sun, Felix Kubik, 1941.

A glance through the 1940s JLC yearbooks reveals that membership throughout the decade ranged from 600 to 750 members, and dues for Active and Provisional (now called "Associate") members were $18 per year and $10 per year, respectively. In 1942, the JLC introduced a special rate of $5 per year for women who were members of the military. Most meetings took place at The Drake Hotel and the Ambassador East Hotel since the JLC did not yet have a headquarters, and the majority of meetings were held during the day so that members could be at home in the evenings with their families.

In addition to Provisional, Active, and Sustainer memberships, there was a fourth type of membership in the 1940s. The "Professional" member was a woman, usually single, who worked outside of the home. She paid only $5 in annual dues to the League but still participated in all activities. Many of the Professional members were women who had taken jobs to help the war effort.

In 1947, the JLC made the bold decision to abolish the Professional member standing. The end of the war caused most women to leave their posts and return to the home. It seemed that there was no longer a need for Professional standing. **Eleanor P. MacDonald**, chair of the JLC Professional Committee, did not agree. In her annual committee report, she asserted, "The AJLA Conference decided to do a spot of weeding out. The axe was swung—we got it in the neck…those 48 who already are Professional members are not being cast out. Rather, we are being left to wither and dry on the Junior League tree, unnourished by fresh blood. We are the newest of the Vanishing Americans." ❖

By Whitney Dawson, *topics* Staff Writer



The membership categories may change, but the Junior League has always been a great place to form friendships. Pictured here are Elizabeth Dolan Wright, Elyse Butler, and Virginia Thomas at the 2012 Centennial Gala.

Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $7,211
- Cost of a car $850
- Salary $1,286

National Figures

- Humphrey Bogart–Actor
- Clark Gable–Actor
- Rita Hayworth–Actress

Reading Material

- *For Whom the Bell Tolls*–Ernest Hemingway
- *Pippy Longstocking*–Astrid Lindgren

The JLC Finds a Home



A tremendous opportunity arose in 1953 that changed the future of the JLC forever: **Lydia Thatcher Wheeler** offered to donate her home at 1447 North Astor Street to the League to serve as a headquarters for all operations and meetings. Prior to this, the League lacked a true home. Members held committee meetings at their homes and larger groups met at various hotels and public spaces that the League either rented or borrowed. Over our 41-year history in Chicago, there were 14 different locations used. It was high time for a permanent home!

Lydia moved into 1447 North Astor in 1922 with her husband Robert and their two children Winifred and Robert. After her husband passed away, Lydia put the house on the market and moved into a smaller apartment nearby. During World War II, every potential buyer that looked at the home was interested in splitting the large space into several apartments. Lydia found this prospect unimaginable and turned down every offer she received. She wanted someone else to enjoy the full home as she and her family once had.





After years of not being able to sell the house as a single family home, Lydia turned to the Junior League of Chicago, of which her daughter was a member. In 1953, she offered to donate her Georgian revival style home to be the new League headquarters. Her offer was met with mixed reactions from members. While thrilled at the prospect of having such a lovely home as the headquarters, many members feared that the cost of the upkeep for the house was far too great for the JLC to sustain.



The JLC leadership mailed a questionnaire to every member for feedback on the move. Members were asked to indicate if they approved of the plan, disapproved of the plan, and if they would rejoin if the plan was approved. Members were aware that the League would be forced to double annual dues in order to pay for the house's upkeep.

Fortunately, most members voted to accept the donation and the move went through. The JLC had a new house to call home. As the house had not been occupied in more than 10 years, there was a great amount of work to be done on the interior and its furnishings. *The Winnetka Talk* wrote on September 24, 1953, "Mrs. George Rich III forfeited a real vacation this summer to stay home and work with the Chicago Junior League, of which she is president, and to guide the organization in their undertaking of a new home."

The JLC was very proud to spend less than $5,000 on renovations to prepare the home for use. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported on July 21, 1954, "To save money, Mrs. Ernest Burgess, a member who served as decorator, herself added the gold trim to the white painted woodwork in the second floor powder room, giving it a rather chic and French air." On April 18, 1955, the JLC held its first formal gathering in the new home to welcome incoming Provisional members to the annual tea. ❖

By Whitney Dawson, *topics* Staff Writer



slice of life 1950s

Favorite Radio/TV Shows

- *Dragnet*
- *The Jack Benny Program*
- *I Love Lucy*

Must-Have Appliances

- Coffee maker
- Enameled colored kitchen appliances

Hit Songs

- "Hey Good Lookin'"–Hank Williams
- "Hound Dog"–Elvis Presley
- "Tutti Fruiti"–Little Richard

