



# the COMMENTATOR

WINTER 2010

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ABILENE

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT



**CHESLEY MARTIN,  
PRESIDENT**

The cold weather seems to be leaving us for another year and spring is in the air. I have an Iris that grows and blooms each year just outside my bedroom window. Despite the cold, icy winter, it never lets me down, every year, it breaks ground, grows and blooms a lovely bluish purple flower signifying the beginning of spring – just in time for Easter. This time of year is full of new beginnings, with promises of new life and growth.

It is appropriate that this is the time of year we discuss and vote on our projects for next year. What are the needs of this community? What focus should we concentrate on as an organization? What are our members willing to give their time and energy to?

These are questions asked during the Project Evaluation process by the Board of Directors and the committee. Our membership should know and feel confident that these groups of women have researched, created and redesigned the best choices to present to the League for the 2010-2011 year. Now it's your responsibility to review these proposals, offer your comments, feedback and any changes, then stand up and be counted.

Your voice matters. Your vote counts. Then we will all move forward, standing as one as we continue to make an impact on our community in the years ahead.

It is such a joy to be a part of this organization of amazing, strong, smart, dedicated women. We may come from different backgrounds and stages in life and bring different strengths to the League, but we all join together to support our Mission: promote voluntarism, develop the potential of women and improve our community. As we move forward into the new decade, we do so sustaining the traditions of our founding and sustaining members, while breaking new ground with new ideas, new projects and new experiences.

I challenge you to look around and identify women to join our organization. We are the premiere organization for training women, and the largest of its kind in our community. We do make a difference. Invite these women to our Information Session at the end of March to hear more about the League, what we do for our community and what we can do for them.

Fondly,  
Chesley

“Breaking New Ground...Sustaining Tradition”

# PAVE-ing the Way: Providing Assistance and Volunteer Experience *by Tifani Smith*

Formerly known as Community Connection, the PAVE Project Committee has been reviewing grant and volunteer requests from other local organizations that serve area children and families.

PAVE has the unique opportunity to provide grants of up to \$750 to partnering organizations to assist them in meeting their project goals. JLA members have the ability to take part in numerous community projects thought up by various agencies when we provide funding and volunteer service to assist with the many great projects that serve our community. So far, this project year, we have given over \$10,000 to assist local organizations with projects that benefit the children in our community. We have provided 42 volunteer opportunities to our League members to assist with these local endeavors.

We continue to receive and review applications and grant requests to seeking organizations. Be checking the PAVE shift sign-up opportunities on the JLA web site to see how you can be apart of extending the arms of JLA outside of the projects we sponsor each year as a League.



- PAVE Committee:
- Chair- Tifani Smith
  - Lesli Andrews
  - Kaysha Arnold
  - Vicki Arthur
  - Allison Baldwin
  - Braid Blanks
  - Kristina Campos
  - Rebecca Correll
  - Tara Curry
  - Stephanie Duncan
  - Brooke Edmondson
  - Julie Edwards
  - Carolyn Gerney
  - Kelley Grimes
  - Randi Guerrero
  - Jennifer Haney
  - Casee Harwell
  - Tracy Holmes
  - Allicyn Ivy
  - Amylyssa Johnson
  - Laura Kellerman
  - Cassidy King
  - Andrea Leggett
  - Jessica McGaughey
  - Lindsay McGill
  - Erin Moosbrugger
  - Dina Patel
  - Lynlee Ridley
  - Melanie Sembach
  - Tiffany Sipe
  - Kylee Stockard
  - Kimberly Wilson
  - Jamie Womack

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

As you may recall, we introduced our very first Wish Child, Dafroza, in a previous WAVE update. Since then, Daf has decided upon a wish — she wishes to visit Washington D.C. to meet President Obama and/or First Lady, Michelle Obama, and do some sightseeing. Paperwork is being processed and we are working on finalizing the trip. We are unsure what Daf's trip will look like; but we do know that it will take place this Spring.

Another exciting bit of news is that we received our second Wish Child — Veronica. She is from Abilene and we met with her family to begin paperwork and discuss her wish. As we find out more, we will be sure to pass it on.

Lastly, Make-A-Wish needs your help! Our committee is creating a scrapbook for each wish we grant as a gift for the child and his/her family. Right now, we have two Wish Families to work with. Our committee is in need of ready-made scrapbook pages in primary/bright colors for Dafroza OR pastel/muted colors for Veronica. By ready-made, we are referring to pages that have details and add-ons already on them – they just need pictures and journaling. If you can help, please bring a 12x12 page to our next meeting! Thanks so much!

