

Where are they now?

**Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore**

"We're much more than camping and cookies," said Sue McClure, CEO of the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore. "Girl Scouts deal with everything from robotics to advocacy. We're girl-led; we talk to those we serve and find out what girls today really need. Our overall vision is to be the premiere organization for girls," said McClure. "And girls need us now more than ever."

Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore was the beneficiary of the 2006 annual CLF Golf Classic. "I can tell you exactly what the donation was and when it was given; I have the big check up on my wall. \$520,000 was given to the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore on June 5, 2006. It's amazing."

Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore try to get as many girls as possible to participate in Summer Day Camp. With the sponsorship endowment established by Charles Lafitte Foundation, any girl from Monmouth County is able to attend Camp regardless of their ability to pay. "When someone does something like that, it's more than mere generosity," says McClure, "It shows that they are trying to make the world a better place."

**Camp Merry Heart**

With the economy in its present state, non-profits like Camp Merry Heart are finding it very difficult to make budget goals. Donations are down nearly 50% this year. As a result, the CLF gift made to Camp Merry Heart is of even greater significance.

Helen Drobis of the Camp said, "This is a very special place. Children confined to a wheelchair are given access to a pool, get to take part in a challenge course, ride zip lines and more. We provide people the experiences that they wouldn't otherwise have." In addition, caregivers are given a much needed respite as their charges find exhilaration and growth.

Beneficiary of the 2007 CLF Golf classic, Camp Merry Heart was able to complete desperately needed repairs and improvements, allowing them to remain open and to continue their work with children and families.

"We hear from 99% of our kids that Camp is one of the most rewarding places for them to be. It's life-changing. Without the Charles Lafitte Foundation, we wouldn't have Camp. We can't say thank you enough to all the people who came to the event and allowed this to happen."

**Jersey Battered Women's Service**

Jersey Battered Women's Service exists to serve victims of domestic violence and abuse, primarily women and children. JBWS helps victims gain safety, perspective, help for their situation and families, and in the process self-respect dignity and inner peace. "I've seen clients come to us at the lowest point in their lives and emerge as self-sufficient and stronger," said Fran Libasci of JBWS.

The Charles Lafitte Foundation presented JBWS with a \$5,000 donation in 2008 for their children's program and later selected them to be the golf outing beneficiary. "I was stunned when we found out that the gift would be in excess of \$500,000. A private gift like this had never come our way. We were suffering as an agency. We were losing government funding and finding many entities had no choice but to cut the funding they extended to us in the past."

In 2009, JBWS is continuing it's work, serving 20% more women and children in their facilities, a number that could likely be higher with more infrastructure and facilities. "I can only hope the Charles Lafitte Foundation understands what the gift has done for us. What that kind of gift can do for a small agency. We're incredibly thankful." Says Libasci.



**CHARLES LAFITTE**  
FOUNDATION

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# A True Home

"One CASA volunteer was working with two boys in placement. As you know, our goal is to find a safe, permanent home for these children. This volunteer took it upon themselves to do some looking and found the boys' father. The father came and took his children home." Says Cindi Van Brunt, Executive Director of CASA, "That's the kind of success story we're all about." In Monmouth County, New Jersey there are 500 children in out of home placement. CASA of Monmouth County serves 172 of those children. CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children of Monmouth County work with children who don't have a safe home environment due to abuse or neglect.

When a child is in foster placement, the case Judge may assign the child to CASA. When a child in out of home placement is assigned to CASA, 90% of them do not re-enter the child welfare system. Staffed by screened and well-trained volunteers, CASA helps children move from the foster system to permanent homes and in doing so, help grant hope for the future.

Making a positive difference in the lives of these children, serving as the advocate for their best interest and welfare takes training, time, an understanding of the court system and caring. Currently, CASA has nearly 80 volunteer case supervisors. That accounts for 172 of the 500 children in out of home placement. "I see us growing in the future, but that requires

more volunteers, more case supervisors. And that takes funding."

"Our agency was given a grant by the Charles Lafitte Foundation. Funding from donations is a key element in helping us provide essential services for children in Monmouth County. But it doesn't stop there," says Van Brunt. "It's obvious that the Foundation cares about this program."