The JLC on the Small Screen

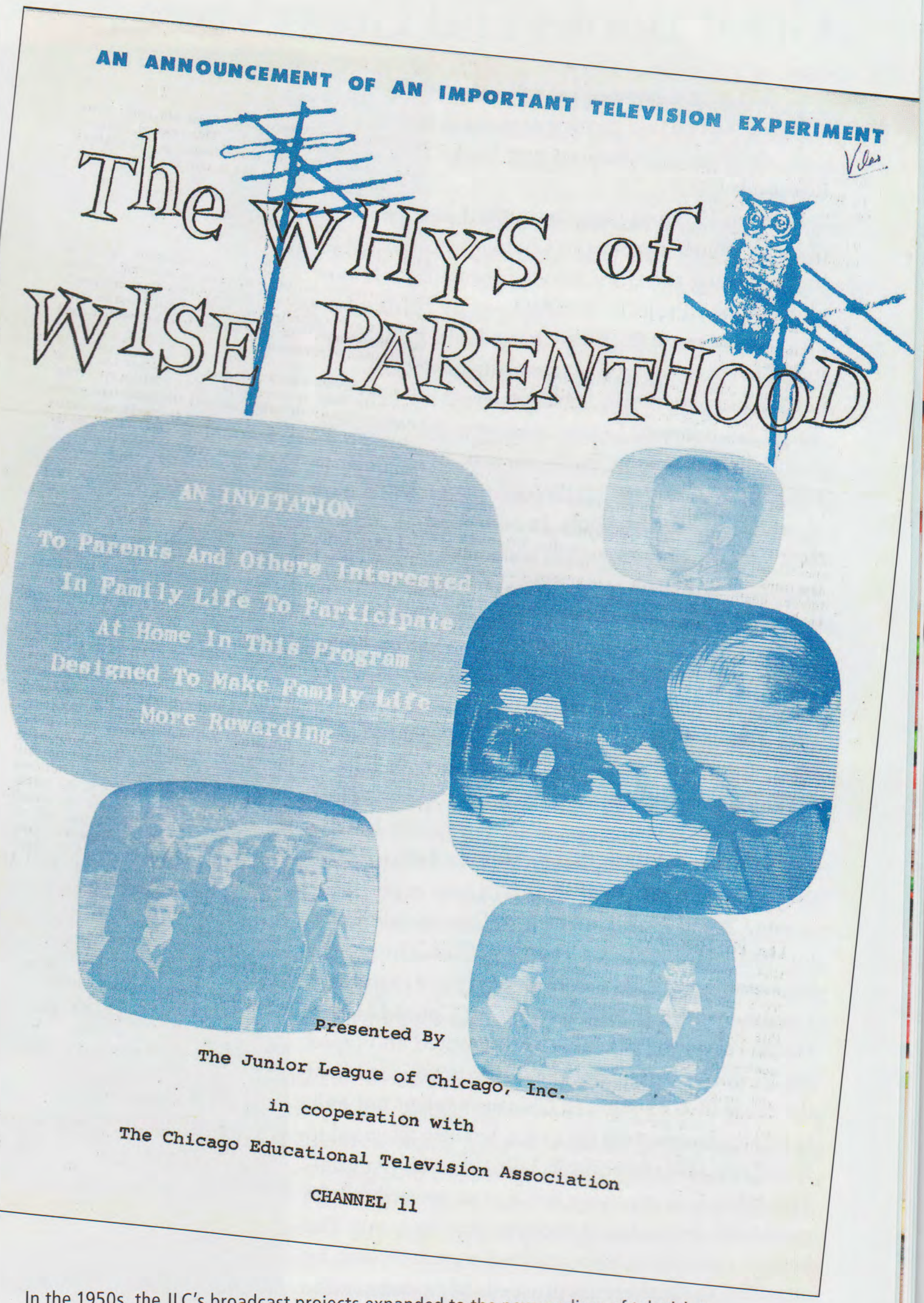
Through most of the 1950s, the Junior League of Chicago's activities were very child and family centered. It's no surprise that the League embraced the emerging medium of television—and its opportunity to reach a large number of parents—with characteristic enthusiasm.

Over the course of several years, there were multiple efforts to develop programming exemplifying the League's philosophy toward community service and to secure sponsors for these media projects. By 1956, a new format was developed with a series of half-hour shows focused on the topic of child guidance, demystifying mental health and behavioral issues afflicting young people, and presenting tips and techniques to help parents create a healthy, happy home environment. The show was eventually picked up by local PBS affiliate WTTW.

Hard work and persistence paid off, and in 1958, the JLC made its debut on Channel 11 with a series of four programs entitled *The Whys of Wise Parenthood*, a forum of parents discussing the unique roles mothers, fathers, and children played in building a family. The goal of the series was to help modern parents "besieged by an over abundance of advice from many different and differing voices on how to raise their children." Instead of introducing yet another expert, the League sought to help parents regain their confidence in their own expertise as parents.

Hosted over the course of four Mondays in May, the program proved an overwhelming success! JLC members sponsored 75 in-home viewing parties, with one person in each group serving as recorder, who would then summarize her group's thoughts on the program, mail them to WTTW, and eventually receive a compiled response of reflections from all 75 parties. ❖

Adapted from a 2011 topics *article by Heather Grayson and Laurie Toth.*



In the 1950s, the JLC's broadcast projects expanded to the new medium of television by sponsoring the WTTW series *The Whys of Wise Parenthood.*

Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $15,796
- Cost of a car $1,480
- Salary $2,686

National Figures

- Hank Aaron–Athlete
- James Dean–Actor
- Elvis Presley–Musician

Reading Material

- *Life*
- *Look*

Inspiring Young Minds with Great Books and Great Voices

1963 was a banner year for the JLC as they worked on two exciting projects to benefit area children—the Junior Great Books Project and Revue a la Carte.