*Make-a-Wish Update*

- Tera Gibson
- Donna Hanna
- Co-Chairs: Katie Browning, Tiffany Loftin
- Kris Ross
- Traci Smith
- Jamie Snyder
- Nikima Stewart

# BOBBIE GEE

Bobbie Gee is well known about Abilene for her support of the arts and community programs, in particular the Abilene Philharmonic, and so she was somewhat surprised when we called on her as a Sustainer Salute. She said to me that the Philharmonic honored her in 2008 as Grande Dame at the Gold Medallion Ball, and that the Commentator highlighted her a few years back — what more could people want to know? Aside from having many new Junior League of Abilene (JLA) members who have not met her, what is so special about



Confederate Air Museum at Elmdale — Bobbie's husband Louis' uniform from WWII when he was a U.S. fighter pilot.

Bobbie is that even now as a Sustainer Emeritus, she still has her unflagging enthusiasm for women and volunteering in this community. She continues to see needs and commits her time and energy to help people improve their lives.

group's excitement at having been accepted into AJLI in record time. This was due to their quick acting member leaders who had transferred in from other leagues and understood what policies and procedures should be enacted to join AJLI. As a Provisional, she remembers what an honor and how intimidating her first year was. Throughout the 1-year course, provisional members could never miss a meeting or show up late, not even 5 minutes. These young women in their early 20s not only looked up to their 35-40 year old women leaders, but also were in awe of them — they were stylish, well-educated and capable women who got jobs done. Stylish, educated and capable — how some things just don't change!

Bobbie continues to view JLA as a wonderful organization offering excellent training opportunities for women and enriching the lives of women and

their families. She fondly recalls that her training for fundraising came from JLA experiences. It started with their citywide fundraiser, an annual garage sale where every member was required to donate \$50 worth of goods to sell. The challenge was that the items had to be numerous and in meticulous condition, so for example her husband's shirts had to be mended, buttons sewed back on, washed and ironed — and they would sell for 25 cents a piece; her children's shoes had to be cleaned and with fresh laces. Not only was this the beginning of Bobbie's fundraising experiences with Abilene groups for decades to come, it was also the start of her daughter's who took the idea with her to college and shared it with her sorority and another community. Bobbie continues to share her knack for fundraising and is active with Community Foundation of Abilene, Abilene Civic Center, Paramount Theatre, The Grace Museum, Abilene Woman's Club and Abilene Cultural Affairs Council.

Joining JLA in the 1950s was unique because it was the only place a woman could volunteer. Now, there are dozens of non-profit organizations recruiting women volunteers. Bobbie is proud that JLA is largely responsible for having created these opportunities over the last 50 years- places such as West Texas Rehab, Philharmonic Guild and RSVP just to name a few. Bobbie encourages women to join JLA today because of the high regard and community wide respect for the group. Also, she notes that the training and networking opportunities cannot be gotten anywhere else. Other groups in town still seek JLA members as volunteers for their own boards, committees and projects. She applauds today's women for doing so much with their time and carrying on the league's legacy. She sees a definite need for JLA to continue it's work in improving the lives of children and families in Abilene. She is concerned for the young people whose families are struggling with drugs, violence and lack of education. Bobbie we'll continue to do our best, and we salute you for paving the way and offering your encouragement — thank you for your energy and inspiration!



Bobbie with her son, Bob Gee, at the Abilene Philharmonic Gold Medallion Ball when she was honored as Grand Dame.

# Welcome New Provisionals!

Jearlyn Allen  
 Esther Atkinson  
 Julia Belcher  
 Dianna Benavides  
 Kim Dickenson

Jessica Jeffrey  
 Alana Jeter  
 Stephanie Jones  
 Onica King  
 Sarah Lazarowitz

