



**Perspectives** *by Vicki Tucci, Esq., Circuit Director*

Guardians and other supporters of the GAL Program...first, let me wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year! My hope is that your families, and the children we serve, experience a year filled with love!

The Program staff has been working hard to serve children and support our volunteer GALs, not to mention that recruitment efforts are at an all time high!

The following are some key accomplishments resulting from our efforts over just the last 6 months of 2007:

- Increased advocacy for more children
- Creation of our 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Recruitment Team
- Creation of our 1<sup>st</sup> GAL Mentor Program
- Established relationship with local Kiwanis clubs
- Increased collaboration with other child advocates within the community
- Hosting of the First Annual Dependency Picnic
- A constant flow of media presence & recognition.

The awareness of the Program and excitement of what we do is spreading throughout the community as well!  
All of us here at GAL headquarters are looking forward to witnessing a continuation of this support into 2008!

If you haven't had a chance to stop by the office recently, please visit the next time you are close by. You will notice several changes, including a new reception area with a bulletin wall with valuable information. Mostly, you will notice that new staff has come aboard, and others be sitting in new seats. To help you navigate

the new setup, we have included an updated staff directory.

Finally, please take advantage of the get-togethers and in-service trainings scheduled just for our GALs throughout 2008 (listed within this Newsletter). These have been thoughtfully set to include time with your Director, the GAL staff, and each other. The value of additional training and information sharing will be invaluable!

Also...please consider a seat on the newly created GAL Advisory Board to the Director (explained under "GAL Announcements"). Your wisdom will surely help our Program succeed in reaching our goal to represent 100% of abused & neglected children.

As always, never hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns, and THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR THE CHILDREN!

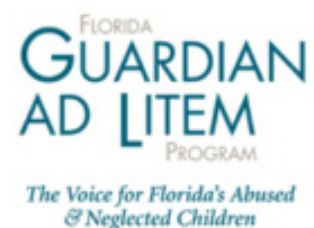
## Greetings from the Recruiting Desk

As the new Director of Recruitment and Training for about two months now, things have been happening at a very fast pace; the following are *just a few* of the highlights:

- A new class of 15 just completed training! The next training class is scheduled to begin the weekend of January 18, 2008. In-service training for children of sexual abuse, which is now REQUIRED by the State for all GAL's, will be held on February 8, 2008; additional training will be held February 22, April 16, and June 13, 2008.
- GAL's – with the parents' permission, consider taking photographs (digital or traditional) of the children when visiting, as photos bring a more personal encounter to the judge, who may never see the children. Keep in mind that ALL PHOTOS are to be property of the Guardian Program and returned with the files upon closure or termination. This is to insure compliance with confidentiality regulations!
- Our recently established GAL Recruitment Team – Ken Thomas – Diversity; Lou Scher, Larry Geller, and John Fuchs – Senior Communities; Bruno Renda and Courtney Brogan – University and College; Kristin Carter – Faith Based Communities; and Alan Mentser – Chairperson – are actively conducting pre-screens and interviews of potential GAL's.
- The GAL Recruitment Team is hosting the GAL Recruiting Challenge: between now and February 29, 2008, the GAL who brings in the most referrals for prescreen interviews that result in the sign up of new volunteers for the January or March training sessions will be rewarded with a great prize! Remember to tell your referral to mention your name for credit!
- The Program is currently engaged in many speaking engagements with Kiwanis and other organizations, which has allowed us to raise the awareness of our purpose and recruit new GAL's; please let Alan know if you have a group or organization that would welcome a speaking engagement regarding the Program and what we do for the children.
- A local website is currently in the works with a release date scheduled for early 2008! Contact Alan or Director Vicki Tucci with any ideas.
- In addition to numerous speaking opportunities, the Program has had media coverage through quite a few local news articles and television reports featuring Shirley Nasby, Peter Braun, National Adoption Day, and our Director Vicki Tucci. Expect to see a piece on WPBTV, Cable Channel 18 in the near future.

Thank you staff, volunteers, and community supporters for your tireless efforts on behalf of the abused and neglected children in Palm Beach County; you alone keep the Program alive and running year after year, and 2008 looks to hold many new and exciting opportunities!

*Alan Mentser*  
Director of Recruitment and Training





### June 2007:

- Peter Braun was interviewed by “Eye on South Florida”, resulting in a successful piece that has helped to bring awareness of the Program to the public.

### October 2007:

On October 20, 2007, the Palm Beach County Guardian Ad Litem Program was invited to appear on the radio show *Aqui Contigo*, broadcast in Spanish on WPSP Spanish Radio 1190 AM. Lourdes Castillo and Bruno Renda were given the honor to represent the Program and answer calls from listeners interested in knowing more about the wonderful work we do.