Between 1963 and 1965, the Junior League was one of many women's groups in Chicago who assisted in implementing the Great Books Foundation's Junior Great Books Project. The philosophy behind the program was not to teach facts, but to lead and stimulate independent thinking and expression of students.

Following an intense training period by the Great Books Foundation, League members led bi-weekly discussion groups on works such as *Aesop's Fables* and Virgil's *Aeneid* for 5th through 8th grade students at underprivileged schools. In addition to donating their time, the JLC financially supported the program by purchasing book sets for the children to read and discuss during their sessions. These efforts were well received and were considered pivotal in bringing voluntarism to Chicago Public Schools. The Great Books Project still exists today, and has evolved into a program where children all over Chicago can earn prizes for the number of minutes that they read.

While some children were reading books, others were singing on stage. In 1963, the Junior League held an event with a similar premise to *American Idol* called Revue a la Carte. This event gave exposure to young Chicago voice talent as well as raised money for the JLC Community Trust Account. The benefit began with cocktails and dinner for more than 1,000 League members and guests at the Conrad Hilton Hotel. Following dinner, CBS presented and taped the 50-minute musical revue. The co-sponsorship of the event by CBS allowed Chicago's talent not only to be seen by guests at the event, but also televised to New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Los Angeles. This television exposure was a great reward for the music and drama talent showcased at the event. The benefit committee also received a great reward by attaining the highest net proceeds of an event in the League's history at the time and generated more than $30,000 profit through this event. ❖

By Kristi Rubenstein, *topics* Staff Writer



slice of life 1960s

Favorite TV Shows

- *The Addams Family*
- *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*
- *Batman*
- *Bonanza*

Must-Have Appliances

- Color television
- Stereo system

Hit Songs

- "Build Me Up Buttercup"–Foundations
- "The Twist"–Chubby Chucker
- "Twist and Shout"–The Isley Brothers

Women Go To Work



Working with Jane Addams Hull House Association, the JLC established Una Puerta Abierta, providing English classes and job counseling.

The 1960s was a decade of change. The country was jolted by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, major legislation was passed to equalize pay between men and women, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 addressed discrimination, the war in Vietnam became increasingly contentious, and the decade ended with two men walking on the moon.

Despite social upheaval, the 1960s were also time of economic affluence. With women entering the workforce, and unemployment down to 3.5% in 1969, per capita disposable income increased by 36% over the decade. While many women experienced success within their lives at this time, they were also inspired to reach out to help women who were less fortunate. With this intent, the Junior League established Una Puerta Abierta (Spanish for "an open door"), a program created in partnership with the Jane Addams Hull House Association to offer English classes and job counseling for women looking to enter the workforce, but who needed to overcome barriers.

Perhaps this decade of political change and social affluence inspired many women to look beyond the home and discover ways they could be involved in their communities. The Junior League of Chicago provided an opportunity for women to serve their community, cultivate friendships, and further influence this decade of change. ❖

By Kristi Rubenstein, *topics* Staff Writer

A Sixties Snapshot



The 1960s were filled with exiting programs such as yet another WTTW series, this time featuring member reviews of cultural events and interviews of prominent Chicagoans, such as Mayor Richard J. Daley.

What was it like to be in JLC in 1960s?

• Of course, in the 1960s members did not have the luxury of submitting their placements online like we do today. Instead, they went through a series of in-person interviews where they would advocate their candidacy to be selected for the committee of their choice.

• In order to apply for League membership, ladies had to gain a sponsor and have four other women complete a questionnaire about their candidacy. Questions such as "please describe this candidate's potential to contribute to the League and her community" and "what are her community interests and what is her attitude towards this work" were asked to help the committee decide if a candidate should be admitted as a member.

• Not far from the expectations of members today, each month members gave two days of volunteer work, performed two days of intra-League work and went to two area meetings with ladies from their neighborhood.

• Area meetings allowed an opportunity for League members to discuss topics and outline their ideas for the JLC's minimum standards. Area meeting leaders would then share their collective opinions with the League's leadership.

• If members didn't meet the expected minimum standards, their names were published in a list of delinquent members in *topics* each month!

• The lively and well-attended membership meetings were held at Chicago landmarks such as the The Casino at 195 E. Delaware Place (co-founded by JLC founder **Lucy McCormick Blair Linn**) and The Drake hotel. The meetings covered JLC business such as passing bylaws, educational topics such as "What Every Woman Should Know About Investments" taught by League members' husbands, and entertainment such as musical performances by children from the Latin School of Chicago.

• The Casino is an obscure and somewhat peculiar looking one-story, green-and-black Art Deco building tucked behind the John Hancock Center. Given the staggering price of real estate in the area, many have wondered how there can be such a diminutive structure on such valuable property. In the 1960s, the Hancock developers wrote to the longtime Casino president, **Mrs. John Doris Winterbotham** (JLC President, 1924-1925), asking to buy the club property. Mrs. Winterbotham tossed the letter into a desk drawer, where it was found years later after her death. She had never replied, and the developer decided to leave Mrs. Winterbotham alone. This twist of fate means that Junior League events can still be held at this location today. ❖

By Kristi Rubenstein, *topics* Staff Writer

Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $20,556
- Cost of a car $2,600
- Salary $4,007

National Figures

- Bob Dylan–Musician
- President John F. Kennedy
- Martin Luther King Jr.–Activist

Reading Material

- *Cosmopolitan*
- *Seventeen*
- *Vogue*

Paper Peddlers

In 1974 there was an idea to set up a personalized stationery shop within the JLC, similar to an operation at the Junior League of Dallas. Prompted by fellow member **Barbara Whitney, Jennet Lingle** visited a department store and approached the head buyer of the stationery department, boldly explaining that she was planning to start a business that would compete with his, and asked if he would tell her everything he knew. Surprisingly, he shared a great deal of information but suggested maybe "you girls" should stick with a few of the cheaper lines and not take on too much.

