

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

244 Dayton street
Hamilton, Ohio 45011

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

www.ywcahamilton.com

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

October is Domestic Violence Awareness month.

Oct. 20 Board Meeting, 5:30 pm

Oct. 28 Outstanding Women of Achievement Luncheon
and Awards Ceremony, 11:30 am, Courtyard by
Marriott (Reservation form enclosed.)

Nov. 4-6 YWCA Great Lakes Alliance, Chicago

Nov. 24 YWCA Board Meeting, 5:30 pm

Dec. 4 Festival of Trees Gala, 7:00 -11:00 pm at the YWCA

Dec. 6 German Village Christmas Walk

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empowering women

Autumn 2009

Serving Butler County Since 1900

the ywca news

24th Annual Salute to

Outstanding Women of Achievement

YWCA President Lee Sanders invites the community to celebrate with us at a luncheon and award ceremony as we recognize these five extraordinary women and their contributions to Butler County.

Wednesday, October 28 • 11:30 a.m.

Courtyard by Marriott, Hamilton

RESERVATIONS MAY BE MADE BY CALLING 856-9800 OR
BY SUBMITTING THE ENCLOSED ORDER FORM.

- Carla Fiehrer
- Nancy Belew Follmer
- Lauren Marsh
- Margestine Smiley
- Karen Underwood Kramer

Each of these outstanding women has a passion to make a difference. Their accomplishments are impressive, as you will find in the following highlights on page 2.

Farewell
and Thank You...



Dear friends,

Since June, 2000, I have had the marvelous opportunity of guiding our 109 year old organization as we live our mission of eliminating racism and empowering women. With pride in our many significant achievements and faith in our dedicated Board of Directors and talented staff, I am now announcing my upcoming retirement from the YWCA.

I will retire at the end of 2009, with more than nine and a half years of service to the YWCA of Hamilton and a career of nearly 45 years in human service and the Social Work profession, both here in Butler County and in New York City.

I hope to have the opportunity this Fall to thank many of you in person for your friendship, support, and faith in me that allowed me to bring our beloved YWCA into the 21st Century in a strong position. And here we are – strong, focused, even “fearless”, to take a word from the YWCA USA motto – “Strong alone; fearless together.”

President Lee Sanders and the other excellent leaders on our Board of Directors, are undertaking the search process to find my replacement. The Search Committee, chaired by Board Member Nadine Hill, has posted a detailed YWCA Executive Director Position Description on our website, and we hope that our friends and community leaders are steering strong professionals to us for consideration as candidates for the position.

I can promise that my successor will find an exciting, challenging, and professionally rewarding job, and an opportunity to build on our strengths to take the YWCA further into the 21st Century

(continued on page 5)

YWCA

244 Dayton St.
Hamilton, Ohio 45011
513-856-9800
513-856-9803 Fax
www.ywcahamilton.com

YWCA

2009-2010
Board of Directors

President
Lee Sanders

Vice-President
Regina Johnson-Phillips

Secretary
Kathy Dudley

Treasurer
Karen Baker

Pat Camacho

Ann Fiehrer Flaig

Margot Halcomb

Nadine Hill

Deloris Rome Hudson

Wanza Jackson

Ericca Keith

Nancy O'Neill

Victoria Ryan

Mary St. John

▲ ▲ ▲

Executive Director
Sibyl A. Miller
LMSW, ACSW

▲ ▲ ▲

Newsletter Editor
Mary Glasmeier

109 YEARS OF CARING FOR
BUTLER COUNTY WOMEN AND FAMILIES!



SPECIAL PROGRAMS
for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

featuring

OUR DOVE HOUSE STAFF
and Domestic Violence Survivors

will be shown on

TVHamilton and TVMiddletown

starting in October

The Dove House Crisis Line
1-800-618-6523 or 863-7099

is available to all, 24 hours a day, for help and guidance



Christmas Greens &
Poinsettia Sale

The YWCA Family Literacy Program is already preparing for the holidays. We are proud to continue a tradition that has been a part of the YWCA for many years. We will once again have our greens and poinsettia sale. Wreaths, roping, wall hangings, and poinsettias of all sizes and colors will be sold.

The sale will begin in October, and the items will be here in time for the holidays. If you are a member of a church or an organization that purchases poinsettias over the holidays, we will be happy to supply your needs. The proceeds go to the YWCA Literacy Program. ▲

For more information, an order form, or to place an order, please call Nancy Schwab at 856-9800.

