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Parents and caregivers are best at spotting kids’ changes in mood and behavior. As you interact with them, watch for these signs that your child may need help.

- Withdrawing from others
- Having very low energy
- Appearing disheveled
- Losing interest in favorite activities
- Trouble concentrating; change in academic performance
- Becoming easily irritated or angered
- Changing eating habits
- Changing sleeping patterns
- Crying a lot
- Giving away personal possessions
- Talking about being a burden
- Stealing money from family
- Changing friends or breaking up

Validate their frustrations, fears and feelings; rather than gloss over them.

Keep the conversation flowing by saying things like, “Tell me more about that.”

Trust your judgment. When your child experiences some of these signs, talk it over with a mental health professional. If you suspect anyone is suicidal, call the 988 lifeline any day, any time.

Menninger offers an expanding range of mental health services for adolescents and families. Some services are, or will soon be, covered by insurance.

Talk with a mental health specialist today at 713-275-5400

Check out other tips for parents by scanning the QR code.
The Junior League of Houston, Inc. is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.

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The Woman’s Hospital of Texas has elevated women’s care for 45 years and is committed to a future of doing even more for them. We would like to thank our dedicated nurses, colleagues and physicians for continuing our founding mission of providing unparalleled Woman-first care.

Voted Houston’s best place to have a baby, The Woman’s Hospital of Texas is the city’s first and only hospital solely dedicated to women’s health.
LETTER FROM THE

PRESIDENT

“CHANGING THE WORLD TAKES MORE THAN EVERYTHING ANY ONE PERSON KNOWS, BUT NOT MORE THAN WE KNOW TOGETHER.”

-SIMON SENEK

Spring is a time of transformation and rebirth. We can see this in action as we watch the plants renew their greenery and come into bloom. The Junior League is in a time of transition as well, as we prepare to turn over leadership to the incoming Board of Directors in June.

As I reflect on the past year, I am so proud and amazed at all that this year’s team has accomplished. In so many ways, the League has a pre-pandemic feel to it that seemed hard to imagine even a year ago. The community agencies we partner with have largely returned to normal operations, including hospitals, schools and camps. This provided the opportunity for volunteers to once again serve our community in person where the agencies needed us most and where we could provide meaningful impact. We were especially happy for our provisional members to have the opportunity to return to Texas Children’s Hospital.

Many of our beloved events were back this year as well, including community events like Kids in the Kitchen and Minor League Day. Our Tea Room Special Events saw consistent sell out attendance thanks to the enthusiasm of our members and patrons. And our Tea Room banquet operations are now running at very close to pre-pandemic levels. We celebrated our 75th Annual Charity Ball, Diamond Celebration, which truly lived up to the milestone with a dazzling event raising over $825,000 for our Community Program. And thanks to the generosity of the Houston community, we were also able to add the support of two new Community Partners and four new Community Champions this year.

And yet, through every transition there is opportunity for improvement, and each year as we are “Building A Better Community,” we also look for ways to build a better League. This year our finance leaders researched and implemented process improvements and found opportunities to restructure and optimize aspects of our structure in order to continue our history of being exceptional stewards of the donations entrusted to the League. We are also continuing to evolve to meet the needs of our members, including implementing flexible ways to navigate membership with obligation waivers and opportunities for reduced placement requirements through our League Lite initiative. Our Training and Education team implemented a new general meeting format with live, in-person and on demand options. And our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) team continues to implement changes to keep pace with best practices, including the addition of stand-alone DEI trainings for provisional and transfer members. We also studied our provisional program and revitalized it to meet the needs of the women who are joining our organization.

While there were many memorable events this year, one that stands out and that I know I will always remember is being in the Board Room when the League’s Centennial Anniversary Gift to DePelchin Children’s Center was approved. This $2,000,000 commitment will be used to help fund the new “Junior League of Houston Volunteer Services Building” at DePelchin and will be the largest single gift the League has ever made. Like everything we do, this historic moment was built on work that had taken place for over two years to create a project that will make an impact in the Houston community for years to come.

As I near the conclusion of my time in this role, I am so excited for President-Elect Amanda Hanks Bayles and her outstanding team to begin theirs, and I know that they will work tirelessly to build upon the accomplishments of this year’s leadership. I am honored and grateful to have had the opportunity to serve this organization.

Anne Sears
President
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

“MANY OF US ARE MORE CAPABLE THAN SOME OF US, BUT NONE OF US IS AS CAPABLE AS ALL OF US.”
– Tom Wilson

As members of the Junior League of Houston, we have a shared commitment to meeting the needs of our community and leaving it better than we found it. This commitment is strengthened when we work together and support each other. When thinking about this year’s presidential theme, Better Together, this issue focused on the power of collaboration. Whether it takes the form of mentoring a provisional as she navigates her first year as a League member, committees working tirelessly to honor our upcoming Centennial Anniversary or volunteers coordinating closely with Houston-area organizations for our focus area events, the impact of working together is woven throughout the stories in this Spring 2023 issue.

Our focus area events, in partnership with HISD and Compudopt, allowed us to directly support Children’s Education, our focus area for the year. The Period Positivity event was supported by multiple committees throughout the League. The Focus Area Chairman with collaboration from the Community Outreach Events Committee hosted the event which distributed over 250 Period Preparedness Kits. The contents of the kit were thoughtfully developed by the Volunteers in Evening Workshop (VIEW) Chairman, prepared by VIEW volunteers and decorated by JLH members attending the September General Meeting. In conjunction with Compudopt, the League was able to help distribute 136 laptops, desktops and monitors along with backpacks, laptop accessories and school supplies provided by JLH.

As we draw closer to our Centennial Anniversary in 2025, we continue our 100 Years Later series with a peek into the 1970s. This feature serves as a reminder that we draw from a legacy of women leaders who tackled similar challenges that we face like adapting to the changing needs of the League’s membership and the Houston community.

We have also seen the results of years of planning by the Centennial Anniversary Committee with the announcement of the League’s Centennial Gift to DePelchin Children’s Center. This gift will help support the construction of a new building that will allow DePelchin to expand its community education program and volunteer center.

JLH also celebrated its 75th Annual Charity Ball, Diamond Celebration, with a nod to the gem that symbolizes the strength of the League’s commitment to Houston through its Community Program. The Junior League of Houston also celebrated the anniversary of its partnership with both the Baylor Teen Health Clinic and the Houston Museum of Natural Science, 40 years and 75 years, respectively.

All of these highlighted achievements would not have been possible without the combined efforts of many people. In the spirit of collaboration, I would like to thank the women who dedicated their time and energy to the making of this issue. Thank you to the incredibly responsive and amazing Houston News Writers, Rachel Clark, Claudia Garnica, Elisabeth Netherton and the Houston News Sustainer Writers, Elizabeth Ozden and Steph Magers. Working with you all and reading your work has been a true joy.

Thank you to Melissa Matsu, Sustainer Advisor, whose dedication to Houston News is unparalleled and infectious. You continue to amaze me with your grace and attention to detail.

Special thanks to Tara Merla Hinton and her tireless dedication to getting this across the finish line. I know that you have had to wear many hats this year, and I appreciate all of your work getting this to print.

Lastly, thank you to Anne Sears, Emily Shushtari, Alle Houston, Amanda Hanks Bayles, Akilah Mance and Kristiann Rushton for your support and contributions.

As we move forward into 2023 and beyond, let us remember the power of working together and the importance of voluntarism. By continuing to collaborate, innovate and serve our community, we can build a brighter and better future for our community.

Cristina Torres
Houston News Editor
Home of the world’s medical breakthroughs

The Texas Children's team of experts provide life changing care across a number of nationally ranked specialties. We have the resources and knowledge to solve even the most challenging health problems. And we’ve proved it—breakthrough after breakthrough. That’s the difference.

See why the difference is life changing at texaschildrens.org.
I developed an interest in pediatric surgery during my embryology lectures in medical school, where I was able to see how an issue with development in pregnancy could be fixed with a surgical procedure in infancy. I love that the field of pediatric surgery involves a wide range of patient experiences, from the infant with an anatomic anomaly that needs correction to the teenager with more common surgical problems. I can meet some of my patients the day they are born and follow them as they recover from their surgeries and grow into bigger babies and then older children. The ability to help children and their families navigate both minor surgical issues and complex conditions that may require multiple operations is incredibly rewarding.

Sara Fallon, M.D., MS
Pediatric Surgeon

Our Pediatrix subspecialists located throughout Houston are proud to provide a coordinated and individualized plan of care for each patient’s unique diagnosis. We deliver a multidisciplinary approach from a team offering expertise and experience in providing care for children with common or complex conditions.