Not discouraged in the slightest, Jennet began writing job descriptions and drafting a business plan. She then began inquiring among League committee chairs for members who would want to take on a task within the Paper Peddlers. Soon she was able to recruit a treasurer and assistants, along with 10 area representatives who all worked out of their homes. Each representative was responsible for her own sales campaign. This arrangement worked well for the team, and in the first year, Paper Peddlers grossed $42,000 with a net profit to the JLC of $14,000. The Peddlers existed within the League for many years and was quite successful. ❖

By Erin Morrison, *topics* Staff Writer



Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $23,400
- Cost of a car $3,350
- Salary $6,186

National Figures

- Muhammad Ali–Athlete
- Al Pacino–Actor
- Stevie Wonder–Musician

Reading Material

- *Rolling Stone*
- *Tiger Beat*
- *Time*

Founding the Chicago Children's Museum



The JLC incubated what is now the Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier, providing innovative, hands-on learning for children.

Throughout its history, the JLC has implemented countless programs to help broaden the minds and experiences of children. In the 1980s, the JLC turned their desire to help children succeed into something tangible. The Chicago Public Schools system was falling on hard times, and cutbacks were beginning to take a toll on the education system. In 1982, a coalition headed by the JLC identified a need and opened the then-named Express-Ways Children's Museum, located within just two hallways of the Chicago Public Library at 78 East Washington Street (now the Chicago Cultural Center). The museum's debut exhibit was "Getting to Know Hue" and it focused on exposing children to the many facets of color, light, music, and literature.

Not long after it opened, the museum began offering trunk shows and traveling exhibits in order to satisfy an overwhelming number of curious patrons eager to see the fascinating exhibits. One such experience was "Amazing Chicago," a free exhibit that brought architecture down to size for children and provided exercises and activities about the impressive architecture in Chicago in a fun and educational manner. "We had this grand vision of a full-fledged children's museum, but no one yet understood the hands-on learning model," reflected **Mary Boyer**, a JLC member who was an integral part of the launch. "The Junior League made it work—by collaborating with the right people and by committing dollars, volunteers and credibility to create a pilot project people could touch and see and measure."

The pilot was such a success that even with trunk shows and traveling exhibits, capacity issues were a consistent problem. The museum moved several times over the first decade, continuously searching for a permanent space. In 1995, it moved to its current home at Navy Pier. The new facility offered 57,000 square feet of exhibition space and included three floors of educational exhibits, public programs, and special exhibits. The expansion made it the fourth largest and second most visited children's museum in the United States. The now-named Chicago Children's Museum serves more than 657,000 visitors annually, both on-site and in communities throughout Chicago, particularly in areas with limited access to the museum's rich array of resources. ❖