Sara Norman  
 Joi Pollard  
 Tami Ratliff  
 Vanessa Roberts  
 Tamara Robinson

Candace Robles  
 Kedra Snead  
 Shannyn Taggart  
 Lucy Vinson

**NAME:** Sara Norman  
**BIRTHPLACE:** Lubbock, TX  
**OCCUPATION:** Enterprise Rent-a-Car  
**HUSBAND:** Paul Norman, Residence Life Director of Housing Abilene Christian University  
**CHILDREN:** None  
**HOBBIES:** Dancing, party planning and I online shop like it's my job.  
**OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:** Connecting Caring Communities, Beltway Park Church  
**FAVORITE FOOD:** Guacamole  
**FAVORITE MOVIE:** Superstar, Flashdance, The Incredibles, The Sweetest Thing, Baby Mama  
**FAVORITE BOOK:** Anything by Dan Brown or plays by Oscar Wilde  
**WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU KNEW YOU COULD NOT FAIL:** Be a contestant on So You Think You Can Dance and win!  
**WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE LEAGUE?:** Leadership, fresh ideas, organizing and working toward making Junior League even more amazing  
**MAGAZINE YOU READ EVERY MONTH:** Lucky and Marie Claire  
**WHAT DO YOU COLLECT:** Speeding tickets  
**PERSON YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO MEET:** Tim Gunn or Tina Fey

**NAME:** Julia Belcher  
**BIRTHPLACE:** Waco, TX; grew up in Sulphur Springs, TX  
**OCCUPATION:** Marketing Manager at Abilene Regional Medical Center  
**HUSBAND:** Andrew, Physical Therapist  
**CHILDREN:** none other than our two dogs, Bailey (3) a weimaraner & Charlie (1) a welsh terrier  
**HOBBIES:** Being with my precious husband and best friend, Andrew, working to complete my masters in Conflict Resolution from ACU, being with friends and family, & cooking  
**OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:** Highland Church of Christ, United Way, American Heart Association, March of Dimes  
**FAVORITE FOOD:** Mexican  
**FAVORITE MOVIE:** Pride & Prejudice  
**WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU KNEW YOU WOULD NOT FAIL:** Own my own business  
**WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE LEAGUE?:** I look forward to making new relationships and giving back to the Abilene community  
**MAGAZINE YOU READ EVERY MONTH:** In Style & Cooking Light  
**PERSON YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO MEET:** Audrey Hepburn or Frank Sinatra

**NAME:** Vanessa Roberts  
**BIRTHPLACE:** El Paso, Texas  
**OCCUPATION:** Dean of Student Affairs at McMurry University  
**CHILDREN:** No kids. I have two dogs. Squooshie and Sorella  
**HOBBIES:** Working on a doctorate, kickboxing, jewelry making, playing with my dogs, and spending time with family and friends  
**OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:** National Orientation Directors' Association (NODA), National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), Abilene Office of Neighbor Services Advisory Council  
**FAVORITE FOOD:** Italian  
**FAVORITE MOVIE:** Legally Blonde  
**FAVORITE BOOK:** Succulent Wild Woman  
**WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU KNEW YOU COULD NOT FAIL:** Write/publish a book  
**WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE LEAGUE:** Energy, enthusiasm, new ideas, time, and heart  
**MAGAZINE YOU READ EVERY MONTH:** In Touch and Real Simple  
**WHAT DO YOU COLLECT:** Wine bottles from special occasions  
**PERSON YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO MEET:** SARK my favorite author

## February General Meeting

FEATURING VICKI CLARK



National Trainer, Vicki Clark motivated inspired and re-energized Actives, Provisionals and Sustainers at our February General Membership Meeting.



# PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS by Kari Polk



Where has 2009 gone? It's hard to believe 2010 is here! With the start of the new calendar year comes Project Evaluation. The Project Evaluation Committee consists of seven elected Active members, the President, the President-Elect, the Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Development Director, and Community Director. Every member of the Project Evaluation Committee has a vote except the Community Director who only votes to break a tie.

The Project Evaluation Committee meets for three days (usually Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoon). The current project chairs present their projects to the Committee. They make recommendations based on their assessment of the year in areas such as committee involvement, community relationships, money needed and spent, etc. The Project Research Chairman has been investigating possible projects since May. She presents the most suitable ones to the committee.

On the final day, the Project Evaluation Committee reviews and discusses all the presentations. They take into consideration the following:

- Does the project support the Mission
- What funds are available
- What funds are needed
- What volunteers are needed
- What are the opportunities, etc.

After carefully weighing all the considerations, the committee votes on the projects to present to the membership with the

following recommendations: continuation as is; continuation with modifications; or termination.

The project slate is presented in the form of a Project Proposal Booklet at the January General Membership Meeting. During that meeting league members break out into small groups and discuss proposed projects at length.

At the March General Membership meeting, the vote occurs. If all projects pass, the Membership Development Committee begins placing the project chairs. If a project does not pass, that project's funds and volunteers are reallocated to other projects and the reallocation goes to the general membership for a vote.

