

ST. LOUIS HEALTHY MARRIAGE COALITION



VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5

JANUARY 2009

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SLHMC

Gloria Lee
John and Kathy Seibel
Aaron and Danae Delano
Halbert Sullivan
Ann Bauer
John and Carol Webster
Ron and Marilyn Sloan
Janis Hoyt
Mayvah and Charles Seng
De-Andrea Blaylock
Manorama & Shanti K. Khinduka
Kamal P. Yadav
Mary Vidakis
Kathleen and Julien Bueno
Rich and Lynn Einig
Thomas and Barbara Hilton
Lutheran Family & Children's Services
Our Lady's Inn
Judy Taylor
Patricia Randall
Daniel Durken OSB
Dan and Laura Benoist
Tom and Barb Bushmann
Lynne Einig
Office of Laity and Family Life
Knott-Chapman
Laura Slay and Associates
Arthur Syndicate, LLC
Minuteman Press
Darrell L. Marks Insurance Agency
The Ink Spot, Inc.
The Cana Institute, LLC
Bilikens
Broadway Oyster Bar
Brunswick Lakeside Lanes
Candy's Candies
D&D Marketing
Dewey's Pizza
Fortel's Pizza Den
KMOX CBS Radio
Missouri Botanical Gardens
Newstead Tower
Pasta House
Real Mex Restaurants
Schlafly Bottleworks
St. Louis College of Pharmacy
Six Flags
The Record Exchange
Vicki Johnson
Jerrica Sherrell
Candace Flynn
Angie Przada
Natalie Edwards
Patrick Gable
Kerri Bonasch
Michele Kukla
Jerry Ekey
Marco Griffero
Denise Hufford
Julie Devoti
Laura Gamache
Cathie Laufretter

2009 BRIDAL EXPO!

The 2009 Bridal Expo was held at the America Center January 10-January 11th. SLHMC was there in full force, as VISTAs volunteers Tawanna Gandy and Caroline Allen worked a booth at the Expo. During the Expo the VISTAs raffled off different gifts for new brides from SLHMC, such as the book "The Five Love Languages", a big hit among winners.



The Bridal Expo provided an excellent opportunity to inform the St. Louis Community about our services. Both VISTAs were pleasantly surprised to learn that many of the engaged couples had already enrolled in Marriage Preparation courses through their churches. Many of the brides took pamphlets from our booth and expressed interest about enrolling in our classes in the future. Overall, it was a great weekend for SLHMC, as we were able to further our message in the community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 7TH- COUPLES RETREAT @
MATTHEW-DICKEY BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB (FOR
MORE INFORMATION CALL 314-351-4590)

FEBRUARY 11TH 2009- SLHMC GOES TO
JEFFERSON CITY FOR BREAKFAST MEETING WITH
LEGISLATORS

FEBRUARY 21ST 2009- EXPLORING
RELATIONSHIPS BOOSTER SESSION 8:30-2PM

FEBRUARY 25TH 2009- CONNECTIONS
TRAINING @ FLO VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
8-4PM

MARCH 5TH 2009- OPEN HOUSE @ SLHMC

Board of Directors

Danae Delano

Blackwell, Sanders, Et al LLP

Erin Ercoline

—A.L.I.V.E

Susan Hannibal

—Office of Laity & Family Life

Valerie Russell

—St. Louis City Dept. of Human
Services

John Seibel

—CPA

Keith Willis, Jr .

Bridget Brennan

—Executive Director

MARRIAGE WEEK 2009!

C
E
L
E
B
R
A
T
E

Originating in the U.K., **Marriage Week** (Feb 7th– Feb 14th) is an annual celebration that was officially launched in the United States in 2002. Marriage Week is a preventative campaign that seeks to highlight the benefits of healthy marriage education. Through church based events and media coverage this week provides a great opportunity to educate

couples on the benefits of an ever improving relationship. Marriage provides the best possible foundation for individuals to build a stable and successful partnership.

The benefits of marriage directly contribute to a secure society and provide the best environment to conceive and raise children. Because marriage is recognized

and valued in all cultures, Marriage Week celebrations will be held all over the world.

Marriage Week is a wonderful reason to participate in relationship education and skills training. This week-long celebration appropriately culminates on the most romantic day of the year, Valentines Day.



This year Marriage Educators throughout the state of Missouri will be celebrating Marriage Week by hosting a breakfast for State Legislators in Jefferson City. This breakfast will be held to educate our legislators about the positive effects healthy marriages have on a state's stability and well-being. Hosted by University of Missouri Extension

Professor David Schramm, this breakfast will be attended by members from the St. Louis Healthy Marriage Coalition, Better Family Life in St. Louis and Ozark Marriage Matters in Springfield. Photos from the Love Nest Photo Shoot will also be on display during this breakfast, demonstrating the value of marriage education in the state of Missouri.

Here are some fun ways to commemorate Marriage Week:

- Celebrate couples who have reached marriage milestones 25, 40, 50 years etc.
- Create a "Ten Most Affordable" (or "most romantic", "most creative" etc.) Marriage Dates list contest for your community.
- Ask religious and civic leaders to acknowledge the importance of marriage and or Marriage Week in their sermons or speeches.
- Hold a "How this marriage has had an impact on my life" or a "Why I think this is a great Marriage" essay contest for children
- Recognize the couple in your community, business, region or state who has been married the longest
- Organize a fundraiser - dance, walkathon, race, bake sale - to purchase marriage education books and tapes and donate them to the public
- Strengthen your own marriage. Read a book, attend a course.