By Berit Gemar, *topics* Staff Writer

slice of life 1980s

Favorite TV Shows

- *ALF*
- *The Cosby Show*
- *Dallas*
- *The Wonder Years*

Must-Have Appliances

- IBM PC
- Radio cassette player
- VHS

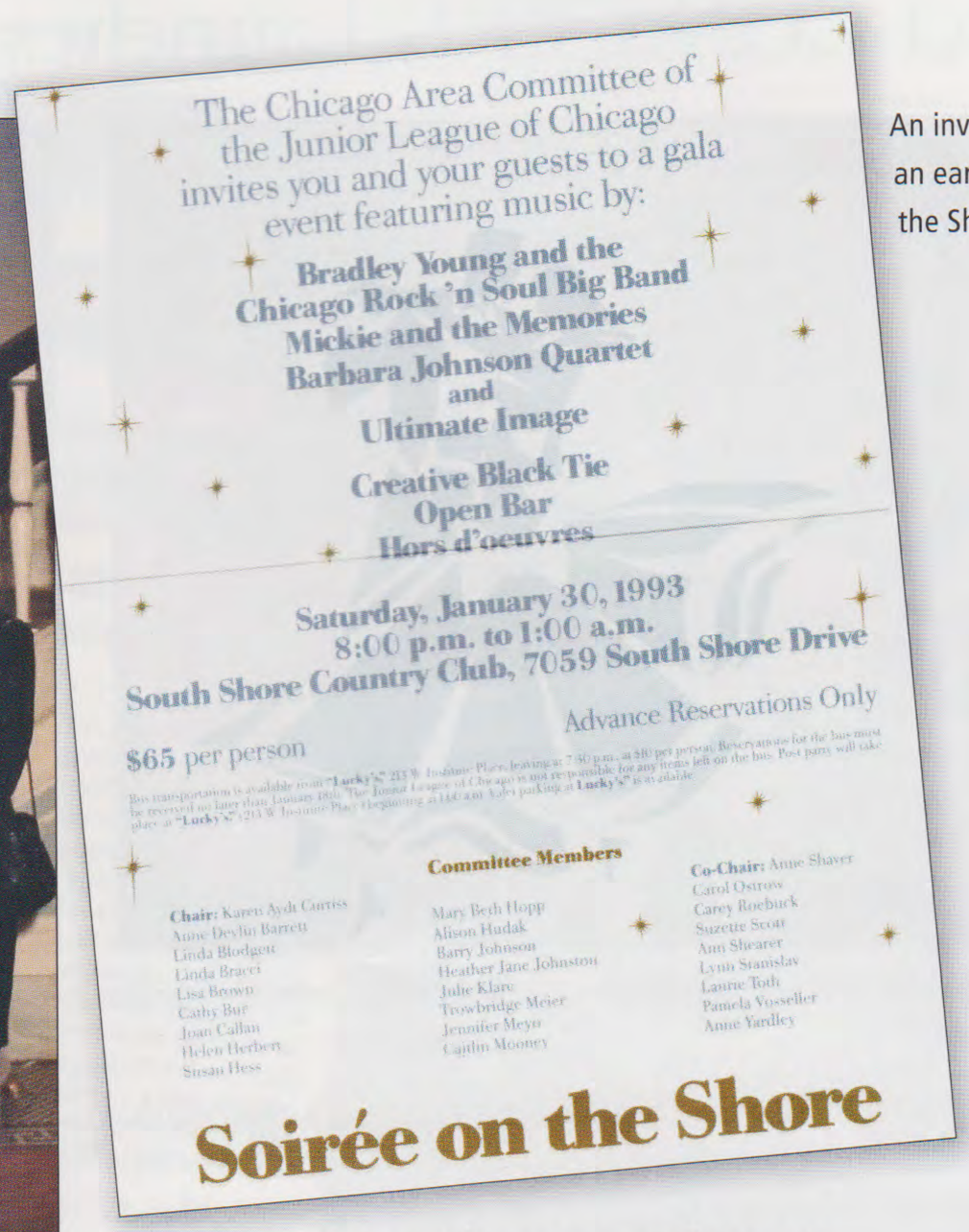
Hit Songs

- "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun"–Cyndi Lauper
- "I Love Rock n Roll"–Joan Jett & The Blackhearts
- "Thriller"–Michael Jackson

Soiree on the Shore



The first Soiree on the Shore committee gathers before their historic event. Pictured in front, second and third from the left, are chairs Liz Sharp and Nancy McFadyen.


The Chicago Area Committee of the Junior League of Chicago invites you and your guests to a gala event featuring music by:

Bradley Young and the Chicago Rock 'n Soul Big Band
Mickie and the Memories
Barbara Johnson Quartet
and
Ultimate Image

Creative Black Tie
Open Bar
Hors d'oeuvres

Saturday, January 30, 1993
8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.
South Shore Country Club, 7059 South Shore Drive

Advance Reservations Only

$65 per person

Bus transportation is available from "Lucky's" 213 W. Institute Place, leaving at 7:30 p.m. at $10 per person. Reservations for the bus must be received no later than January 18th. The Junior League of Chicago is not responsible for any items left on the bus. Post party will take place at "Lucky's" 213 W. Institute Place Beginning at 1:00 a.m. Valet parking at "Lucky's" is available.

Committee Members

Chair: Karen Aydt Curtiss
Anne Devlin Barrett
Linda Blodgett
Linda Bracci
Lisa Brown
Cathy Burr
Joan Callan
Helen Herbert
Susan Hess
Mary Beth Hopp
Alison Hudak
Barry Johnson
Heather Jane Johnston
Julie Klare
Trowbridge Meier
Jennifer Meyer
Caitlin Mooney
Co-Chair: Anne Shaver
Carol Ostrow
Carey Roebuck
Suzette Scott
Ann Shearer
Lynn Stanislav
Laurie Toth
Pamela Vosseller
Anne Yardley

Soirée on the Shore

An invitation from an early Soiree on the Shore event.

Around the third week of January, life in Chicago can start to seem a little dull and dreary. This was no different in the 1980s, when JLC members **Liz Sharp** and **Nancy McFadyen** thought the mid-winter doldrums would be the perfect excuse to create a lively fundraising event.

Plans for Soiree on the Shore began in 1986, with the first event held in January of 1987. To get things started, Liz and Nancy talked to chairs of other successful fundraisers, wrote a detailed proposal to recruit champions through Membership Council, gained the support of JLC President **Judy York**, researched venues, and connected with Junior League friends and acquaintances who were convivial and connected around town. With no seed money and no budget for decorations, the committee decided to pre-pay for their tickets to the event and secured enough funds to make deposits for the band, The Original Drifters, and one ballroom at the newly and beautifully renovated South Shore Cultural Center. The creative decorations chair, **Deb Surpless**, had the idea to use boxes and tissue donated by Tiffany & Co. to serve donated Garrett's popcorn to the guests.