Outstanding Women (continued from pg. 1)

Carla Fiehrer



Nancy Belew Follmer



Lauren Marsh



Margestine Smiley



Karen Underwood Kramer

Carla Fiehrer

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, to all the people you can, as long as you can." By John Wesley

When you meet Carla, you get a strong impression of warmth and energy simultaneously. Her warmth and kindness are immediately noticeable in her graciousness and attention, yet she bristles with energy ready to pounce on her next project.

Her achievements are evidence of this energy and caring. In 1984, she began her volunteer services at St. Peter in Chains Catholic Church as a eucharistic minister and lector, a member of PTO, Education Commission, and Parish Council of which she became president. When her children began attending Badin High School, Carla became a member of the Parent Group and the Development Board.

During this time she began to expand her volunteer services to the community. She served as a CASA worker with Parachute; was a member of Class 6 of Leadership Hamilton; a member of the Butler County Courthouse Restoration Committee; and served as an Ambassador with the Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce.

Her next phase of volunteering focused on Hamilton. She served as Treasurer of the Hamilton Special Improvement District and remains as an active member; and joined the City of Hamilton Vision 2020, including Chair of Governance Committee and Chair of the Image Committee in the past ten years. She then chaired the Charter Review Committee for the City of Hamilton and successfully passed the first rewrite ever of Hamilton's City Charter.

In 2006, she began serving as President on the YWCA Board of Directors, and was a member of Hamilton Rotary Club, PEO, and

the 5th Academy Class of the Hamilton Police Department Citizens' Police Academy. The Commissioners appointed Carla to the Butler County Children's Task Force investigating the tragic death of Marcus Fiesel.

As if this was not all enough, Carla decided to run for Hamilton City Council – and was elected. During her term she as served on the Boards for Emergency Money Fund, SELF, and Re-Discover Hamilton, and is Chair of the 2009 Butler County Heart Walk and the Lincoln in Hamilton Committee.

Somehow she has found time for her five children, five grandchildren, and husband Larry in their lovely Hamilton home.

Nancy Belew Follmer

"We have a responsibility to give back. Besides, the Lord expects us to take care of one another and leave the world a little brighter."

Nancy's family will attest that her life has been characterized by selflessness, and caring for and serving others, for which her family has a history. She was a faithful caregiver for her late husband and parents during their illnesses. She is always ready to lend a hand with someone who needs help, such as taking elderly friends to their appointments and visiting shut-ins and patients in hospitals. She has delivered Colonial Meals on Wheels for eight years.

An active member of First Baptist Church, she was Chair of the Deaconess Board and Coordinator of Funeral Dinners. These dinners are a long-time tradition at First Baptist. New Life Baptist Mission also benefited from Nancy's passion to help.

Nancy recently retired from 31 years of

service in the Lakota School district as a teacher for kindergarten, 3rd grade, reading, gifted, and then principal. Testimonials upon her retirement proved that she had touched and inspired many.

She has continued her interest in education by serving as president and membership chair of the Butler County Retired Teachers' Association, and was co-facilitator of the Christian Authors Book Club.

In the community, Nancy has served as member, chair, and secretary on the Board of Directors of Aurgroup Credit Union for the past 25 years. Through the Hamilton Community Foundation, she has established a fund in memory of her husband. Nancy was a past Junior Achievement Board member, and is Advisory Board Chair for Heritage Hall Museum of The Butler County Historical Society.

Nancy resides in Hamilton, has two grown stepdaughters and 2 granddaughters.

Lauren Marsh

"I believe in doing what you love and loving what you do. I can't believe I'm being recognized for it."

Lauren has understood service since she was a child. As a young child, she organized neighborhood cleanups. As a teen, she traveled to Jamaica for an inter-parish ministry mission trip and worked as a summer camp counselor for the Cincinnati Recreation Commission serving inner-city children. Most recently, her family opened their home to an AFS exchange student as well as young women from all over the world in the Au Pair in America Program.

Lauren is a Healthcare Chaplain and served for some years at the old Mercy Hospital in Hamilton. In that capacity, she

(continued on page 3)

**A Letter from Lee Sanders**

YWCA Board President

Dear Friends and Members of the YWCA,

Happy Autumn! I am both honored and pleased to be serving as the president of the board of directors for the 2009-10 program year. My admiration for the staff of the YWCA and the work it does continues to grow. Our new program year is now underway, and I invite you to learn more about the workings of the YWCA and to participate in ways that work for you. As you can guess, the need for our programs is especially great in times such as the current economic downturn. The programs include the Dove House Shelters in both Hamilton and Middletown for abused women and their children, the growing literacy program, housing in our beautiful historic building with the option of attending the Culinary School on-site, and a variety of other opportunities designed to further the national as well as local goals of empowering women and eliminating racism.