Our specialists partner with the patients and their families entrusted to our team, provide exceptional patient care and strive to achieve the best possible outcome. We look forward to the opportunity to provide care for your child.
At Texas Capital Bank, expertise is just the start. Because our clients deserve more. We invest in our relationships by providing an unparalleled level of understanding and service you can only find in Texas. It’s why we’ve been recognized as America’s #1 Most Trusted Bank.
THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON, INC.

DIAMOND CELEBRATION
THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON CHARITY BALL 2023

“DIAMONDS HAVE AN IMAGE OF PURITY AND LIGHT. THEY ARE GIVEN AS A PLEDGE OF LOVE AND WORN AS A SYMBOL OF COMMITMENT.” – PETER SINGER

CHARITY BALL

by: Steph Magers, Sustainer News Writer

The Junior League of Houston, Inc. has given its love, support and commitment to the Houston community for nearly 100 years, so it only seemed fitting that the 75th Annual Charity Ball was themed Diamond Celebration. The formal event was held on Friday, February 3 and Saturday, February 4, 2023, with a cocktail event on Thursday, February 2, 2023. Over these three evenings, the League raised more than $825,000 that goes directly to support the League’s Community Program. The League’s Community Program includes the 33 community projects served by JLH-trained volunteers, as well as community outreach efforts like our Community Assistance Grants, Emergency Grants and Community Collaborations.

In order to plan such a successful event, there must be dynamic leadership in place to create a vision as stunning as a diamond for the celebration. Elizabeth Roath Garcia, serving as Charity Ball Chairman, was the driving force behind this year’s theme. The milestone gem for 75 is the diamond, so she knew it would allow a perfect opportunity to host a glamorous night celebrating the League. Of course, she had the help and support of Megan Anson, Development Vice President, and Anne Sears, President, and Tabitha Lopez, Charity Ball Assistant Chairman, behind her all the way. And none of it would have been possible without her outstanding committee. Blaire Burdine served as a phenomenal Media Chairman. Karla Winters Cruickshank did a fantastic job leading the Auction Committee, and Lauren Freitag created the flare as Decorations Chairman. Clarissa Barboza created a mesmerizing show as Entertainment Chairman, and Kaylen Olwin designed a beautiful invitation and program as Invitations, Reservations and Program Chairman. And, of course, it would
not have been possible without the Underwriting Chairman, Amy Thorpe Strickland, and her committee made up of Jessica Baumann, Mary Margaret Brollier, Megan E. Brown, Natalie Magill Gonzalez, Aimi Knowling, Ashley Plaeger, Mia Rommel, Jessica Strake, Victoria “Tori” Tolbert and Anaam Zamorano. In Elizabeth’s words: “I was honored to lead this dazzling committee of women that even after all of the challenges, deadlines and pressures we faced, we came out in the end with friendships as strong as the diamonds in our celebration.”

Upon entering the event, guests could peruse beautiful photos of the Junior League’s history, as well as its current activities and offerings. It was especially neat to see photos of League members’ daughters that could be the next generation of League leaders. Through these photos, guests could see the true impact that the League has had on our great city, as well as see the future of what can be for the League. Guests were also able to scout out all the live and silent auction items. There were items that really appealed to all partygoers.

Of course, what makes Charity Ball so unique from all other galas in Houston is that the live entertainment during dinner, including the singing, dancing and instrument playing, is all done by League members. The League is so fortunate to have such talented women that can perform in the show and bring guests to their feet for a standing ovation. A true highlight of the show was the cellist, Kobi Morton, who dazzled with her solo.

Guests were delighted by a beautiful ballroom adorned with gorgeous flowers, silver and white flowing tablecloths, and sparkles everywhere. There was also an amazing tent covering the lovely outdoor space that served as a fun and elegant place to have cocktails, view auction items, and mix and mingle with fellow guests. Additionally, there was a VIP Diamond Vault Bar, sponsored by CIEL Restaurant + Lounge and a professional jewelry cleaning station hosted by Valobra Master Jewelers. On Saturday night, there was a special late-night experience, Bejeweled Late Night, that was sponsored by ALTO. This event featured drinks, photo opportunities and dancing under the diamonds to Houston’s Radio Live Band.
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Ellen and Jorge Toranzo
Anne Tucker
Betty Tutor
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United Airlines on behalf of Erika Kirsten Hunter

The Junior League of Houston, Inc. has made every effort to include all donors on the listings herein and apologizes for any errors or omissions.
For 67 years, The Junior League of Houston, Inc. has provided Community Assistance Grants to worthwhile organizations that do not receive ongoing volunteer support or other financial assistance through the League’s Community Program. For the 2022 – 2023 year, the League awarded $172,500 in Community Assistance Grants to 14 remarkable organizations. These grants are funded by the Community Program Fund and the Barbara and Roy Adams Endowed Community Grant Fund. Each year, the Community Assistance Committee is given guidance to help prioritize their requests, and this committee’s focus areas were directed by results from the 2021 Membership Survey: Abuse and Neglect of Children, Basic Needs, Children’s Education, and Mentoring Young Girls and Women.

The 2022 – 2023 grant recipients represent a diverse group of programs both in the populations they serve as well as the geographic area of Houston. Not only do these grants give financial support, but they also assist in establishing fruitful relationships and cultivating key collaborations. “Something that has been eye-opening for me is the potential synergies between several of these organizations and the programs they are offering” stated Jennifer Weinstock, Community Assistance Chairman. During the grant check presentation and reception at the League on Monday, January 23, 2023, Jennifer spoke about several agency recipients “in hopes they would make connections with one another to further grow their missions and programs.”

2022 – 2023 Community Assistance Grant Recipients:

**CHRISTUS Foundation for HealthCare:** To support CHRISTUS School Clinics Program in partnership with Catholic Charities. For over 50 years, the foundation has helped underserved and uninsured people of all faiths, ages and cultures receive compassionate health care and related services.

**Fort Bend Family Promise:** To support the Youth Empowerment Planning (YEP!) Program. The organization provides shelter, meals and comprehensive support to families without homes.

**Girls Inc. of Greater Houston:** To help underwrite the Project inSIGHT Program model for the 2022 – 2023 school year. Through direct programming, Girls Inc. of Greater Houston builds safe spaces and fosters long-term mentoring relationships for the girls they serve to develop their strengths, learn lasting skills and take charge of their future.

**Have Shears Will Travel:** To support the expansion of services, serve more agencies through the barber school and partially fund a permanent location. Have Shears Will Travel is a nonprofit hair care organization serving the local community with special needs that restrict their ability to obtain these services due to physical impairment, lack of transportation or financial means.

**Houston Ballet:** To support the X³: Explore, Extend, Excel! Program, which is a free program for 3rd through 5th graders. Two Houston Ballet teaching artists and a musician travel to schools to work with students for a class series culminating in a themed performance for the school community, family and friends.

by: Elizabeth Ozden, Sustainer News Writer
Houston Botanic Garden: To support BotaniCamp, which aims to enrich students’ lives through discovery, education and the conservation of plants and the natural environment.

Houston ToolBank: To support the Desk Build Program. Houston ToolBank provides community-based organizations with tools, equipment and expertise to empower their most ambitious goals.

*Memorial Assistance Ministries: To support the “I Can See” Eye Exam Program for children. Since 1982, MAM has focused on delivering programs to build financially stable families and healthy, supportive communities where all in need will feel welcome.

*Neuhaus Education Center: To support the expansion of Neuhaus’s Family Support Program. NEC has been a trailblazer in solutions for overcoming obstacles to literacy, including dyslexia, and is a nationally recognized leader in implementing the science of reading.

Prelude Music Foundation: To support “My First Orchestral Concert.” The Prelude Music Foundation partners with schools in underserved communities to bring research-based music education to support the development of young children.

The Women’s Resource of Greater Houston: To support the RISE! Program, which, in partnership with local high schools, helps at-risk girls acquire essential financial knowledge, skills and confidence they need to make sound decisions and improve their lives.

The Woods Project, Inc.: To support expansion efforts, significantly increasing the number of students served and the overall impact in the Houston community. The Woods Project creates wilderness education and exploration experiences that develop critical behaviors needed for students from underserved communities to succeed in school and life.

Wellsprings Village, Inc.: To support the Mental Health Awareness Program. Wellsprings Village provides a safe, nurturing environment of healing and development in a homelike environment for women who were homeless or abused, helping them to become independent, contributing members of the community.