To get the word out, committee member **Liz McGarry** opened her huge shoebox full of index cards with names of single men and women in the city and began sending invitations. According to Liz Sharp, "Word got out and the response was tremendous. It soon became apparent that we were going to have well in excess of 500 people coming. We secured a second room at the South Shore Cultural Center and hired an inexpensive combo band, The Sharps and The Flats, to play swing music. The night of the event it began snowing and we worried about attendance, but the buses transporting guests from Lincoln Park to the event were packed and the cars kept arriving, delivering in excess of 800 party-goers. The halls were filled with black-tie attired guests moving from the ballroom to the swing room having a great time. The windows fogged up, the snow drifted down. It was beautiful!"

Within the next month plans were already well underway for a second annual Soiree on the Shore for the following winter. Nancy McFadyen and Liz Sharp chaired the event again, entertaining more than 1,000 guests and raising in excess of $20,000 for the JLC. Needless to say, the decorations and food improved! Soiree on the Shore was held in the winter months for several years and slowly transitioned to the summertime event we now know as Summer Soiree. ❖

By Erin Morrison and Kristi Rubenstein, *topics* Staff Writers

Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $64,600
- Cost of a car $7,200
- Salary $12,513

National Figures

- Madonna–Singer
- Michael Jackson–Singer
- President Ronald Reagan

Reading Material

- *Shape*
- *USA Today*
- *Vanity Fair*

Project CON:CERN Launches





Project CON:CERN continues to thrive today. In December 2012, committee members presented recommendations to agency partners Hephzibah Children's Association and Common Pantry.

Project CON:CERN—Community Outreach Network: Consulting and Educational Resources for Nonprofits—was first introduced by the JLC in 1996 by **Allison Youngblood** and **Joy Turnheim Smith** in conjunction with Community Council Vice Presidents **Eileen Gill** and **Deb Schaeffer**. Initially conceived as an effort to develop a manual for nonprofit boards, the idea quickly evolved into an opportunity to enrich the nonprofit sector outside of the JLC with mentoring and skill building.

In preparation for the project, a survey was conducted to gain an understanding of how Project CON:CERN could be of the utmost value to the Chicago nonprofit community. Allison said she knew the project would make an impact when one of the survey responders reported feeling "helped and counseled after only taking the survey." The responder "felt like he had received consulting help that they would normally have paid for."

In 2004, Project CON:CERN received the Association of Junior Leagues International's Community Impact Award. The project is still going strong today, with a different group of organizations being helped by the project each year. Allison stated, "we help the organization build its capacity, rather than expand their direct service offerings." She believed that "it's a new way to think about helping the community—changing with the times and being flexible to community needs. It's the same thread that our country, our city, our community was built on. We're pulling together to help one another. Project CON:CERN helps strengthen the organizations that are working to strengthen their neighborhoods."

The project focuses on five main areas: marketing, strategy, board development, fundraising, and volunteer management, and each partner agency chooses one area as their focus for the year. Networking also plays a key role in Project CON:CERN's community commitment. In addition to providing consulting services, the project hosts two nonprofit networking breakfasts annually, where nonprofit practitioners share their expertise on a panel, with topics ranging from nonprofit finance to volunteer management. These events provide smaller nonprofits with an affordable opportunity to experience networking and learning forums. Previous participating organizations have included the Better Boys Foundation, Community Counseling Centers of Chicago, Friedman Place, and Helping Hands.

Joy reflected that her experience in founding the project gave her the confidence to step out in a new direction. "I discovered how to connect my work with my service to the greater community and to seek out ways to make a difference." ❖

By Jennifer Pawela and Erin Bonnivier, *topics* Staff Writers

slice of life 1990s

Favorite TV Shows

- *A Different World*
- *Cheers*
- *Full House*
- *The Golden Girls*

Must-Have Appliances

- Camcorder
- Cellular phone
- Laptop computers

Hit Songs

- "I Will Always Love You"–Whitney Houston
- "Smells Like Teen Spirit"–Nirvana

A Children's Place

In 1991, the Junior League of Chicago's long-held tradition of supporting children and promoting healthy lifestyles led to a partnership with Dr. Ram Yogev, director of the pediatric AIDS program at Children's Memorial Hospital. The result of this union eventually led to the founding of The Children's Place Association in Humboldt Park, the first pediatric AIDS home in the Midwest.

> *At a time when AIDS was considered a disease attributed to homosexual behavior and intravenous use, the Junior League of Chicago looked ahead to meet the needs of the many children born with this life-threatening virus.* – "Making a Lasting Impact on the Community"
>
> —*topics* vol. 81, no. 3, 2007

Since its creation in 1991, Children's Place has helped more than 2,000 Chicago area children and adults. The Association has also grown to meet its patients' needs by expanding its services to include far more than progressive pediatric care alone—family and community services, foster care and adoption, early childhood care, 24-hour nursing, specialized day care, summer camp, learning centers, and supportive housing are also now available.

Recently, the Children's Place has taken its service and care overseas in an effort to aid children and families affected by HIV/AIDS. Children's Place International now helps children living in the Caribbean and Southern African gain health, skill sets, and confidence to escape the cycle of poverty. ❖

By Jennifer Pawela, *topics* Staff Writer

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CHICAGO

TOPICS

VOL. 64, NO. 6, MARCH 1991

Focus on Community Council: Health Issues Impact Area

AIDS Babies Get Help from Project LEAD

Project LEAD's (Leadership Experience and Development) West Side YWCA location donated over $450.00 of hard-earned cash to The Children's Place Association, a new facility being created for the housing and care of babies born HIV positive.

