



News from The Big Sister League

www.bigsisterleague.org

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

By Kathleen McIntosh

I get calls almost daily from our long-time supporters asking me, "How are things going?" Well, I'm proud to say that things are going great! Both houses are close to full. We have a brand new staff, all of whom have at least a Bachelor's degree and many working towards their Masters in either social work or psychology.

Mary McAfee has come back to help direct the staff and programs. She has also been working on a CDBG grant through the city. This month she secured over \$90,000 in funding for the renovation of the kitchens at both houses. By the first of the year we hope to start on the construction process.

We have a long ways to go and, like every other organization, the recession has hit us hard. It increases the amount of women who want to live at our houses, but it decreases the donations with which we support our programs.

I hope that as the holidays grow near, you will think about ways in which to help the ladies who live with us. Monetary donations go to help pay for our staff, worker's comp, insurance, and the thousands of other things it takes to keep our homes up and running. Donations of food go straight to our cooks in the kitchens. Several people this summer brought by fresh fruits and vegetables. I can assure you that none of it went to waste and it was all delicious. Thank you so much for your support. We couldn't have made it through without you!

Housing



Both of our homes are nearly full and are home to almost 30 women. This is Jacqueline's story, who lives at our 4th Avenue Home: Greetings! I am a second-generation San Diegan, and came "home" after living in Los Angeles and New York City for a combined total of over 30 plus years. I love to brag about the fact that I'm the oldest of nine children (also San Diegans), and that my paternal grandfather lived to be 107 years old and his wife 96 years old. Also, my maternal grandfather lived to be 96 years old and his wife 90 years. I guess I'll live to be at least 100.

Before coming back to San Diego, I worked in the entertainment field for most of the 30 plus years as a casting director and producer. I am still working in that field from time to time in San Diego.

I have lived at Big Sisters for almost two years, during which I have found the experience overall to be a good one. I have made many friends among the members and have enjoyed the staff immensely. The biggest thing I have gotten from Big Sisters, is that it has provided a safe environment in a great neighborhood in a beautiful home. I feel that when I transition back on my own, I will have all the tools necessary, i.e., being compliant about taking my own meds (I have been hospitalized off and on for about a year), and know that my diagnosis is not a hindrance but a way to let people know that I can function in society as someone with a mental diagnosis. (Although I feel that many people who are considered 'normal' are just undiagnosed-smile!)

I thank Big Sisters for giving me a new outlook on life and an enjoyable and doable one.

2010 Donors

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Thanks! We could not have made it without you!

Wish List

There are so many simple ways you can help! Please review our wish list items. If you can contribute, please contact executived@bigsisterleague.org

- Paper products (toilet paper/paper towels)
- Cleaning Supplies
- Food (meats, veggies and fruit appreciated)
- Plastic zippered mattress covers (twin)
- NEW twin size sheet sets
- Items to raffle off for Big and Little sister events (such as movie or park tickets)

Mentoring

The mentor program had its annual picnic last month. The girls had a blast eating pizza, making sno-cones and cotton candy, decorating their own personal tote bags and listening to music. They also received new backpacks full of school supplies. A special thanks to Bronx Pizza for donating a gift certificate to us and providing us with great food. Next event: Halloween!



Great pizza!

Relaxing with the new backpacks!



Volunteers Needed!

We are always looking for women who would like to become "Big Sisters" to mentor a young girl age 6-17 in need of a positive female role model! Contact bslmentor@gmail.com for more info.

Interested in fundraising or public relations? Then join our development committee, which meets once per month to help raise funds to ensure we continue to provide quality services.