Each year, we are reminded that all aspects of the Project Evaluation process are confidential and are not to be discussed outside the League. This protects those involved in the project as well as the organizations we work with.

Thank you to those who served on the Project Evaluation Committee this year. You have spent many long hours forming the best recommendation for the League. We appreciate your commitment, time and knowledge.

The Project Evaluation Committee is a great way to learn a lot about how the League selects their projects. It's an honor for me to serve on it this year.

A Provisional Punch and Pastries information meeting for prospective new provisionals will be Sunday, March 28th at 2 pm at the League House. If you have a fabulous woman in mind, please contact Dulcey Fulenwider so she can send them an invitation. [dulceyf@suddenlink.net](mailto:dulceyf@suddenlink.net)

Congrats to Brandie and George Brown on the birth of their daughter, Hudson Rylie, born February 20th at 2:01am, weighing 5 pounds. She was 2½ weeks early, but healthy and happy and was also welcomed by her big sister!

Condolences:  
Family and friends of Clara Campbell, Charter Member, Sustainer Emeritus, founding JLA Member and past (3rd) president.

Stephanie Boggins on the death of her grandmother.

Jasa Ruff on the death of her grandmother.

Sue Shackmuth on the death of her grandmother.

Cara Fournier needs photos to put on the Web site. Please e-mail them to her so she can show everyone what wonderful things JLA is doing!  
[cara@rickandcara.com](mailto:cara@rickandcara.com)

You can now access photos for upload, download, or ordering prints, from the JLA Kodak Web site.  
Go to [kodakgallery.com](http://kodakgallery.com); User name: [jrleague@abilene.com](mailto:jrleague@abilene.com); Password: abilene

Census 2010: It's in our hands – the Census begins this month. Help bring services, funding, programs and more to our community. Encourage family, friends, neighbors and co-workers to complete their easy, quick forms! Everyone counts.



## A HEAVENLY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

What a sensational weekend! Heavenly décor, Out-of-this-World shopping and first-class events and entertainment left guests starry-eyed! Thousands of visitors experienced Christmas Carousel 2009 and helped support the Junior League in our mission to improve the community and enhance the lives of children. We thank our lucky stars for the generous support from our sponsors and the members of the community that enabled us to meet our fundraising goal for 2009!

Thank you to all the league members and our families for helping us pull of another successful Christmas Carousel!! Your many hours of volunteer work and your dedication to this important cause are greatly appreciated. A special thank you to the amazing Carousel Committee for pouring your hearts, energy and time into this enormous undertaking. It is an honor to work with so many extraordinary women and to experience the joy of giving together as an organization. The stars really do shine brighter over Abilene because of the women of the Junior League. Thank you again for an amazing year and let's get ready for Christmas Carousel 2010!

*Allison Cowling, Christmas Carousel Chairman 2009*

## CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF CHRISTMAS CAROUSEL!

Good Heavens! Has the Heavenly Christmas Carousel already come and gone? I'm still nursing the "garland needle" wounds in my thumbs after wrapping all those poles. Can't you still hear Susan Wray uttering "that chair wrap just won't do." And now, the reality is that we are about to start it all over again. Kind of reminds me of the anguish of childbirth.... yet, in the end, the result was incredibly rewarding. And soon, all those past struggles are forgotten. We laugh about how we endured while we make plans to do it again.

The 2010 Christmas Carousel marks our 30th anniversary of the Junior League of Abilene's signature fundraising event. Ironically, many of our sustaining members who worked those past Carousels now have daughters serving the League. What a heritage! As we all join together to put forth an exciting plan for the upcoming year, we also seek to bring new elements to the table. We have a great group of ladies who will bring a great deal of enthusiasm to this landmark 30-year tradition. Our vision is to stir excitement within Junior League of Abilene and to stimulate a passion in the people of this community to get involved in our cause — to make an impact on the lives of children in our surrounding area. What better way to do that than having a party with a purpose!

As we set forth our plan of numerous ideas over the coming months, I hope each of you will plan to join us in delivering a stunning Christmas Carousel 2010.