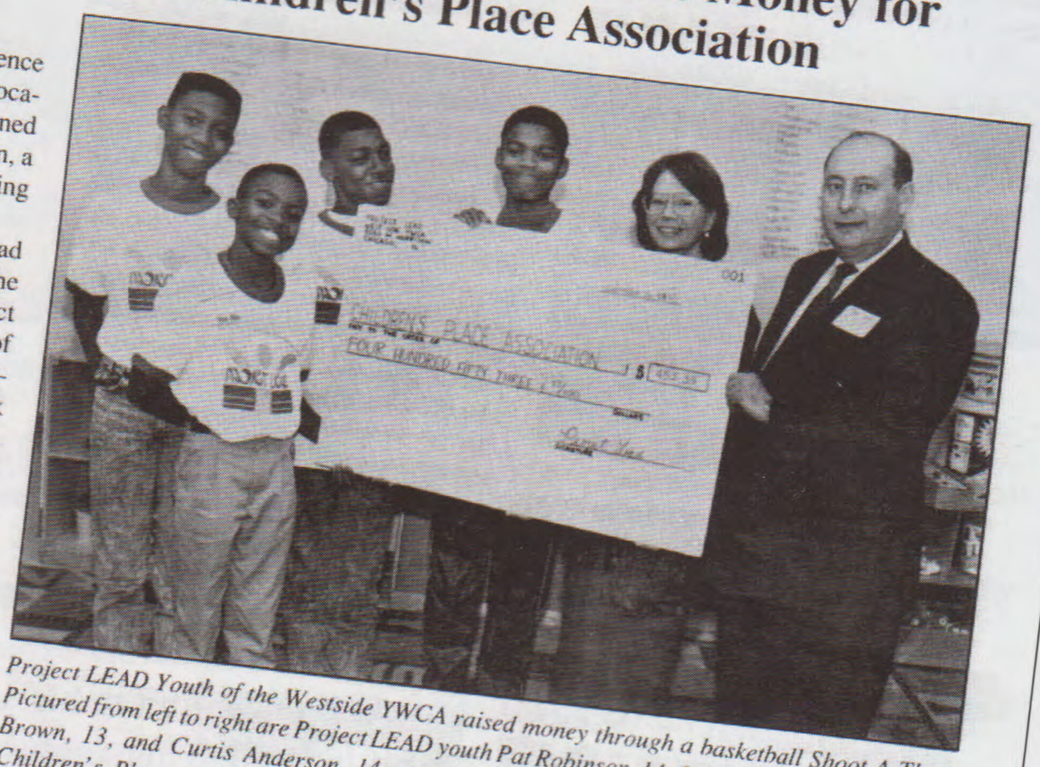
In May 1990, the YWCA Project Lead team held a Basketball Shoot-A-Thon at the Garfield Park Gymnasium. The Project LEAD youth got pledges for the number of free-throw baskets they made out of 50 attempts. Their efforts paid off and the check was recently presented to Kathy Krieger, Executive Director, and Robert Bale, Chairman of the Board for The Children's Place Association.

Project LEAD began with a leadership conference outside of the city. A National Leadership Trainer was hired to teach leadership skills and to promote camaraderie. There are four teams participating in the program this year and they are busy completing their Community Needs Assessment from which they will design and complete at least one community project before May 1991. Most of the teams meet once a week to plan their projects, which may involve fundraising or requesting donations from a corporation. Throughout the year, the teams all meet together monthly to sort out successes and ideas to make their projects work. The program ends in the spring, with another Leadership Conference outside the city. A second dose of skill building is taught and realizations are made from the community projects and their preparations.

The primary focus of Project LEAD is to build self-esteem and leadership skills through positive reinforcement brought by the production of community service projects completely designed by the youth. The Junior League and community adults act as mentors to the youth on the teams.

Carolyn Berkey, Chairman

Project LEAD Youth Raise Money for The Children's Place Association



Project LEAD Youth of the Westside YWCA raised money through a basketball Shoot-A-Thon. Pictured from left to right are Project LEAD youth Pat Robinson, 14, Currie Upchurch, 13, Dante Brown, 13, and Curtis Anderson, 14; as well as Cathy Krieger, Executive Director of The Children's Place Association, and Robert Bale, Board Chairman for The Children's Place Association.



Jamie Freveletti, Dave Galowich, Meredith Emerson, Karen Graham, Peter Kanaris and Pauline Schultz enjoy Soirée on the Shore! (Story & photos on page 6).

The Children's Place Association regularly made *topics* front-page news throughout the decade.

Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $112,900
- Cost of a car $11,300
- Salary $21,208

National Figures

- Jennifer Aniston–Actress
- Mariah Carey–Singer
- Will Smith–Rapper/Actor

Reading Material

- *Martha Stewart Living*
- *Sassy*
- *Wired*

Next Steps for Next Step



JLC Associates Zenja Vaughn and Angela Brooks chatted with attendees of a special Next Step Thanksgiving celebration in 2007.