Young Audiences, Inc. of Houston: To support the Self-Care Learning Lab at Kashmere High School. Young Audience’s mission is to educate and inspire children through the arts, and to make the arts an integral part of the school curriculum. Congratulations and many thanks to the Community Assistance Committee!

Committee Members: Chairman
Jennifer Weinstock
Sustainer Advisor
Megan Anne Ryan

Tany Jeter Klaes
Nicol Voutsinas
Kaitlin Lolie McLellan
Lauren Mielke Walker

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Ms. Shine George
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YourCause for Crestwood
on behalf of Susan Bailey

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Mr. and Mrs. Michael Bayles
Mrs. Jeanette Collins

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One of the focus areas for The Junior League of Houston, Inc. for 2022 – 2023 is the gift and importance of mentorship. Much of the League’s success can easily be attributed to the power of women mentoring women. The League proudly offers mentorship opportunities to our provisional, active and transfer members. This kind of mentorship availability provides the chance to support every one of our members, regardless of their membership status or where they are in their League journey.

Starting next year, League members who sign up and volunteer their time as mentors will be given credit as part of the League Lite program. Volunteers selected as mentors will attend required training before initiating contact with their mentees. Once training is complete, mentors will set up mentorship meetups or sessions with their mentees. Any member of JLH can opt in to being matched with a mentor. Their member status – provisional, active or transfer – will determine their mentor match and what type of mentorship they receive. For example, a provisional mentor may focus on providing a better understanding of how the League operates and coaching on what kind of volunteer involvement would be best for them as a future active member.

In comparison, an active or transfer member may be given mentoring that is more specific to their current league experience. For transfers coming to Houston, the size of the Junior League of Houston may differ from their prior league.

League mentors are invited to all provisional, transfer and active member engagements, events and socials to have the opportunity to accompany their mentee. The number and consistency of mentor meetings can vary based on the individual and her needs but usually involve a minimum of two meetings in the fall and two in the spring.

Mentorship is just one of many initiatives the League is excited to create and promote to build up both our members and the Houston community!
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— Haroon Patel, M.D., MHCM
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Dr. Goff is passionate about the care she provides as a nationally recognized fetal and pediatric cardiologist. She has dedicated her career to advancing fetal imaging, prenatal management and postnatal management of patients pregnant with a child diagnosed with a complex congenital heart defect.

— Donna Goff, M.D., MS
Practice Medical Director
Fetal & Pediatric Cardiology
Pediatrix Cardiology of Houston
The Sara Houstoun Lindsey Award is presented each spring to a Junior League of Houston member that furthers the mission of the League and its vital role in the community. Typically, this member has identified a need within the League and the community and then dedicates herself to addressing that need either through her individual service to the League or community, or by engaging other League volunteers to help make a positive difference in the community. This year’s amazing woman, the 2023 Sara Houstoun Lindsey Award recipient, is Courtney Culver Baker.

Courtney is currently serving in her 18th active year of the League as the Sustainer Assistant Chairman – Centennial Anniversary. She has used her nearly 20 years of active experience to help lead discussions on Centennial activities and has helped bridge ideas between sustainers and actives. She has also served as a Board of Director-at-Large, Open Door Meetings Coordinator, Community Assistance Committee Member and even in a non-credit position as an Outside Board Representative for The Woods Project. She clearly has a passion for Development and Charity Ball having served as Tea Room Special Events Chairman and Development Communications Manager, plus Ad Sales Chairman, Charity Ball Assistant Chairman,
Charity Ball Underwriting Assistant Chairman and Charity Ball Decorations Chairman. She has brought her impeccable sense of style and fantastic writing skills to each of these roles as well.

During the 2020 – 2021 year, Courtney served as the Focus Area Chairman. Given that this was during the pandemic, she had the extra challenge of planning and executing a Focus Area Event conducive to the ever-changing health landscape. She was instrumental in creating the first-ever JLH Super Markets. These markets provided much-needed food and household necessities to families that had been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. She embodied the essence of the Sara Houstoun Lindsey Award as she was determined to make a difference in these families’ lives and inspired those around her to help make these markets a success. When asked what her most rewarding JLH placement was, Courtney noted it was tough to decide as she felt fortunate for all the roles. However, she did feel that the Focus Area Chairman role really brought all her years in Community, Development and Membership together to impact the League and Houston community.

Courtney works full-time as a trial attorney for Sheehy Ware Pappas & Grubbs P.C. focusing primarily on commercial, hospitality and construction litigation. Prior to joining that firm in 2020, Courtney also worked as outside counsel to corporations, government entities, and individuals in both the litigation and transactional space for over 21 years. Outside of the Junior League of Houston, she has been incredibly involved with the Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation, River Oaks Baptist Church and School, Recipe for Success, Sky High for Kids and The Joy School. She has also served as President of Houston Tri Delta Philanthropies, Inc./the SALE and Administrative President-Elect of the Tri Delta Houston Area Alumni Chapter. She has dedicated numerous hours to all these groups giving her time and talents to each.

When asked where her passion for volunteering comes from, Courtney fondly comments about her parents. She saw both her mom and dad consistently serve as active members of the community through service organizations, their church and even in politics. Shortly after her dad passed away in 2015, members of the Fort Bend County community shared tributes about her dad, who had served as a County and State District Court Judge for over 38 years plus served countless hours helping others. As a
lasting tribute, an elementary school was erected in 2019, housing 400 students, and named after him, Judge Thomas R. Culver, III Elementary School. Courtney said, “Observing a lifetime of service by my parents has been a blessing. I am proud of their combined legacy that my mom continues to create.”

They both instilled in her a love for helping others and leading through service. Courtney also hopes to instill those same values in her two children, Pierson and Helen Eloise-Marie. She and her husband, Buck, both try to ensure the kids learn the importance of volunteering from an early age. Courtney has served as such an inspiration and embodies all that the Sara Houstoun Lindsey Award represents. Congratulations to Courtney!
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Learn More About Our Practice
We must cut the cord. Our kids are tethered to cell phones, tablets and other electronic devices for hours each day. And it shows. By age 12, only eight percent of kids meet American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines of one hour of physical activity per day. Others’ inaction has fueled adolescent obesity, which has more than tripled in the past 30 years.

**THIS TROUBLING TREND MUST STOP—AND THE ANSWER IS EXERCISE. BUT HOW DO WE TURN KIDS INTO ACTION HEROES?**

“Physical activity starts with parents providing a good example,” says Timothy Couture, PT, MPT, Associate Vice President of Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation at Memorial Hermann Ambulatory Services. “If you don’t engage in exercise, how can you expect your kids to do so?”

**10 WAYS TO STAY FIT AS A FAMILY**

**TRY THESE 10 WAYS TO INSTILL NEW FAMILY VALUES:**

1. **Be a Player.**
   Invite your children’s friends to join them at a nearby park, miniature golf range, batting cage, tennis court or playground where they can swing, slide, skip, scamper and chase each other. “Children like to engage with other kids their age,” says Couture, a triathlete and father of three. “Even teens who are too cool to hang out with their parents are more willing if their pals participate.”

2. **Gimme a Break.**
   Stage challenges during TV commercials by allowing one of your youngsters to decide whether you run in place or do push-ups, jumping jacks or handstands.

3. **Put Kids in Charge.**
   Some kids prefer team sports. Others would rather do something with you one-on-one. Let them choose and they’ll be more likely to pursue a passion. “Even if it’s not 100 percent active, getting them away from computers and TV and out of the house is an accomplishment,” says Couture.

4. **Post It.**
   If your child is a natural performer, create a fitness video starring her and her friends. “It’s a great way to engage kids to be more active and enjoy what they’re doing,” Couture says.

5. **Go High-Tech.**
   As anyone with a Fitbit or pedometer can attest, competing with oneself and tracking progress often motivates. “My daughters track their movements on fitness watches, while my 10-year-old son has a device that connects to an App on my phone. He gets rewards if he meets his goals, so he’ll say, ‘Let’s go for a walk!’ Also steer kids to interactive games that offer chances to move with a partner and be scored on accuracy, be it Zumba, golf, boxing or bowling,” Couture says.

6. **Celebrate.**
   Set expectations and goals but don’t punish kids for failing to achieve them, as long as they try. “Acknowledge effort,” Couture says. Though participation trophies are sometimes ridiculed, they encourage those who are uncoordinated, out of shape or slow to master skills. “The less able they are, the smaller goals should be.” Reward kids for finishing homework with a game of catch, but don’t punish bad behavior with running laps or doing crunches. “We never use food as a reward,” Couture says. “We reward our kids with activities.”