What we thought would be a short “cameo” on the show developed into a 45-minute “question and answer” session between the audience and us. The success of this first appearance resulted in another invitation to the show at a different time. This will allow us to address a more diverse audience and grant us more exposure in the Latin community, possibly earning us the Spanish-speaking volunteers we need so much.

## GAL IN THE MEDIA

- John Bachman, Channel 12 WPEC TV news reporter, filmed a wonderful news piece on the GAL Program and the need for 500 additional volunteers.
- GAL Shirley Nasby was honored by a child for whom she served as a GAL; the story was written by Emily J. Minor of the *Palm Beach Post* and is displayed in our office for all to see!

### November 2007:

- Circuit Director Vicki Tucci was honored by *Sassee Magazine*, to be distributed throughout Palm Beach County. The story was written by former GAL Samantha Cheste. The article is displayed in our office for all to see and is being distributed throughout the County!
- The PBC National Adoption Day was covered by Channel 5 WPTV, Channel 29 WFLX, Channel 18 WPBTV, Channel 12 WPEC TV, and the *Palm Beach Post*.
- Channel 18 WPBTV interviewed Program staff Katie Rodriguez and Cheryl Baylor and Director of Recruitment Alan Mentser.

## GAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



### Brown Bag Lunch with the Director

Please join Vicki on the first Friday of every month in 2008 for a brown bag lunch. This will be a time where 5 GAL's & Vicki can come together to talk about everything except cases. The first lunch meeting will be held on January 11, 2008 (2<sup>nd</sup> Friday due to the holiday season) from 12:30-1:30 p.m. in Vicki's office. Please RSVP to Lucinda at ext. 6220 to reserve your spot during the year. (Note that the July 2008 lunch will be held on July 11th due to the holiday).

### GAL Roundtable

The first GAL Roundtable will be held on January 25, 2008 (location within the courthouse to be determined) from 12-1:30p.m. The purpose of the Roundtable is to give 10-15 GAL's an opportunity to come together and learn from each other. Please take advantage of this exciting opportunity to share! If successful & desirable, the Roundtables

will be held monthly throughout the year. Please RSVP to Lucinda at ext. 6220 to reserve your spot.

### GAL Advisory Council

Please consider serving in the capacity of a GAL advisor to the Director on the newly created GAL Advisory Council. Council membership will last 60 days to allow many to serve throughout the year. The Council will meet once per month with Vicki to discuss GAL needs and perspectives. The first meeting will be held on January 28, 2008 from 9-11:00 a.m. in Vicki's office. Please RSVP to Lucinda at ext. 6220 to reserve your spot.

FLORIDA  
**GUARDIAN  
AD LITEM**  
PROGRAM

*The Voice for Florida's Abused  
& Neglected Children*

## National Adoption Day a Great Success for 15<sup>th</sup> Circuit

*By Penny Martin, Esq.*

*National Adoption Day Chair*

On Saturday, November 17, 2007, PB County celebrated National Adoption Day. Over two-hundred people came together to participate in the event.

By the end of the day, thirty-two children were placed in new homes!! In addition to lots of smiles, the guests enjoyed a catered brunch from TooJays, gift bag, clowns with balloons and a magic show by Magician Jamie Porter.

Agencies involved in the success of the event included the Guardian Ad Litem Program, Children's Home Society, Foster Children's Project, Child and Family Connections, Department of Children and Families, Clerk of the Court, Trial Court Administration, the Heart Gallery, and the Palm Beach County Bar Association Special Needs of Children Committee, which raised a significant amount of money through sponsorships.

The rewards were great for all who attended. Special thanks to all the volunteers who relentlessly pursue healthy permanence for the children.