The programs at the YWCA have been energized and ably led for most of the past decade by an outstanding

woman, our executive director Sibyl Miller. Sibyl possesses the best combination of abilities I can imagine for this job—she has counseling skills and experience and a gentle toughness that seeks to hold clients responsible for their own lives while supporting their efforts, and she has a business acumen that has helped stabilize the fiscal situation of the YWCA and give it a solid foundation for future work. Many of you may have heard that Sibyl has decided to retire at the end of this calendar year. As much as that pains all of us, we agree that Sibyl certainly deserves retirement, although we suspect she will never stop working toward empowering women and eliminating racism! A search has begun to find a new executive director, but we will never find anyone to "take her place." There will be opportunities throughout the fall for you to meet with Sibyl at various events to thank her personally for her efforts and energy on behalf of the YWCA.

Sibyl has built an incredible staff, all of whom are dedicated to the mission of the YWCA. They are all highly capable and caring, and will make the transition to new leadership easy for a new director. We are truly blessed to have such an excellent staff! (Did you know that the YWCA employs about 40 people?!)

The fall is a special time of year for the YWCA. In late October, we will recognize five Outstanding Women of Achievement from Butler County. The luncheon will be

held at the Courtyard by Marriott on October 28, and will be a celebration of the lives and work of these fine citizens of our area. I always leave the luncheon inspired by how much good there is in the world, by the opportunities that exist for sharing, and by the people who take those opportunities to make Butler County a better place to live. You'll read about this year's honorees elsewhere in the newsletter. Also in the fall (early December) will be the Festival of Trees. For a second year, the beautifully decorated trees will grace the public spaces of the YWCA and the money made in their sale will benefit our programs. Look for more information in this and upcoming communications.

Over the next year, I hope you will seek out concrete ways in which you can offer your own special gifts to the YWCA and to the women we serve. The first opportunity is to become a member if you have not yet done so, and the second is to attend the October luncheon to honor our special women of achievement. If you are able to attend the latter, you will leave with a new sense of hope about humanity!

I wish all of you a beautiful and fulfilling Fall, and look forward to seeing you at one of the upcoming events.

Sincerely,

Lee K. Sanders, President of the Board of Directors
785-3228, sanderlk@muohio.edu

Farewell (continued from page 1)

with vitality and relevance. Our mission will gain a new champion to extend our reach and expand our voice. The person who takes over as the Executive Director upon my retirement, will be able to make our mission even more compelling. The YWCA will continue to thrive and serve all of Butler County.

Our achievements and successes over these last nine years, including the extensive \$5.2 million renovation of our beautiful historic building in 2004, have firmly woven the YWCA as a key participant into the fabric of community well being. We are enriching and saving lives and stabilizing and enhancing community life, through our creative and effective programs.

We rescue victims of domestic violence; we protect women recovering from mental illness; we teach illiterate adults and struggling children how to read.

In this serious, often life-saving work, we also manage to enjoy each other – Board, staff, and clients. We celebrate successes and provide comfort and a safe haven in difficult times.

One of our achievements this summer is our renewed accreditation, at the highest possible level by CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities). This valuable credential attests to the excellence of all our business practices and of our mental health services. We

strive for excellence in all our activities, accountability, health/safety matters, fiscal management, and client services. This accreditation verifies that our efforts have hit their mark.

I am very proud of our work and our dedicated staff, and I know they will continue to strive to keep the YWCA a strong and healing presence in our community. It has indeed been a blessing and privilege to serve as our Executive Director. I remain committed to our mission, and I hope all our friends will also remain inspired to support the vital work of the YWCA.

Sincerely,
Sibyl

would "go the extra mile" to make sure discharged patients would have the care and oversight they needed even if she had to call on them at home herself. She knew how to connect people to be sure that everyone was covered. She often made referrals to The Presbyterian Church's Stephen Ministers. (A Stephen minister has been trained to provide one-to-one Christian care to hurting people in and around their congregation.)

Her connection to The Presbyterian Church became more involved. She became Director of The Presby House for Men for 2-3 years and during this time founded the Community Meal Center, a non-profit organization providing free hot meals for those in need. For the past nine years, she has coordinated sit-down meals with accompanying music every Friday for all hungry people (both physically and spiritually), who come through the door. Each week, she plans the meals, gathers the food, and coordinates volunteers from church groups, youth groups, boy/girl scouts, etc., to make it all happen. She directs this program with creativity and fun for the volunteers and the guests. She has brought them together through community.