7. **Time Share.**
   Just as you schedule meals and chores, set aside time to walk, shoot hoops or ride bikes. You can work off pent-up after-school energy or calories by playing catch or taking laps around the block after dinner.

8. **Be App-y.**
   MyFitnessPal allows the Coutures to track calories and fat grams of grocery foods before buying them and to check restaurant menus online before ordering. “We read labels together and talk about healthier options.”

9. **Steer Clear.**
   Skip, not sip, soft drinks. “90% of what they drink should be water, for their growth and development,” Couture says. “Sodas are essentially drinking calories.”

10. **Follow the Leader.**
   “My wife and I are committed to a lifetime of fitness, and so are our children,” says Couture. “They’ve seen for themselves that they do better academically, have more energy and are less stressed. One of my daughters will go for a run before college exams because it improves her focus and reduces her stress. Once your children feel better, physical activity becomes a lifelong change.”
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FACTORS THAT CAN IMPACT YOUR FERTILITY

INTERCOURSE TIMING AND FREQUENCY
It might seem obvious, but the timing of when you have intercourse is important. You’re fertile on the day you ovulate and five days prior—known as your fertile window. Pregnancy can only occur within this time frame. There are different ways to track your ovulation, including basal body temperature, ovulation predictor kits, tracking changes in cervical mucous and fertility apps, such as Flo and Clue.

HOUSEHOLD TOXINS
Synthetic chemicals such as phthalates and Bisphenol A (BPA) are found in household packaging, plastics and cosmetics. There has been increasing evidence that BPA might negatively impact fertility both in males and females by disrupting hormone levels in the body. This could lead to reproductive conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and decreased egg quality. Because phthalates and BPA are in so many household items, it’s almost impossible to completely get rid of them. As much as you can, try to use clean cosmetics and fewer plastic food containers.

TOBACCO SMOKE
The chemicals in cigarette smoke can damage your eggs and increase the risk of miscarriage. If your male partner smokes, they are more likely to have lower sperm counts and motility, or how well sperm can move around. If you or your partner smoke, now is a great time to find resources to quit.

BEING OVER OR UNDERWEIGHT
If you have a high or low body mass index (BMI) you can still have a successful pregnancy, but weight can be an important factor in fertility. Increased fat tissue can release certain molecules that might negatively affect egg production. Being overweight or obese can also put you at an increased risk of miscarriage.

However, being underweight can affect your ability to get pregnant as well. With a low body fat percentage, the hypothalamus that regulates hormone production can slow, leading to irregular or absent menstrual cycles. Talk with your doctor to find out if your BMI could be affecting your ability to get pregnant.

YOU’RE THINKING ABOUT GETTING PREGNANT AND MIGHT BE WONDERING WHAT YOU CAN DO TO INCREASE YOUR ODDS. UNFORTUNATELY, THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT AFFECT YOUR FERTILITY THAT YOU DON’T HAVE CONTROL OVER SUCH AS YOUR AGE AND YOUR GENETICS.

THE GOOD NEWS IS, THERE ARE SEVERAL THINGS YOU CAN DO TO BOOST YOUR FERTILITY AND IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF PREGNANCY SUCCESS.

YOUR DIET
High amounts of red meat, sugar, refined grains and fats can impact health in many ways, including your reproductive system. Though more research is needed to find out how exactly certain foods can affect fertility, we do know a diet containing plenty of fruits and vegetables, healthy fats and whole grains can be beneficial when you’re trying to get pregnant.

Some studies have shown alcohol may impact your egg quality and overall fertility, so it’s a good idea to decrease your intake when you’re actively trying to conceive.

EXERCISE
Exercise is good for your overall health and for reducing your stress—both great reasons for fitting it into your schedule. But regular exercise has shown to improve fertility as well, so aim for 30 to 60 minutes a day. However, exercising too much can actually do more harm than good and decrease your chances of getting pregnant. Now is a great time to come up with a pregnancy-friendly workout routine. Talk with your doctor if you have questions or concerns about your fitness regimen.

There are many factors that you and your doctor need to consider when it comes to your fertility. If you are trying to get pregnant and it hasn’t happened yet, we recommend making an appointment with a CCRM Fertility specialist to discuss your options.

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The first couple of months I didn’t experience any issues and felt safe to travel and do things like normal. But after a vacation, I felt a rush of liquid and experienced some abdominal pain and it felt like my water had broken. I knew something didn’t feel right.”

Dr. Lindsay Sillas, a board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist at The Woman’s Hospital of Texas, told Larissa to go to the hospital’s obstetrical emergency department (OBED) which offers advanced services to women who need special care during pregnancy, such as the early onset of labor. After receiving a full assessment, Larissa learned that she experienced a preterm premature rupture of membranes (pPROM). According to the March of Dimes, pPROM occurs in about five to seven percent of all pregnancies, and accounts for one-third of preterm births.

At just 22-weeks, Larissa was admitted to the antepartum unit (APU) so she could be on bed rest with the additional support from highly trained nurses that Larissa and her vulnerable baby required.

“They wanted to give Dreux as much time as possible to develop before delivering. Our goal was to make it to 35 weeks,” said Larissa. “My second day on the unit, I met my perinatal navigator, Kristi, and I immediately asked her what I needed to do for my baby to make him safe.”

Perinatal navigators have the sole focus of providing high-risk patients with extra care to support their unique pregnancy and delivery experience. Kristi Hardy, perinatal navigation manager at the Woman’s Maternal Fetal Care Center, said that Larissa’s mindset throughout her journey was inspirational.

“She was Dreux’s biggest champion. She wanted to know about every available resource, and everything she could do to help him before and after delivery,” said Kristi.

After 17 days of bed rest in the APU and at just 24 weeks gestation, baby Dreux was ready to make his debut into the world. “It all happened so fast; before we knew it, he was here” said Larissa.

Because Dreux was born early, and weighed only 1 pound, 10 ounces, he had to be admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).

“The entire staff took a situation that was scary and uncomfortable, and made us feel supported. They reassured us that we were going to be okay,” Larissa said. “Kristi continued to support me during this time. She helped me find my voice and let me know it was okay to be involved in Dreux’s care plan.”

Throughout their stay, Larissa, DeVonta and Dreux worked with many members of The Woman’s Hospital of Texas team including therapists, Child Life Specialists and the March of Dimes Family Support Program Coordinators.

The March of Dimes Family Support Program Coordinators provide families with children in the NICU – as well as the NICU staff – with an extra layer of support during what can be a stressful time. They meet with each family upon admission to the hospital or within the first few days of their baby being admitted to the NICU.

“We really like to stress that every baby is different,” says Brandi Clark, one of two program coordinators. “We don’t know what the NICU course is going to be like, but we definitely try to make sure that parents have the appropriate information.”

After spending 160 days in the NICU, Dreux was finally able to go home weighing a healthy 11 pounds, 9 ounces.

Reflecting on her own experience, Larissa has a few words of advice for parents in similar situations: “You have to remember that you are a part of the team taking care of your baby. Ask the healthcare staff really good questions, try to constantly be there for your baby, and get to know the people who are helping you across all departments.”

Inspired by her and Dreux’s time in the NICU, Larissa is now part of The Woman’s Hospital of Texas Parent Panel, and Kristi reaches out to her to be a mentor to other NICU parents.

“Larissa embraced all of Dreux’s wins, all of his milestones. Larissa and Dreux inspire me so much because I know their journeys, and I see where they are now. It encourages me in so many ways,” says Kristi.
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A GUIDE TO SEEING THE GYNECOLOGIST AT ANY AGE

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOUR LAST CHECK-UP?
MANY WOMEN PUT IT OFF, BUT REGULAR CARE WITH AN OBSTETRICIAN/GYNECOLOGIST CAN GIVE IMPORTANT GUIDANCE TO MAKE THE MANY TRANSITIONS OF WOMANHOOD EASIER.
“YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR GYNECOLOGIC CARE UNTIL YOU SEE A PROVIDER,” SAID BAYLESS DRUM, MD, GYNECOLOGIST AT THE PAVILION FOR WOMEN OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY.

ADOLESCENCE
While a first gynecologist visit can be seen as a part of the transition to adult female life, teens have a lot to gain from seeing a gynecologist early.
Education about menstrual cycles can be a topic young women may be hesitant to discuss on their own. “If a woman has heavy menstrual bleeding, she does not have to suffer through it. There may be safe and effective interventions available to her,” said Dr. Drum. An early visit to a gynecologist can prompt open discussion about how heavy periods may be affecting a teenager’s life, monitor for signs of anemia and provide safe and effective resources for making periods lighter and less painful.