### Looking back...

- **July 2007:** Urban Youth Impact Back 2 School Blast: GAL Program staff & volunteers greeted hundreds of children and parents attending this event where they received school supplies, haircuts, lunch and immunizations.
- **August 2007:** In-service Trainings: Over 50 GALs & staff were trained on report writing and sexual abuse issues.
- **September 2007:** First Annual Juvenile Dependency Picnic: GAL staff & volunteers, juvenile judges & magistrate, Legal Aid, DCF, CLS, and conflict attorneys came together for a few hours of fun. A scavenger hunt & hula presentation/lessons were some of the day's highlights.
- **September 2007:** Breakfast with the Judges: A group of GALs attended a breakfast at the Governor's Club hosted by Voices for Children. The GALs had the opportunity to ask questions of our juvenile judges and magistrate.
- **October 2007:** Volunteer Recruitment Team: The PBC GAL Program's first Volunteer Recruitment Team meeting was held where 7 volunteers came together as a group to target specific recruitment efforts within the community!
- **November 2007:** Kiwanis Kickoff Events: GAL staff – Peter Braun, Alan Mentser & Vicki Tucci - attended banquets hosted by the Kiwanis and visited by the Kiwanis Governor & First Lady, Mark & Sharon Taylor.
- **November 2007:** National Adoption Day: The PBC Juvenile Practice Committee hosted this year's event where over 30 foster children were adopted!
- **December 2007:** VFC Holiday Party: Voices for Children hosted a holiday fundraiser at Leila's restaurant to support the GAL Program.
- **December 2007:** GAL Appreciation Holiday Cookies & Cider: The GAL Program hosted our first holiday appreciation for our volunteer GALs. GALs and staff came together for a time of relaxation and fun. The event was co-sponsored by VFC and an anonymous donor.

FLORIDA  
**GUARDIAN  
AD LITEM**  
PROGRAM

*The Voice for Florida's Abused  
& Neglected Children*

## Voices of Children

To all of the wonderful GAL's who contribute so much to Palm Beach County's Children:

As the newly appointed CEO of the not-for-profit Voices for Children (VFC) of Palm Beach County, I would like to share the organization's continuing vision that VFC will make a proactive and positive impact on the various issues that we face in regards to abused, neglected, and abandoned children and their experience in our court system.

VFC has taken an active role in the support of the Guardian Ad Litem Program over the last several years through numerous fundraisers, which are used to aide in the recruitment and retention of Guardians, the ultimate goal being to provide a Guardian for every child, which VFC hopes to achieve over the coming years.

## Friends of Abused Children, Inc.

### *Request for Funds:*

Please make your request for funds by visiting Friends' website at [www.friendspbc.org](http://www.friendspbc.org) and clicking on "Request for Funds" at the top of the home page. On-line submissions allow Friends to process your request faster.

### *Request for Tutoring:*

Friends provides free tutoring for children in your care, and tutoring sites can be arranged anywhere throughout Palm Beach County. Each child receives two one-hour sessions per week for a maximum of 18 months. Please visit [www.friendspbc.org](http://www.friendspbc.org) and click on "Request for Tutoring" for more information and to apply.

### *Friends is pleased to announce the following new Board Members:*

Laurie Briggs, President (paralegal, Searcy Denney et al); Stan Klett Jr., Vice-president (attorney, Rutherford Mulhall); Stan Klett Sr., Treasurer (GAL); Carla Ferrugio, Secretary (board-certified nurse practitioner with Pediatric Associates); Destinie Baker (assistant state attorney, 15th Judicial Circuit);

One of our most recent fundraising events, Celebrity Bartender Night, which was held on October 3, 2007, at Amici's Restaurant in Palm Beach, resulted in a Channel 12 news story featuring the Program's need for additional volunteers. Twelve new volunteers attended the Program's most recent training class as a result of this story. We are thrilled that the event triggered this type of publicity and can only hope that more of the same type of coverage will be given in the future, encouraging others to recognize and support our cause!

Please feel free to contact me at [mmayo07@yahoo.com](mailto:mmayo07@yahoo.com). If you have an interest in participating in one of VFC's committees, please let me know; we can always use your help!

Warmest Regards,  
*Maryann Mayo*, LCSW  
CEO/Voices of Children of Palm Beach County

Joel Levine (certified public accountant, Caler, Donten, Levine, Druker, Porter & Veil); and Jim Sackett (news anchor, WPTV NewsChannel 5).

### *Upcoming Fundraisers:*

#### **"Over The Rainbow" Preview Reception**

*Four Seasons Hotel, Palm Beach*

Please join Friends on Thursday, March 20, 2008, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., for an evening of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, a live auction, and take-home goody bags. Ticket price is \$100.00 per person.

#### **"Third Annual Ironhorse Charity Event" -**

Hosted by Ironhorse Charitable Foundation  
*Ironhorse Country Club, Palm Beach Gardens*  
Please join Ironhorse and Friends for a card (April 2, 2008), tennis (April 4, 2008), golf tournament and cocktail reception (April 7, 2008). Reservations are limited. Ticket price is TBD.

Best Regards,  
*Cory Rubal*  
CL Communications Inc.  
772-283-7792 (office)

FLORIDA  
**GUARDIAN  
AD LITEM**  
PROGRAM

*The Voice for Florida's Abused  
& Neglected Children*

# Congratulations!

To the Program's most recent Graduates



"If we don't stand up for children, then we don't stand for much."