WE HAVE MOVED!!

Despite an icy morning, on December 15th we officially moved to our new office on Laclede. We are delighted with the new space and could not be happier with the location. Every member of our office did a great job packing boxes and we were lucky enough to have a great moving company at our disposal. Within a day we had our office up and running and most of the boxes unpacked.

Many people helped make this a smooth transition and we are grateful for their

assistance. Mary De Frank at the St. Louis Archdiocese and Pastoral Center for providing us with boxes, our great new landlord John McElwain and his associate Marie Plotkin. A special thanks to our other halves, Jerry Shen and Kurt Arthur for their assistance with this move and finally, we would like to thank St. Louis University for their wonderful hospitality the last two years.

A new space brings many new opportunities and we look forward to utiliz-

ing it to the fullest. We plan to show off our great new office on March 5th at an Open House. We would love to see you, so please stop by from 12-2pm!

Our New Address:

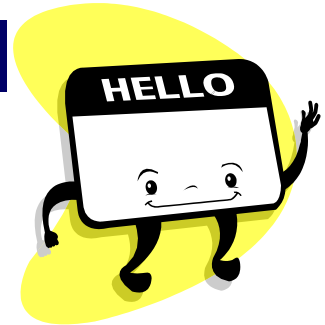
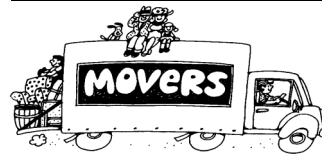
SLHMC

4557 Laclede Ave

St. Louis MO 63108

Phone: 314-361-1222

Fax: 314-361-1555



MEET OUR STAFF :

Bridget Brennan

Executive Director

314.361.2376

bbrennan.slhmc@att.net

Terry Arthur

Financial Manager

314.361.2297

tarthur.slhmc@att.net

Caroline Allen

PR & Program Coordinator/

Americorps *VISTA

314.361.2387

vista2.slhmc@att.net

Tawanna Gandy

Family & Marriage

Coordinator/Americorps

*VISTA

314.361.2887

slhmcvista1@att.net

Madeline Adams

Relationship Educator

314.361.2206

madams.slhmc@att.net

Shalini Sharma

Grant Assistant

314.361.1222

ssharma.slhmc@att.net

NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS!

January 1st marks the first day of 2009 and for many people it is a day to officially change their bad habits. According to the U.S. Government website (USA.gov) America's most popular New Years Resolutions are: "Spend more time with Family and Friends", "Enjoy Life More" and "Help Others". A healthy marriage can directly effect the achievement of each of these resolutions so we decided to seek some advice from an expert -

Susan Hannibal the Chair of our Board of Directors!

Resolution Ideas From Susan

1. Say something both **unnecessary** and **kind** to your spouse each day.
2. Let go of past petty grievances and start fresh in the New Year.
3. Consciously decide that little behaviors or quirks you've found irritating are what make your spouse the unique person they are. Resolve to love them everyday **BECAUSE** of their "specialness", **NOT IN SPITE** of it.
4. Make a weekly date, but remember it doesn't have to cost a fortune, it just has to be time together for each other. Look for ways to have "free fun" together. Have a carpet picnic or find an outdoor concert in a near-by park.
5. Trust your spouse enough to be vulnerable with them. Share a fear or weakness you have and believe that they will keep your confidence and give you strength. Be loving and supportive when your spouse shows you **THEIR** weakness.



**4557 Laclede Ave
St. Louis, MO 63108**

**Phone: 314-361-1222
Fax: 314-361-1555**

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.STL-HEALTHYMARRIAGE.ORG

Promoting & Supporting Healthy Marriage
in the St. Louis Community

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant: 90FE0133/03 Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author (s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The only constant is change! That surely is the motto of the St. Louis Healthy Marriage Coalition.

In case you have lost track, we have moved three times in 2008! The good news is we are getting skilled at packing and one does tend to clean out 'stuff' for each move.

As we settle into our new home where we expect to be for some years to come we would like to express our appreciation to Dr. Jim Gilsinan, and the St. Louis University community for their welcoming hospitality and support services. They truly set us on the path to success.

As we begin the new year of 2009, year three of our Healthy Marriage grant, year two as a partner in the **Healthy Hearts& Homes** grant we continue to explore and discover new venues and connections to bring our Healthy Marriage Educational Programs to the Community. Word is getting out regarding the programs we have to offer and we are being invited to bring our classes to a wider spectrum of the St. Louis area.

A major goal for this year, hopefully in January, will be the launching of our **Healthy Marriage Therapists Referral** program. Licensed therapists who support healthy marriages will be invited to list their contact information on our website. Both the local

chapter of the AAMFT and the State chapter of the NCSW are supporting our project. This will be an excellent extension of our work as couples and individuals seek additional services .

February, will be busy with many classes, workshops and trainings and events scheduled. Andrew and Terri Lyke from Chicago will return to present a "booster" session for couples trained in **Exploring Relationships**, an interactive curriculum which we use at many church sites.

In February we will welcome Joyce Huff from the Dibble Institute to train secondary school educators in the **CONNECTIONS** curriculum.

Grant partners are busy

scheduling and hosting marriage education programs throughout the area.

We are grateful to our many donors, supporters and partners who share our commitment and passion to bringing marriage education skills to our Community.

*~Bridget Brennan
Executive Director*