PRE-PREGNANCY CARE
Prenatal care is crucial for decreasing pregnancy complications for both mother and baby. Additionally, pre-pregnancy visits are equally important and can be used to screen for medical conditions that may affect maternal health, such as sickle cell disease, diabetes or high blood pressure. Medications to treat these and other chronic conditions can be modified so that they are safe to use once a woman becomes pregnant. These visits are also an opportunity to find a medical team that you trust before you’ll depend on them to provide compassionate and meticulous care during pregnancy.

BEFORE MENOPAUSE
Recent years have seen a significant expansion in the treatment options available to women experiencing menopause symptoms, such as vaginal dryness, hot flashes and mood instability. A women’s health care practice can help manage these symptoms and can even offer referrals to specialty centers such as The Menopause Center at Texas Children’s Pavilion for Women.
“Care at regular intervals can make the transition through menopause a lot easier,” said Dr. Drum. Hot flashes and mood disorders, for example, are easier to treat when the symptoms are mild, before they become severe.

YOU DESERVE SUPPORT
In this era of medical and scientific innovation, every woman deserves to know about the advancements in obstetrics and gynecology that can lead to a healthier and more comfortable life. Regular visits to a women’s health care practice offer that opportunity.
“For women who aren’t sexually active, women who have sex with women or women who are past menopause, there’s a misconception that they don’t need a Pap test or don’t need to see a gynecologist, but gynecology still has a lot to offer you,” said Dr. Drum. “I love being a home base for women and being the person they can go to ask what’s normal and not normal in what they are experiencing. At Pavilion for Women Obstetrics and Gynecology, we focus on easy access to care with a kind and experienced staff to make that possible.”

To learn more, visit www.women.texaschildrens.org/program/obstetrics-and-gynecology or to schedule an appointment call 832.826.3000.
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by: Claudia Garnica, News Writer

**STORY TIME TEA**

With special appearances by Elsa, Winnie the Pooh and Marshall from Paw Patrol, kids and their guests enjoyed a tea-time buffet while listening to their favorite characters read a selection of stories on Sunday, January 29, 2023. In true Junior League of Houston spirit, guests brought book donations in support of the Texas Tamale Company's Literacy in the Bag Campaign.

**MEALS WITH MALCOLM**

Everyone felt the love on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, at Meals with Malcolm. Tea Room General Manager, Malcolm Rowland, made everyone's Valentine's and Galentine's Day experience memorable as he walked diners through a Valentine's Day-themed five-course menu. Guests enjoyed wine pairings and a menu that included various seafood items, chicken piccata and theme-appropriate chocolate-dipped strawberries.

...... continued
SPRING FLING

SPONSORED BY COMMUNITY CHAMPION, CIEL RESTAURANT + LOUNGE

The League celebrated the start of spring by hosting Ladies’ Night Out on Thursday, March 23, 2023. Friends old and new had a chance to dress up in spring colors and florals as they shopped with Cameron Yoesel Designs, Boots & Bows Smocking Co., Honey Linked and Color Primavera Collection. Attendees were treated to the musical banter of Dueling Pianos Live Texas while enjoying drinks and hors d’oeuvres.
BUNNY BRUNCH

League members and their families got a head start on Easter celebrations at the annual Bunny Brunch on Sunday, April 2, 2023. While families enjoyed a buffet brunch and drinks, the kids got a chance to make new friends while playing games, hunting for eggs and meeting the Easter Bunny! The event included a service project in partnership with The Woods Project.
A BUBBLY DAY AT THE LEAGUE

On Sunday, April 23, 2023, the League sparkled with a sold-out Bubbles & Brunch and Champagne Tea! For the first time, the event offered morning and afternoon options, giving more members a chance to participate in this popular event. Attendees had a chance to enjoy a three-course meal and some bubbles while checking out the latest spring trends from The Avenue and Valobra Master Jewelers showcased by our gorgeous volunteer models.
MOTHER’S DAY BRUNCH

League members had a chance to celebrate the women who shaped them on Sunday, May 14, 2023, at the Mother’s Day Brunch. The guests of honor had a chance to spend time with their loved ones while enjoying a delicious buffet in the Ballroom. Attendees also had the opportunity to participate in a service project in partnership with the Houston Area Women’s Center. As a special gift to the mothers, Silhouettes by Cindi created beautiful, hand cut silhouettes of children and families.
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— Wasyl Szeremeta, M.D.
Practice Medical Director
Pediatric Otolaryngologist
Pediatrix ENT of Houston

Our Pediatrix® family of practices is here for you when your family needs it most.
Since its founding in 1925, The Junior League of Houston, Inc. has been a driving force in the Houston community, leveraging the power of voluntarism to positively impact the lives of individuals and families in need. From addressing critical issues such as poverty and education to supporting local arts and cultural institutions, the League has been at the forefront of many of the most critical initiatives that have shaped Houston’s growth and development. To continue supporting this mission, the League continually reevaluates the focus of its volunteer efforts to ensure that the League can continue to focus its efforts where it will have the most significant impact.

One way that the League achieves this is by selecting focus areas that will guide the organization’s direction and decision-making regarding its financial and volunteer resources. The League’s membership votes every three years to determine the top three focus areas that will receive this support. This year’s focus area is Children’s Education.

In support of this focus area, the JLH’s first focus area event this year, “Girls Should Be in School…Period. Period Positivity,” was co-sponsored with HISD for Thomas Middle School. This event occurred on Friday, October 28, 2022, and focused on children’s education about first-time menstruation cycles. Children from low-income families were provided with necessary supplies while hearing from several speakers – a League volunteer, an HISD nurse and nutritional educators. Children were also able to participate in a nutrition demonstration. Kaia Kessler, VIEW Chairman, not only led the speeches, she generously donated additional supplies for the kits. At the end of the presentation, Junior League volunteers distributed Period Preparedness Kits that VIEW volunteers had put together for this event.

The Junior League of Houston also partnered with Compudopt, an organization that provides technology access and education to under-resourced youth, for its second focus area event on Saturday, March 11, 2023. Compudopt’s programs serve to eliminate limited access to computers, facilitate growth in technical and digital literacy skills, help provide no or low-cost high-speed internet options, and support the future of youth in our community.

During this event, JLH distributed donations of laptops, desktops or monitors less than five years old from JLH members. The Junior League of Houston also donated backpacks, laptop accessories and school supplies to support Compudopt’s programs.
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Lizabeth E. Riley, MD
Marc H. Feldman, MD

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REFLECTION AND RESTRUCTURE

During the 70s, Houston experienced a 30 percent population growth and the League a 50 percent membership growth consisting primarily of transfers from other leagues as volunteers moved to our dynamic city. The addition of 846 new members was a big change, but the even bigger change was that for the first time 50 percent of League members were now professionals, working 40 hours or more a week outside the home. “This was a game changer,” revealed Emily Attwell Crosswell, 1979 – 1980 President. “We had to reflect on our admission procedures, our provisional requirements, our general meeting offerings and our placements. We were obliged to ask ourselves many questions. How do we transition? How do we keep the rigorous training, an instrumental part of being a JLH volunteer, and at the same time, accommodate more and more women working outside the home? How do we keep our high standards yet stay current?” These and many more questions were answered during this decade to enable the League to continue moving forward in a changing world. We benefit from the results of this transition period today with general meetings having in-person, virtual and on-demand options, as well as daytime, evening and weekend placements, and provisional opportunities to synchronize with all types of schedules.

RESILIENCE AND RETENTION

The League leaders of the 70s dared to have hard conversations, listen to members and find new ways to train and serve, fulfilling its obligations to the community and to the potential of every volunteer. They reflected, they surveyed members, they tried new approaches and programs. They paused and looked inward to reevaluate, recalibrate and continue forward while staying true to the mission.

Although the tradition of a yearly theme set by each president to inspire and guide through the year ahead did not start until the 2000s, the Public Relations Committee between 1971 – 1974 did choose themes to emphasize key issues, as shown below. These three themes identified the issues most important to the League at the time. The Education Committees focused on these themes through a yearlong series of programs that reinforced the message.