*Stacy Hammond, Christmas Carousel Chair 2010*





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# the COMMENTATOR

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF ABILENE

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Permit #729

*The Junior League of Abilene is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, to developing the potential of women and to improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.*

## Return Service Requested

JANUARY			Sondra Seamster	02-03	S	Melanie Sembach	03-08	A	Candace Robles	04-04	P
Stacy Hammond	01-01	A	Lynlee Ridley	02-04	A	Joy Ramsey	03-09	S	Susan Wray	04-05	S
Denice Bailey	01-05	S	Lauren Clark	02-05	S	Julia Belcher	03-09	P	Cindi Bumann	04-05	A
Alana Jeter	01-05	P	Wendy Smartt	02-05	A	Kelly Thompson	03-10	S	Beth Worrell	04-07	S
Laura Dyer	01-08	S	Tommie Holley	02-06	S	Kylee Stockard	03-10	A	Laura Madison	04-07	A
Jessica Melson	01-08	A	Peg Kennedy	02-09	SE	Sonoma Sibley	03-12	SE	Rayme Denison	04-07	A
Cynthia Pearson	01-10	S	Kimberly Scarborough	02-10	A	Dian Stai	03-12	S	Suzanne Davis	04-08	SE
Keri Robinson	01-10	S	Patty Taliaferro	02-11	SE	Clara Campbell	03-13	SE	Tammye Smith	04-10	A
Sherri Statler	01-11	S	Gail Kaiser	02-11	S	Kimberley Cole	03-14	S	Gloria McDaniel	04-11	S
Amy Richardson	01-12	A	Joni Wood	02-11	S	Jamie Miers	03-15	S	Darlene Stevens	04-11	S
Suzie Ramsey	01-14	S	Jeri Orr	02-12	S	Kimi Newcomb	03-16	S	Jean Eckert	04-12	S
Chris Faehnle	01-15	S	Charlene Richardson	02-12	S	Kristin Marczynski	03-16	A	Tracy Patterson	04-15	A
Sheila Richardson	01-15	S	Frana Sturgill	02-12	A	Lisa Linn	03-17	S	Kristen Connolly	04-16	A
Lucy Kay Robinson	01-16	S	Sandy Meyer	02-14	S	Alexis Hughes	03-17	A	June Hodgkin	04-18	S
Carolyn Barnhill-			Lisa Cedillo	02-14	A	Cathy Mash	03-18	S	Leigh Black	04-19	S
Rodriguez	01-16	S	Tiffany Sipe	02-14	A	Debbi Lehr	03-19	A	Pam Rosenbaum	04-21	S
Jackie Batjer	01-18	S	Suzie Shahan	02-16	S	Pam Yungblut	03-20	A	Jean Stash	04-25	S
Holly DeShazo	01-18	S	Christie Galbraith	02-17	S	Casee Harwell	03-20	A	Gayle Gray	04-26	S
Stephanie Taylor	01-18	A	Megan Cheek	02-19	A	Anita Maberry	03-21	S	Ronda Hillis	04-26	S
Kristen Corder	01-18	A	Kay Loftin	02-20	S	Jackie Evatt	03-21	A	Tracy Hines	04-28	A
Lynn Dickey	01-20	S	Terry Hall	02-22	SE	Leslie Smith	03-23	S	Kay Hartgraves	04-29	S
Linda Rothwell	01-21	S	Tamara Robinson	02-24	P	Maureen Trotter	03-23	S	Melinda Toombs	04-29	A
Holly Clause	01-22	S	Cindy Haley	02-26	S	Ellen Knox	03-24	S	Emily Meador	04-30	S
Julie Grohman	01-22	A	Stephanie Boggins	02-26	A	Sandy Self	03-24	S	Kasey Kearney	04-30	A
Jackie Cox	01-23	S	Sharon McDonald	02-27	S	Patsy Jones	03-26	S			
Lisa Kuntz	01-24	S	Anne Jones	02-28	SE	Nikima Stewart	03-26	A			
Jearlyn Allen	01-24	P	Amy Etchison	02-29	S	Amy Edington	03-27	A			
Peggy Beckham	01-26	S				Kelley Messer	03-27	A			
Elizabeth Miller	01-29	A	MARCH			Jenna Dozier	03-31	P			
			Frann Smith	03-02	S						
FEBRUARY			Jennifer Harper	03-02	S	APRIL					
Sandy McNair	02-01	A	Ruth Robertson	03-03	SE	Karen Sharp	04-01	S			
Jean Shoultz	02-01	SE	Malinda Hamby	03-03	A	Paula Fiel	04-01	A			
Susan King	02-02	S	Bonibelle Kiker	03-04	S	Jasa Ruff	04-01	A			
Barbara McLeod	02-02	S	Tera Gibson	03-05	A	Jan McCaslin	04-02	S			
Angela Tomlin	02-02	A	Megan Myers	03-07	P	Audrey Music	04-04	A			



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