Many JLC projects have been given back to the community and have evolved since the Junior League has ceased official involvement. One such program is Next Step for Teen Moms, a Junior League of Chicago Signature Project aimed at helping teen mothers with one child to commit to higher education and development of career goals before having another child. The project was started through a partnership between the Junior League of Chicago and the University of Chicago's Department of Pediatrics, and was transitioned to the Chicago Child Care Society in 2010.

Diane Deaderick with the Chicago Childcare Society has been carrying on the legacy of Next Step since then. A recent interview with Diane reflected the impact that the League had on the women in the program as well as some of the progress the program has made. To name a few:

- The program has grown from 20 students to 100 students and from 1 staff member to 3 staff members.
- In 2006, University of Chicago's Dr. Thomas Keller developed a group mentoring model to prevent attrition.
- The program started working with teen fathers in 2006.
- In 2012 a pilot program began for teen mothers that are currently enrolled in college to help with retention.



Erica Armstrong and Jessie Bartlett participated in the Thanksgiving dinner, which included an etiquette lesson.

Diane also shared the touching success story of a program participant Lillian Harris, who was mentored by a Junior League member. Lillian not only completed her undergraduate degree, but she also received a master's degree in social work from the University of Chicago and went on to start her own program for adolescent mothers called Advocates for Adolescent Mothers. ❖

By Teresa Guerriero, *topics* Editor-elect

slice of life 2000s

Favorite TV Shows

- *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*
- *Family Guy*
- *How I Met Your Mother*
- *Survivor*

Must-Have Appliances

- Foreman Grill
- iPod
- Sony PlayStation

Hit Songs

- "Hey Ya!"–Outcast
- "Say My Name"–Destiny's Child
- "You're Beautiful"–James Blunt

Joining the Fight Against Childhood Obesity



Kids in the Kitchen participants made some healthy snacks during this 2008-2009 event.

Did you know?

- Illinois ranks #4 in childhood obesity with 30% of Illinois children between the ages of 2 and 5 considered obese
- Kindergarten-aged children in Chicago are overweight at more than twice the national rate
- Approximately 60% of all obese children ages 5 to 10 have at least one cardiovascular disease risk factor (i.e. high cholesterol, triglycerides, insulin or blood pressure)
- Children today are the first generation at risk of having a shorter life expectancy than their parents as childhood obesity and its related complications reach epidemic levels

While childhood obesity is clearly a cause for national concern, Illinois is particularly affected by this epidemic. The women of the Junior League of Chicago recognized this and in the 2000s launched the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative, a long-term signature issue for the League. The initiative is based on the JLC's commitment to advocate on behalf of the "whole child," which the Policy on Early Childhood Education and Care defines as "nurturing a child's physical, cognitive, intellectual, social, emotional, and creative capabilities from birth." The League developed several goal-oriented action items to address this issue:

- **Raise awareness** of the dangers of childhood obesity and highlight potential solutions at multiple levels, including with parents, children, educators, community leaders, policymakers, and within our own organization.
- **Offer direct outreach programs,** including educational forums and legislative advocacy, on behalf of those children already, or at risk of becoming, overweight or obese.
- **Build coalitions with like-minded interest groups** such as Action for Children, Voices for Illinois Children, The Ounce of Prevention Fund, Healthy Schools Campaign, and Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children (CLOCC) to work toward the achievement of common goals.
- **Remain current on evolving issues** and research by monitoring proposed and enacted policies of organizations such as the Illinois State Board of Education and the National Conference of State Legislators.
- **Build relationships with the appropriate elected and appointed officials to facilitate our advocacy efforts** and monitor ongoing legislation at local, state, and federal levels.

These goals are represented in current community projects such as Health STARRS, Health Train and Kids in the Kitchen. Through such programs, the Junior League of Chicago aims to relate to children by making healthy lifestyles fun and exciting.

Check out the Kids in the Kitchen website at http://kidsinthekitchen.ajli.org to find out more about the national program. ❖

By Teresa Guerriero, *topics* Editor-elect

The Past (and Future) of the JLC Online



Designer's conception of the new look for *topics*.

"I've been asked, 'Why the emphasis on the Internet?' The Internet is a common language any computer can speak, and is accessible from any place where a phone jack can be found," explained former JLC President **Peggy Bodine** in a 2001 *topics* article.

The Internet has become such a part of everyday life that it is hard to remember just a short time ago when its very existence was a topic of conversation. In the early 2000s, the Junior League of Chicago even had a "Dot Org" project centered around the renovation of the League's website, and this trend continued with a 2006 initiative to give the site a facelift.

Nearly every *topics* issue from that time included articles addressing the brave new online world, including poems singing its praises, and detailed instructions on how to create a free email account. There was no mention of the now ubiquitous Gmail—as it hadn't yet been created—but Lycos.com and Excite.com were top suggestions.

The JLC's next venture into this ever-changing medium is to move *topics* to an online magazine format with continuously updated stories. No longer will League members and friends need to wait months to see the latest happenings in our organization! Development is currently in place, and the new "Topics & Trends" is scheduled to debut in early summer 2013. ❖

By Teresa Guerriero, *topics* Editor-elect

Cost of Living

- Cost of a home $169,000
- Cost of a car $23,000
- Salary $40,857

National Figures

- Eminem–Rapper
- Tom Cruise–Actor
- J.K. Rowling–Author

Reading Material

- *The Huffington Post*
- *Lucky*
- *Real Simple*