1971 – 1972 COMMUNICATE…UNDERSTAND

“It was felt that only through the exchange of information and ideas may we understand our individual needs. The Education Committee emphasized this theme through programs presented during the year dealing with communications within our families, our community and our League.” Kay Haynes Symonds
1972 – 1973 RESPONSIBLE CONCERN

“With this emphasis, we hoped our program would instill a deeper understanding of the obligation of League membership, while at the same time keeping it in the proper perspective with our other personal interests and commitments. We care, and those who need us can depend on us.” Marilyn Dubach Taylor

1973 – 1974 REALIZING OUR RESOURCES

“With this thought, we were urging awareness of the resources within the League (the potential of our individual members), of the League itself as a resource and the resources in the community through which we can better meet the needs of the community.”
Almeria Thompson Cottingham

50th-year celebration gift,” recalled Gay Gooch Estes, 1974 – 1975 President. “We addressed conservation and environmental concerns, by regenerating a property with historical value to our city.” Part of the original tract of land purchased by the Allen brothers in 1836, the land was home to City Hall for close to 100 years until it was moved to its current location on Bagby Street. The groundbreaking ceremonies for Old Market Square Park were held in November 1976 with many JLH executive committee members from both the previous and current year in attendance.

REVITALIZE

In tribute to the League’s Golden Anniversary, $60,000 was given to revitalize the Old Market Square downtown by reverting the paved parking lot back into a grassy park. “The League was always forward-looking and so the reviving of the Market Square space to its original green beauty fulfilled our purpose and felt right for our

RELOCATE – DOORWAY TO THE 80s

“Leadership is action, not position,” stated Emily Attwell Crosswell, 1979 – 1980 President, when interviewed for Houston News in September 1979. Like League presidents before and after her, she certainly led by action. With the growing number of members, the League started outgrowing its building on Post Oak Park Drive. “The immediate problem was parking,” remembered Emily. “We needed more space and approached our corporate neighbor, Tenneco, who owned the land next to us. Not only did we collaborate with them to solve our parking issue, but we also ended up swapping properties – our Post Oak Park property with freeway access to Tenneco and their property on Briar Oaks to us – for what would become our new League building in 1986.” Emily attributes the win-win transaction to the League’s unquestionable reputation and solid relationships within the community it had built since its inception.

RECALLING – DID YOU KNOW?

• The Learning Disorders Clinic within the Outpatient Department of Texas Children’s Hospital began operation
utilizing League volunteers in June 1971 with the help of a grant of $13,500 from the Junior League.

- In 1971 – 1972, a special $5,000 grant was made to The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston to purchase The Hunting Cabin Door by Richard LeBarre Goodwin and is still on display today.

- The first evening general meeting was held in November 1972.

- The Individual Placement was a new concept developed in 1973 – 1974.

- Professional Evening Group (PEG) was restructured for the 1978 – 1979 year and renamed Volunteers in Evening Workshop (VIEW) as it is known today.

- From starting as a small part of the kitchen, then located to the converted coat closet in the foyer, and finally to the designated and designed space of today, The Pantry met a growing new need in the 70s for frozen take-away meals, all toted in JLH monogrammed carry-home bags.

- The 1979 – 1980 membership voted to publish the Junior League of Houston Cookbook, Volume II.

- Total members in 1970 equaled 1,675. Total members in 1980 equaled 2,521.

- Number of Tea Room Patrons in 1970 equaled 4,916; in 1980 equaled 5,727.

- Choosing a different color for the yearbook cover each year was the president's privilege.

- 1979 – 1980 Junior League volunteers received The Distinguished Service Award for the CPR Program from the American Heart Association.

- The 22nd Annual Charity Ball, An Evening of Numerantics, held in February 1970 at the Shamrock Hilton Hotel, netted $36,065 for the charitable trust fund.

- The 32nd Annual Charity Ball, Chinoiserie, held in February 1980 at the Shamrock Hilton Hotel, netted approximately $134,000. The evening included a live TV broadcast of the USA vs. USSR hockey game, dubbed “Miracle on Ice,” of the Olympic Winter Games. Two days later the youthful American team clinched the hockey gold by defeating Finland.

- In an age before late-night emails or cell phone text messages squeezed in after work, JLH volunteer business was to be conducted between the school and work hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.
CONCLUSION

Whether you are a fan of disco favorites, "Stayin’ Alive" and "I Will Survive," or of country legends, "Delta Dawn" and "Hello Darlin,“ or of crossover, "Rhinestone Cowboy," we can all agree the tune of the Junior League of Houston has always been "Building A Better Community," regardless of the musical genre of the period. With tireless effort in each passing decade, the League continually improves on itself, providing a solid foundation for the next era of members. Although the glory days of disco were short-lived, albeit still some of the best dance songs today, the Junior League of Houston continues to gracefully grow, remain effective and strongly serve its members and community. What phenomenal staying power! No doubt the provisionals of today will be exclaiming the same in the 2070s.

Dear League Landers: Would you please reprint Miss Do E. Compton’s “In a League Garden” – Cultivated Cora

Dear Cora: I’ll be glad to.

“PLANT FOUR ROWS OF PEAS;
Patience
Perseverance
Promptness
Preparation

THREE ROWS OF SQUASH;
Squash gossip
Squash indifference
Squash criticism

TWO ROWS OF CARROTS;
Care about others
Care about one’s self

SOME LETTUCE;
Let us be true to obligations
Let us share our talents
Let us have vision

AND TURNIPS;
Turn up for meetings and placements
Turn up with energy
Turn up with a smile.”

— Houston News, September 1976

LIST OF JLH PRESIDENTS IN THE 1970S:

Mrs. John L. Russell (Vale Asche) 1969 – 1970
Mrs. William H. Thanheiser (Mary Ellen Ford) 1970 – 1971
Mrs. Roland M. Howard (Joan Lander) 1972 – 1973
Mrs. William E. Boyer (Elizabeth Letzerich) 1973 – 1974
Mrs. Carl L. Estes II (Gay Gooch) 1974 – 1975
Mrs. Fred B. Griffin (Elizabeth Pearson) 1975 – 1976
Mrs. Donald P. DeWalch (Sally Binz) 1976 – 1977
Mrs. Bryan H. Wimberly (Carolyn Shirley) 1977 – 1978
Mrs. Robert L. Clarke (Jean Talbert) 1978 – 1979
Mrs. Holcombe Crosswell (Emily Attwell) 1979 – 1980
MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENTS

by: Rachel Clark, News Writer

This past spring, the Junior League of Houston celebrated its members and community with many informative and social engagement events. From fundraisers to luncheons, teas to boat tours, cooking classes to self-defense instruction, much was covered in our packed and fun spring!

WHISKEY TASTING AND SHOPPING EVENT

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

The Charity Ball Committee invited members to attend a local whiskey tasting and light-bites event at Giant Texas Distillers’ Tasting Room in Houston’s East Downtown. Proceeds were used to help stock the February 2023 Charity Ball’s – Diamond Celebration – Whiskey Pull. League members and guests enjoyed a fun night out where they purchased whiskey bottles to either take home or donate back to the League!

JEWELRY AND CHAMPAGNE SOCIAL WITH VALOBRA MASTER JEWELERS

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

Since the store’s opening in Italy in 1905, the Valobra family has been committed to offering the highest quality of custom jewelry and timepieces in a warm and welcoming environment. Franco Valobra and Valobra Master Jewelers, Community Champion, hosted a delightful evening in their beautiful River Oaks showroom where they informed and educated guests about the importance of jewelry, gemstones and metals. They also gave a presentation on how to intelligently invest in jewelry and diamonds. Champagne and light bites were provided.

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON SUSTAINING CLUB PAST PRESIDENTS’ LUNCHEON

Thursday, January 26, 2023

All past presidents of the Junior League of Houston’s Sustaining Club were invited to join for a luncheon in their honor in the Junior League of Houston Tea Room. Their service, creativity and dedication to the League were celebrated. Co-Chairs and past JLHSC Presidents – Joni Fichter, Vicki Lange and Liz Rigney – generously organized the event.
behind the scenes: past lives of league sustainers

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

What a fabulous event this was! Sustainers of all generations got to join one another to mix and mingle with drinks and light bites and hear all about each other’s past lives and glory days! From reality television to the inaugural Houston Texans Cheerleader team to the Miss USA Pageant, no stories were spared! Members got to hear what it was like to be in the spotlight, live a day in the life and ask each other those burning questions. Josie Morgan, New Sustainers Co-Chair, served as the emcee and also regaled members with tales from the sea as a past cruise cast member.

BUFFALO BAYOU PONTOON BOAT TOUR

Thursday, March 2, 2023

Community Adventures Co-Chairs, Susan Boone and Carol Herder, planned an adventure aboard Buffalo Bayou Partnership’s pontoon boat. Twenty-one members enjoyed a guided tour with a historian for a 90-minute ride along Houston’s historic waterway through downtown and into the industrial side of the city.

springs fête

Thursday, February 23, 2023

Sustainers dusted off their boots and donned cowboy hats to attend a Spring Fête! Members enjoyed a fun-filled kick-off event to rodeo season while in their best Western attire!