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"In addition to the donation, the Foundation supported our Gala, and has taken part in our Annual Appeal; that is, sponsoring a child for a year. Everyone here is aware of how much [the Citrons] care."

CASA is poised to truly help a child while in out of home placement. "We want to prevent kids from slipping through the cracks. The Charles Lafitte Foundation is helping us do just that."

## Common History, Shared Vision

"We're steadily moving to treating and viewing cancer not as a life-ending disease, but rather a chronic illness," says Frank P. Mascia III, Executive Director of the American Cancer Society in New Jersey. "Through programs and services like the New York City Hope Lodge, Jerome L. Greene Family Center, we're extending life while preserving the quality of life." It's a lofty goal and one that, through the effort of thousands, is coming about.



Mascia, a 17-year veteran with the American Cancer Society, has a stolid hopefulness in speaking of the agency's work. "We're interested in eliminating barriers to treatment. That includes access to care, the quality of care... and seeking more preventative care. Directly, we seek to make the cancer experience tolerable."

The connection between the Charles Lafitte Foundation and the American Cancer Society began when Mascia made the acquaintance of Suzanne Citron as she volunteered with the Society's Jersey Shore region in the 1990s. In the years since, the Citrons have been generous supporters of the Society's Relay For Life of Monmouth County, one of 76 similar events in New Jersey, and have worked hard on behalf of Society in Monmouth County and beyond.

Given their history of a shared commitment to the fight against cancer, it's not surprising that when the American Cancer Society was working to build the New York City Hope Lodge, Jerome L. Greene Family Center, that Mascia and the Society looked to the Citrons and The Charles Lafitte Foundation for support.

The Hope Lodge capital campaign was kicked off with a \$1 million gift from CLF. Used to develop the Communal Kitchen - an epicenter of the Lodge, adjacent to the main greeting area - the gift helped pave the way for the development of the vital facility that provides lodging for people and their loved ones while undergoing treatment for cancer.

One of the 28 such facilities throughout the U.S., the New York City Hope Lodge offers free housing for cancer patients and a caregiver for the entirety of their treatment. Patients often live far from treatment centers and the logistical and financial implications of travel, compounded with dealing with the disease and the emotional weight that comes with it, can be overwhelming. The Hope Lodge exists to remove those concerns and to provide a footing in an uncertain and exceedingly difficult time.

Yearly providing 32,000 nights of accommodations and a safe, welcoming place to those facing cancer treatment, the Hope Lodge is more than aptly named.

"I've known the Citrons for some time. We have much in common," says Mascia, "None more important than the desire to eliminate cancer as a major health threat. The Charles Lafitte Foundation recognized the need and the progressive approach of the American Cancer Society - for both treatment and research - and moved to make the dream of the Hope Lodge reality."

The NYC Hope Lodge facility formally opened to the public in March of 2008, a year notable for the dramatic shift in the economy. Mascia observed, "It's wonderful that through challenging economic times that relationships transcend these barriers. The Citrons have been steadfast. I could not be more grateful."

For more information on the New York City Hope Lodge, visit: [cancer.org](http://cancer.org)

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE

CHARLES LAFITTE FOUNDATION

# lafitte™

**As we patiently await the return of warm spring weather, it will soon be time to enjoy another wonderful afternoon enjoying the Charles Lafitte Golf Classic.**

We look forward to this grand tradition every year, not only because we get to spend some time with those we love and respect, but also because that together, we are all making a difference in so many lives.

Our 2008 event enabled the Foundation to give hope to hundreds of children in the gift to the Jersey Battered Women's Service. More than \$500,000, the gift made a watershed impact in the life of the organization. Not only is JBWS able to continue their work, they are able to provide a more comprehensive service and to extend assistance to more mothers and children. This is a perfect example of why we exist as a Foundation.

We are greatly moved that all of those who take part in CLF's Golf Classic are inspired to make each year more successful than the last. It's only thanks to people like you that the CLF has been able to make a significant annual donation to organizations like Camp Merry Heart, The Monmouth Council of Girl Scouts, Deirdre's House, Happiness is Camping, Jersey Battered Women's Service and The Deborah Foundation.