This year she has added a second weekly meal service at Millville Ave. Church of God and instituted Neighborhood POD (People Over for Dinner) groups joining people together for meals and fellowship in their own homes.

Lauren is currently Chaplain at Mercy Franciscan at Shroder in Hamilton and has been nominated for the Excellence in Mission award for Catholic Health

Partners, Senior Health and Housing, Southwest Region. Last year she joined the Sisters of Mercy as an Associate and takes groups on mission trips to the Sisters of Mercy's orphanage, St. John Bosco Boys' Home in Jamaica. It has taken a special place in her heart. She recruits volunteers and organizes fundraisers for all of the people she serves in these various capacities.

She is an Assistant Scout Master and attends Boy Scout Camp annually. She also holds a state appointed position on the board of Alcohol & Drug Addiction Services.

She has great compassion and the ability to listen and problem solve for people in need.

Lauren resides in Hamilton with her husband Gary and their 3 sons, one of whom is an exchange student in Germany.

Margestine Smiley

"I like people. I like serving. And I like pleasing the Lord."

Ms. Smiley, eighty-seven years old and retired, is known throughout the community as an energetic, positive, and beautiful senior citizen. Her generous acts have been completely selfless and have empowered generations of people - young and old. Ms. Smiley acts out of a heart filled with faith and a belief that lives can be changed.

For decades she has picked up small children and taken them to various activities at her church - Israel Baptist. She has generations of family members to whom she has ministered while transporting them in her car. (Unfortunately, she has stopped driving this year due to health.)

From 1997 to 2007, Ms. Smiley assisted in the Stars reading program at Jefferson Elementary school. She will tell you that children are her love.

Her caring spirit has been felt by numerous families to whom she reached out when they experienced the loss of a loved one. She would go and sit with family members of the bereaved at their homes to help them through their mourning.

People would call her and ask for her assistance because they knew she would come. It did not matter to which church they belonged; she was always ready to serve anyone in need. Her legacy of service is an inspiration to all who meet her.

Karen Underwood Kramer

"Sometimes I feel so strongly that I have to do what I think is right - for a community, a person, or an organization."

We all know Karen Underwood Kramer as part of the founding family of Hamilton's Richard's Pizza. She and her sister, sharp business women, have kept the trademark pizzeria going strong and expanded it to five locations. They employ over 80

local people with the average length of employment being over seven years. That's quite a testament to their business practices and commitment to the community.

With the original location being on Main Street, Karen has become a major player in developing that area and a strong advocate for Hamilton in general. She is tireless in her involvement and passion.

One of Karen's visions for Main Street was Armstead Park. The park project has proven to be a great success, but it required a great deal of work to put it in place. The location was a former gas station, so there were environmental issues to resolve and permits to acquire. Karen had a vision and took a key role in fundraising and moving it forward. The result of her vision culminated with a lovely corner park with a gazebo and a striking and meaningful sculpture that were dedicated in 2005.

Her latest achievement is the organization of the weekly Main Street Marketplace at Armstead Park. The market is a place for local growers to sell their fresh produce and for local handcrafters to offer their goods. Marketplace is open 3- 7 pm each Thursday - convenient for stopping by on your way home from work.

Gary Richards, Director of the Special Improvement District, said, "There would be no Marketplace at Armstead Park if not for Karen Underwood." He added that Karen has the vision and drive to carry a project through to fruition.

Karen is a graduate of Leadership Hamilton, Class 2; on the Board of Zoning Appeals in the City of Hamilton, member and past secretary of Rotary Club, a member of PEO, Chapter CY, and a member of Hamilton Vision 2020 Commission; Board Member of the Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Area Association, the Great Miami Rowing Center, past Board member of Hamilton Community Foundation and Rediscover Hamilton. Karen and her sister Gayle were selected as Chamber of Commerce Small Business Persons of the Year 2000.

Karen resides in Hamilton with her husband Dave Kramer and their two spoiled cats. ▲

Eagle Scout Project Improves YWCA Beauty



Eagle Scout Spencer Stucki has completed a special project to beautify the landscaping and other elements of the YWCA exterior. He obtained all the supplies, gathered volunteers and has made the grounds of the YWCA very inviting and attractive. We are so grateful, Spencer!

His troop, 952 from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, put in over 200 hours of work, with 20 people helping; Bobby Miles and Scott Lovdal were major contributors.

Mark your calendar!

FESTIVAL OF TREES GALA

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4
7:00 - 11:00 PM

ywca
244 Dayton Street, Hamilton, Ohio