Vicki Lange generously hosted the event at her lovely home.

A GALENTINE AFFAIR

Saturday, February 18, 2023

All sustainer members were invited to come for “A Galentine Affair” at Trez Wine Bar. A two-course brunch paired with two wines was served, and all celebrated love and joy!
PLANTING SUSTAINING FRIENDSHIPS LUNCHEON  
**Friday, March 31, 2023**

Friends are like flowers; they bring color to your world! All Junior League friends, old and new, were invited to the Planting Sustaining Friendships Luncheon. This event represented a joint partnership with Friendship Luncheon Co-Chairs, Katie Hackedorn and Marion Wade, and Engagement Co-Chairs, Susan Barnes, Renée Davis, and Erin Montgomery.

MC GOVERN CENTENNIAL GARDEN HISTORY AND HORTICULTURAL TOUR  
**Wednesday, April 12, 2023**

To celebrate spring blooms and the McGovern Centennial Gardens being redone, members met up for a wonderful walking tour at Hermann Park! Following the event, attendees ended the morning with fellowship and a good meal.

SELF-DEFENSE CLASS  
**Monday, April 17, 2023**

A private class was held at Urban Jungle Self Defense for members to learn basic techniques, drills, exercises and safety tips that educate and promote self-defense and awareness. The class was tailored explicitly for females and followed by a social at Bungalow Heights.

EMERITA TEA  
**Tuesday, April 18, 2023**

All Junior League of Houston sustainers aged 80 and above were invited to attend the Emerita Tea. At the event, Sing Along With Seniors volunteers sang medleys taking attendees on a journey through the decades and across America. In honor of the Junior League’s upcoming Centennial Anniversary in 2025, all Emerita Tea guests were invited to share their stories on-camera about their experience serving as Junior League of Houston volunteers. The celebratory short film will be featured in February 2025 at the League’s Centennial Charity Ball and on the JLH website.
SPRING LUNCHEON

Monday, May 1, 2023

The Junior League of Houston Sustaining Club’s Spring Luncheon was not to be missed! Over 125 sustainers joined Co-Chairs, Lesley Lilly and Shannon Robinson, to cap off another fun and successful Sustaining Club year. Graciously hosted by Krissi Reid in her beautiful home, the event featured a bountiful spread, lively conversation and camaraderie galore.

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"TOGETHER WE CAN FACE ANY CHALLENGES AS DEEP AS THE OCEAN AND AS HIGH AS THE SKY." — SONIA GANDHI
GROUP MEETINGS ROUND-UP

by: Rachel Clark, News Writer

The Junior League of Houston, Inc. kicked off 2023 with the following group meetings to enlighten, empower and educate our members!

SKINCARE AND ANTI-AGING WITH THE PEARL DERMATOLOGY

Tuesday, January 10, 2023

This virtual event featured Dr. Tracy Katz, a board-certified dermatologist and co-founder of The Pearl Dermatology. Dr. Katz educated League members on the importance of skin care from a medical and cosmetic perspective. Treatment information included sun care, anti-aging regimens and cosmetic treatments offered at The Pearl.

2023 – 2024 ADMINISTRATIVE PLACEMENT INFORMATION SOCIAL

Thursday, January 12, 2023

This social served to educate members on new opportunities for leadership and growth in the League. Attendees were able to network with the incoming leadership team – the 2023 – 2024 Executive Committee and Board of Directors – and learn more about serving in administrative placements.

SEEING INTO THE FUTURE: AN OVERVIEW OF ULTRASOUND SCREENING IN PREGNANCY

Monday, January 23, 2023

This virtual event featured Pediatrix Medical Group, a Junior League Community Partner, and Dr. Amber Samuel. Members were given valuable information about the importance of ultrasound screenings during pregnancy. Dr. Amber Samuel is the Medical Director for Obstetrix-Maternal-Fetal Medicine Specialists of Houston.

CRACK THE CODE ON CRAVINGS

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

This virtual event featured Rupina Meer, MBA, CHHC, as she helped members discover the bitter truth about their sweet tooth and gave insight into better ways to live a sweet and juicy life without sugar.

MOBILE BLOOD DRIVE BENEFITING GCRBC

Monday, January 23, 2023

League members were invited to donate blood to the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center, which serves more than 170 area hospitals and healthcare institutions. The blood drive was held from 1 – 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room.
ESTATE PLANNING 101
Tuesday, January 24, 2023

This virtual event featured League member Austin Thomas as she taught the basics of estate planning. This presentation included an overview of the essential and foundational estate planning documents that most people should consider putting in place, including medical and financial powers of attorney, a directive to physicians, a declaration of guardianship for minor children and a will – or will substitute. Ms. Thomas is an attorney Board Certified in Estate Planning and Probate who practices at Jackson Walker LLP. The meeting was credited as one hour of continuing legal education through the State Bar of Texas.

TEN REASONS YOU MIGHT NEED A REPRODUCTIVE ENDOCRINOLOGIST
Wednesday, January 25, 2023

One of the League’s Community Partners, CCRM Fertility Houston, presented on reproductive endocrinology via Dr. Beth Zhou and Dr. Rashmi Kudesia. Drs. Zhou and Kudesia reviewed and taught about unassisted conception concerning aging and common reasons to visit a specialist in reproductive endocrinology and infertility (REI).

COMMUNITY AND TEA ROOM PLACEMENT FAIR
Thursday, February 16, 2023

Members were invited to join the Community and Tea Room Placement Fair to discover the community and Tea Room placements available for the 2023 – 2024 League year. Interested members mixed and mingled with current project chairmen and volunteers to learn about the specifics of each project and got to “road trip” through the placements offered around Houston.

MINOR LEAGUE MORNING
Saturday, February 25, 2023

The “2023 Minor League Morning” was a morning of service in preparation for National Volunteer Month and Volunteer Appreciation Week in April. League members brought their children for a morning of service and learning about League operations, including a tour of the League building. The event was an incredible and memorable opportunity to prepare a future family legacy of service to the community.

OPEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, February 9, 2023

The Community Vice President opened the non-voting portion of the February Community Council meeting to provide members an opportunity to see and partake in how administrative placements and League leadership directly impact the League.
THE ART OF GATHERING: HOW WE MEET AND WHY IT MATTERS BOOK DISCUSSION
Thursday, March 9, 2023
The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee hosted a book club discussion of *The Art of the Gathering* by Priya Parker. The meeting highlighted building community with every gathering and conversation and discussing strategies to make every interaction impactful.

THINK HAPPY! WITH KAITLIN CUEVAS
Wednesday, March 15, 2023
This virtual event featured Kaitlin Cuevas, an author, life coach and podcast host, discussing ways to create more happiness in your life. The presentation was tailored toward helping busy women create sustainable habits and routines that reduce daily stress by creating systems and control, decreasing wasted or unproductive time throughout the day, and increasing the amount of time to refill their own cup.

HOUSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS 101
Thursday, March 23, 2023
Since Houston is home to over two dozen public school districts and more than 200 private secular, parochial and special needs schools in the Greater Houston Area, families often have many educational options for their children. This virtual event featured educational consultants Dee Dee Halpin, M.S. and Julie Blumberg of Houston School Options as they reviewed the application process for Houston-based private and public schools. This presentation answered questions from members and gave concrete instruction to many education related processes.

Dee Dee Halpin has served as President of the Johnston Middle School PTO and on the boards of River Oaks Elementary, Shlenker School, High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, Bellaire and Lamar High Schools. Julie Blumberg is an educator who founded her tutoring business, Motivation Houston, in 2014 after a career in the elementary classroom.

INTERFAITH MINISTRIES AND THE HOUSTON REFUGEE EXPERIENCE
Thursday, April 6, 2023
This virtual event featured Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston. The agency, one of the five resettlement agencies in Houston, has been on the frontlines of giving and showing compassion in many different ways through its programs and services. During the presentation, the IMGH Refugee Services staff educated members on the multiple facets of the refugee experience, including the journey and the resettlement process. Additionally, it gave information on the role of IMGH in bringing the Houston community together for dialogues, collaborations and service.

SEWELL AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES: AN EVENING AT THE HOUSTON CADILLAC DEALERSHIP
Thursday, April 13, 2023
The League's Presenting Automotive Sponsor, Sewell Automotive Companies, hosted League members at their Cadillac Houston dealership for a fun and informative meeting. Light hors d'oeuvres were served while topics such as purchasing vs. leasing, vehicle technology, vehicle maintenance and collision were taught by vehicle experts.
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To honor the 2025 Centennial Anniversary of the founding of The Junior League of Houston, Inc. with "A Century of Building A Better Community," the League recently announced the 2025 Centennial Gift of $2,000,000 to be awarded to DePelchin Children’s Center.