Saying thank you for the commitment you have made to CLF beneficiaries and our annual golf tournament over the last seven years doesn't begin to express our gratitude. You are the driving force that is helping to fulfill our mission of empowering individuals to help themselves and others around them lead healthy, satisfying and enriched lives. Your continued dedication is inspiring to us all, and we thank you for your endless caring and generosity.

We hope you enjoy this issue of our newsletter. It is filled with inspiring stories and information about the impact your contributions and constant support of CLF are making, as well as important news about the upcoming Golf Classic. Together, we can make this year the best in the CLF's history and continue to make a difference in the years to come.

Thank you!  
Sincerely,  
Suzanne & Jeffrey Citron

**Past Golf Classic Beneficiaries:**

The Deborah Foundation  
Happiness is Camping  
Deirdre's House  
Monmouth Council of Girl Scouts  
Camp Merry Heart  
Jersey Battered Women's Service, Inc.

## Earning Their Wings

When former Franciscan friar Bill Woodward sold his ambulance company and took up flying, he had no idea he was taking the first steps in an adventure that would transform the lives of thousands.

**Angel Flight NE** transports patients for critical medical care free of charge. "You'll never pay a dime, be it two flights or 2,000," says Woodward.

More than 10 years, innumerable miles later, Angel Flight has 1,000 volunteer pilots who often donate the use of their planes, pay for their own fuel and take the time to transport families to and from treatment.

"70% of our flights are taking people to outpatient cancer treatment. 54% of people dealing with catastrophic healthcare costs end up going into bankruptcy. It's devastating. 37% of our flights are for children. Think about it, your nerves, your finances, your hope is shot," says Woodward, empathetically.

**"...I've done a lot of things... but I know that this is the most important thing I have ever done in my life."**

"You will move heaven and earth to save your child. Then you hear about a new treatment but you have to be in a city hundreds of miles away three times a week. When we get to say to that parent, 'Just worry about taking care of your baby,' they know their prayers have been answered. The healing that takes place is phenomenal."

Woodward is unabashed about his motivations and speaks freely about them. "We're all called to be instrument's of God's voice. He shows his presence in our life through each other. I understand this. Still, I didn't anticipate the transformative effect this work would have on the pilots themselves."

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Woodward recounts a phone call he received from pilot after his first flight. "He is talking to me and he gets choked up and tells me, 'I'm 66. I've done alot of things... but I know that this is the most important thing I have ever done in my life.'"

When the pilot landed, he carried the child passenger, walking alongside the child's mother. Turning back to return to his plane, he began to get emotional. Once inside the cockpit, he was unable to take off because of his tears. He was on the ground for 30 minutes, crying.

"He wanted to know why that happened. I told him, 'God called you, very quietly, asking you to use your gifts and you responded. When you cried, it was because you had a divine religious experience.'"



**"What do we do?  
One word...  
we provide  
people Hope."**



Even with volunteer pilots and a strong network of affiliations, there is a good deal of cost and challenge to carry on the work of Angel Flight. "The Charles Lafitte Foundation came to us. We were given a \$25,000 grant. I was stunned."

Donations like this quite literally keep people alive. Perhaps in more ways than one. "Because of this," says Woodward, "I can tell those we assist that we will be here, we will take care of you." 🌱

## Life Imitates Art

**"We become successful  
when we empower  
artists to become  
self-sustaining."**

Says Sandy Taylor, Arts Education Director for Monmouth County Arts Council. Thirty five years of working with artists have paved the way for an organization that has built the infrastructure to assist artists and the flexibility to make it work.

Engaging young artists in visual arts, music, dance, voice, filmmaking, acting and more the Festival yields performances by more than 25 groups of dancers, and 600-plus art pieces. The students get real value and perspective on being an artist. More than opportunity, it's a challenge



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"We position ourselves to be a resource for artists. We help organize and support more than 70 artists groups, and function as a grant resource as well." Taylor continues, "we have an online newsletter, a registry of local artists and we help them promote their work, all for a \$35 a year membership." Doing the work most artists are unable to do themselves, Monmouth Arts enables the arts to thrive.

**This is no more apparent  
than at the Teen Arts Festival  
held annually at Brookdale  
Community College. The Arts  
Festival brought out 1900  
teens ages 13 to 19 over 12  
days. The Arts Festival is an  
investment into the kids and  
the future of the arts.**

with professional artists running workshops and holding critiques. Rather than a pat on the back and a fledgling, "good job, you're very talented," young artists get a real-world, no-holds barred assessment of their work. This is essential for growth and likely a good reason why the Festival has continued to grow.