*-Marian Wright Edelman*

Robert Bradley

Verna Brinson

Courtney Calfee

Karen Callies

Kristin Carter

Robert Carter-Stray

Joseph Chase

Adriane Chatterton

Judy Cooper

Jennifer Dean

Magalie Deriphonse

Lista Faircloth

Arnold Glass

Meri Grant

Philip Grant

Irene Greenberg

Beverly Iselin

Alan Jackson

Rachel Kann

Jeana Knickerbocker

Sherman Levie

Michelle Mitchell-Grant Yorker

Alice Mueller

Mary Ann Naas

Kerby Noel

Claudia Osterhaut

Marjorie Schnier

Arlene Schwartz

Celes Smith

Janine Spokoine

Julia Torres

Virginia Vlahos

Koste Vlahos

Joan Woodson

Anne Wottitz

FLORIDA  
**GUARDIAN  
AD LITEM**  
PROGRAM

*The Voice for Florida's Abused  
& Neglected Children*

# Office Directory



<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Phone #</b>	<b>E-Mail Address</b>
Alan Billingsley	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	355-2271	Alan.Billingsley@gal.fl.gov
Alan Mentser	Recruiter/Trainer	355-1149	Alan.Mentser@gal.fl.gov
Amy Bierer	Sr. Prog. Atty.	355-1124	Amy.Bierer@gal.fl.gov
Arelis Dujon	Sr. Sec.	355-1167	arelis.dujon@gal.fl.gov
Ashleigh Barnes	Prog. Atty.	355-1148	Ashleigh.Barnes@gal.fl.gov
Barbara Weber	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	355-2773	barbara.weber@gal.fl.gov
Bill O'Connor	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	355-6160	bill.oconnor@gal.fl.gov
Brad Austwick	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate (Belle Glade)	996-4894	brad.austwick@gal.fl.gov
Celia Lopez	Sr. Sec.	355-3726	celia.lopez@gal.fl.gov
Charles Thompson	Staff Atty.	355-6742	Charles.Thompson@gal.fl.gov
Cheryl Baylor	Case Coord. /Volunteer Sup.	610-8343	cheryl.baylor@gal.fl.gov
Coleen LaCosta	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	355-1549	Coleen.LaCosta@gal.fl.gov
Edna Hixson	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	355-1848	edna.hixson@gal.fl.gov
Eleanor Portnoi	Sr. Sec.	355-4173	Eleanor.Portnoi@gal.fl.gov
Helga Finnigan	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	596-5840	helga.finnigan@gal.fl.gov
Judy Horowitz	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	355-1163	Judith.horowitz@gal.fl.gov
Kara London	Sec. Spec.	355-1849	kara.london@gal.fl.gov
Katherine Rodriguez	Case Coord. /Volunteer Sup.	355-6742	Katherine.Rodriguez@gal.fl.gov
Kayleen Cavanaugh	Case Coord. /Volunteer Sup.	355-6221	kayleen.cavanaugh@gal.fl.gov
Kristin Carter	Trainer/Recruiter Asst.	355-1167	Kristin.carter@gal.fl.gov
Liz Lieber	Case Coord. /Volunteer Sup.	355-1166	liz.lieber@gal.fl.gov
Lourdes Castillo	Sr. Prog. Atty.	355-6225	lourdes.castillo@gal.fl.gov
Lucinda Kyles	HR Liaison	355-6220	lucinda.kyles@gal.fl.gov
Marge Lombarski	Asst. Program Dir.	355-1113	marge.lombarski@gal.fl.gov
Maria Montesinos	Sr. Sec. (Belle Glade)	996-4894	Maria.Montesinos@gal.fl.gov
Marleen Roy	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	355-1825	Marleen.Roy@gal.fl.gov
Nicole Jackson	Prog. Atty.	355-6628	Nicole.Jackson@gal.fl.gov
Pamela L. London	Sr. Sec.	355-2775	Pamela.London@gal.fl.gov
Peter Braun	Case Coord. /Staff Advocate	355-1149	peter.braun@gal.fl.gov
Takara Manning	Data Input Clerk	355-2773	Takara.manning@gal.fl.gov
Tanique Lee	Sr. Prog. Atty.	355-2773	Tanique.Lee@gal.fl.gov
Tonya McCormick	Sr. Prog. Atty. (Belle Glade)	996-4858	Tonya.Mccormick@gal.fl.gov
Tracy Gallion	Sec. Spec.	355-2773	tracy.gallion@gal.fl.gov
Vicki Tucci	Circuit Dir.	355-2773	vicki.tucci@gal.fl.gov
Victoria J. DeRosa	Sec. Spec.	355-2773	victoria.derosa@gal.fl.gov