The Junior League of Houston has been committed to the well-being of children as a primary mission since its founding in 1925. The League has demonstrated this commitment over the years through grants, partnerships and volunteer placements with Texas Children’s Hospital, Baylor Teen Health Clinic, BEAR...BE A Resource for CPS Kids, Bós Place, Casa de Esperanza de los Niños, Child Advocates, Inc., Houston Area Women’s Center, Kids’ Meals, Ronald McDonald House Houston and countless others.

The League has actively supported DePelchin Children’s Center over years of voluntarism. DePelchin is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded in Houston in 1892 to "strengthen the lives of children by enhancing their mental health and physical wellbeing." Similar to the origin of the Junior League of Houston, DePelchin Children’s Center was founded by a woman devoted to helping her community who partnered with a friend to amplify her impact. DePelchin furthers its founder’s mission through programming focused on supporting children and families via evidence-based work in preventing maltreatment, maintaining family well-being and caring for children who have experienced trauma.

DePelchin is well known for their foster care programs, which include work with both foster and adoptive families and with birth families who are placing children for adoption. They provide programs that teach parenting skills to parents and provide in-school counseling for children at no cost to the child in a number of Houston-area schools. While DePelchin receives funding from government programs and grants, donations from private individuals, foundations and organizations such as the Junior League of Houston are instrumental to its ability to carry out its mission.

DePelchin is of great importance to Houston children, as DePelchin fills a critical need within our community in caring for children and families under stress. Texas nonprofit Children at Risk...
notes that there are 1.2 million children within the Greater Houston Area, of whom one-fourth currently live below the poverty level and another one-fourth are low-income. In 2021, the Department of Family and Protective Services substantiated reports of abuse of over 68,000 children; fatalities in Texas due to abuse and neglect increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, to 251 fatalities in 2020. The most commonly substantiated reports are for negligence, at nearly three-fourths of cases. Children’s mental health is in crisis nationwide, with recent statistics finding that nearly one in five high school students have contemplated suicide and a third reporting symptoms of depression and anxiety that interfere with their ability to function. Suicide currently ranks as the second-leading cause of death among teens and young adults under the age of 24. Children in Texas are at an increased risk of being uninsured; even with insurance, they often struggle to access the mental health care they need, rendering the mental health services provided by DePelchin critically important.

DePelchin Children’s Center plans to use the League’s Centennial Gift to construct a new volunteer center and family mental health service classroom space. The current DePelchin campus was built in 1937 to meet the needs of a much smaller city and its size limits the number of volunteers who can be present at one time. The new building will significantly increase the center’s capacity for community education and effective volunteer space.

The Centennial Gift has been years in the planning, with the Centennial Anniversary Committee first chaired by Amanda Hanks Bayles in the 2020 – 2021 League year. Alle Houstoun, 2022 – 2023 Centennial Anniversary Chairman, describes the role of the committee as one that “supports the mission of the Junior League of Houston by researching, evaluating, planning, executing and celebrating the League’s Centennial Anniversary year in 2025.” She notes that the gift is intended to serve as a collaboration between the League and DePelchin Children’s Center, to make a long-lasting impact on the Houston community, allow for future volunteer opportunities for League members, and will allow for the League’s involvement in the direction, maintenance and preservation of the project.

Within the League, the Centennial Anniversary Committee collaborated with the 2022 – 2023 Leadership Institute Training participants to support this process. The League selects a cohort of women each spring for the Leadership Institute Training (LIT) course, a rigorous program designed to provide leadership training for future League and community leaders. This April, the LIT volunteers attended training at DePelchin, where they learned about plans for the new facility. They also tied blue ribbons on the fence posts along Memorial Drive in honor of Blue Ribbon Week, a campaign initiated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to highlight child abuse and neglect. With this training, LIT candidates are the first group of League members to receive a one-hour training in mental health and suicide prevention. Margie Sutton, 2022 – 2023 Training and Education Director, hopes that participation in this training “empowered LIT participants to recognize, intervene and provide a referral to someone who is in crisis.”

The 2025 Centennial Gift to DePelchin Children’s Center will be a gift for the children of Houston, contributing to their health and well-being for years to come. The new facility at DePelchin Children’s Center, funded by so many dedicated League members, will stand as a symbol of the Junior League of Houston’s century-long commitment to improving the lives of Houston children and their families.
The Junior League of Houston, Inc. has partnered with the Baylor Teen Health Clinic (BTHC) for over 40 years. The mission of BTHC is to extend Texas Medical Center quality preventative health care to Houston’s underserved youth. They provide services that include: the prevention of adolescent pregnancy, risk reduction education, contraception, school sports physicals, treatment for STIs, HIV testing and counseling at no cost to the patients. For those patients who get pregnant, they work with the Nurse Family Partnership to provide the mother support during pregnancy and through the first year of their child’s life.

Dr. Peggy Smith, Professor, CEO and JLH sustainer, got involved with what would become the BTHC in 1973. After realizing a need to serve these patients and struggling to get funding, the Junior League of Houston presented her with a $12,000 check. This check allowed the clinic to continue to operate until larger grants came in and allowed the clinic to grow. Since then, the clinic has added services to make it a truly comprehensive clinic. From a serendipitous check from the JLH to addressing significant needs for underserved youth, the BTHC has been devoted to addressing the unique needs of Houston youth.

As of late, BTHC has incorporated an initiative known as “social determinants of health.” Dr. Smith explains, “We believe that clinic interactions can be a way that people access job training, employment and eventually careers.” Ascend, a program for patients interested in allied health careers, provides scholarships to Houston Community College navigators and therapists to help the students succeed. This is one example of how BTHC’s services have evolved strategically to benefit youth and to give them a path toward something greater. Dr. Smith shares, “Because we are able to give young women and men tools to plan their future by planning their families, we are opening up options they have never had before. Community college, opportunities in careers – it’s not just about medicine, it’s about economics.”

The Junior League of Houston primarily supports BTHC by placing volunteers in Ben Taub Hospital to connect with new mothers between the ages of 13 and 24. JLH provides these young mothers with information on BTHC and the services they provide. Another way that the League supports BTHC is through the Mentors for Moms Program. Akilah Mance, Baylor Teen Health Clinic Chairman, explains: “Members call once a month for six months to check in on moms and offer support. They also help by elevating any concerns to BTHC staff.” BTHC volunteers have recently returned to in-person service post-pandemic. This service is of utmost importance to BTHC. Dr. Smith emphasizes that “having young women provide options nonjudgmentally to patients and making sure they get referred back to BTHC if they choose” is crucial. The League also worked with the Nurse Family Partnership during the pandemic to throw a drive-through baby shower for mothers. Akilah describes working with BTHC as a “rewarding, flexible placement. It can’t be overstated how important it is for us as educated, driven and accomplished women, to help mentor teen moms; our presence in this placement is impactful.”

Celebrating 40 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP with BAYLOR TEEN HEALTH CLINIC

by: Eleanor Faulkner, News Assistant Editor
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This year marks the 75th anniversary of the partnership between the Junior League of Houston and the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS). The League first collaborated with HMNS in the 1948 – 1949 League year when it was added to its list of accepted volunteer placement agencies, alongside the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Children’s Theater and the Junior League Health Center. An early gift to the museum included an expansion of its Audio-Visual Program.

Starting in the 1961 – 1962 League year, JLH donated $45,000 over the course of three years to fund the purchase of a dinosaur to go on display at the museum. In subsequent years, the League also provided funding to support the Children’s Education Program. This money supported efforts to fabricate dioramas of the battles of San Jacinto and the Alamo, and for the purchase of a heliostat, a device that reflects sunlight in a constant direction and is used to capture solar energy for scientific research.

The partnership between HMNS and JLH was almost put on hold during the 1973 – 1974 League year when the Projects Study Committee recommended ending the Museum Docent Program at the museum. This proposal was voted down by the membership, which is a testament to the dedication of JLH members to this program. Since then, the League continues to support HMNS through the provision of trained volunteers.

Currently, League volunteers serve as docents in the museum during daytime, evening and weekend shifts. They present artifact touchcarts in the museum’s exhibit halls, targeted for a four to ten-year-old audience, and give tours to Houston Independent School District students. The HMNS placement is part of the Culture and Enrichment Impact Committee, supporting learning, awareness, exploration and discovery for children. League members can continue to support the important contributions of HMNS to the education of Houston children by volunteering in the placement during the 2023 – 2024 League year.
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