The Charles Lafitte Foundation awarded Monmouth County Arts Council a grant to the Teen Arts Education program. "In times like these, this kind of generosity makes a difference. Without the Council, the arts would suffer. Let's face it: We're all happier people when you do what you love to do. Helping the arts flourish enables all of us to flourish." says Taylor. 🌱

## Best Friends

Gloria Gilbert Stoga was inspired by a veterinarian in Florida who thought that inmates would be perfect candidates to raise service dogs. After much deliberation, she left her position in Mayor Rudy Giuliani's office to found Puppies Behind Bars.



**"Ten years from now,  
my hope is that we will  
have no more wounded  
warriors to care for; I  
hope that our mission  
can change as conflict  
winds down. Our core  
mission is the same, how-  
ever: to train the best  
quality working dogs. Our  
work may change, but  
the quality cannot."**



Successful beyond expectation or belief, it didn't surprise Stoga. "I had no background in dog training nor correction's but we had made a commitment to this. There was no question it would succeed."

Puppies Behind Bars (PBB) trains dogs to assist the disabled, serve as explosive detection dogs, or provide companionship to veterans. PBB pays for all costs involved with training the dogs, including the education of the inmates. The trainers, inmates from medium and maximum security facilities, are not considered trained until 18 months of education and work are complete. The dogs live with them for 16 months with occasional furloughs into more everyday environments to acquaint the dogs to everyday sounds, events and to learn critical skills, such as riding in cars or navigating busy sidewalks.

If the dogs are deemed suitable for service, they go to schools for additional training. If not, they are donated to families with blind children. In any case, they live as companions to those who need them.

When asked the impact of the Charles Lafitte Foundation grant, Stoga said without hesitation,

"Substantial." The grant allows PBB to conduct it's work that profoundly affects the lives of the dog, the inmate and the final recipient of the dog.

The training experience has a tremendously positive effect upon the inmates. The value of the interaction, responsibility and their benefit to society isn't lost upon the trainers even though they are incarcerated. To quote:



**"When I go home, I  
believe I can succeed  
in something. I'm  
human again... it gave  
me a second chance."**

"They're keeping families safe in airports and ferries and that... that makes me really, really proud."

If an inmate is successful in training, they typically will continue training dogs as long as they are within the correctional system. The base of experience contributes to the success of the program as a whole.

Asked how the program will differ in the years to come, Stoga was pragmatic. "We evolve as the world evolves. A post 9-11 world has us training more dogs for bomb detection. After 2006, we have been doing what we can for the enlisted men and women. The working dog has changed as our world has changed."

Change is a vital part of the program. Due to the generosity of The Charles Lafitte Foundation, PBB is well equipped to meet the growing and changing needs of the community. 🌱



## Deirdre's House

In 2005, the CLF presented Deirdre's House with more than \$300,000. "It was a godsend," said Executive Director Maria Savetti, "With that major gift, our entire outlook changed."

According to Savetti, that new-found stability emboldened other donors to contribute to the cause. Beyond creating vital assistance for child victims in Morris County, Deirdre's House is working to create and expand prevention programs centered on education, social services and to be prepared by observing emerging trends in child development.

"We'd received small grants, but nothing to guarantee the future of the center. Put simply," said Savetti, "the Citron's saved the future of the center." 🌱

Deirdre's House was in difficult shape. With perhaps one month's operating budget on hand, the future of their existence was anything but secure. The value of the work they perform, however, was rock solid. Deirdre's House comes to the aid of child victims of abuse and neglect or those who have witnessed domestic violence. Bringing together law enforcement, medical and mental health specialists and onsite counselors, Deirdre's House works to ensure that while abuse may have changed a child's life, it won't define his or her life.

## SAVE THE DATE



**In 2010, the Golf Classic  
returns after a hiatus to Trump  
National Bedminster on June 28  
with a great day of golf, friendly  
competition and the opportunity  
to benefit a great cause.**

The 2008 Charles Lafitte Golf Classic was a fantastic day that raised more than \$500,000 to benefit The Jersey Battered Women's Services.