

Guardian Angel Gazette

From the Founder/President's Desk



Anita Gilford, RN, MSN

This is the busiest time of the year for Angels' Place and we have several important events that have happened and will happen since our last newsletter.

I want to thank **Alan Katz** and **Candy Lovitt** with the **Kenner Star** newspaper for the recent article and interview with me about Angels' Place. We also advertised

in the Kenner Star for Christmas presents for our children and their siblings. We had a very good response from the advertisement. If you wish to donate gifts for our kids, you may drop them off, unwrapped, at our office before December 9. We also give out iTunes and gift cards.



AP children getting instruction from one of their art instructor, Sherry Francalancia

Our Christmas Party, hosted by the **Archbishop Rummel High School Operation HeadStart students** is on Sunday, December 11.

Our Angels' Place children got together at our little house on Coolidge for art classes. Their motto was "we came to paint and give back." Their artwork and decorative plaques will be sold at our **Art For Angels** fundraiser on Saturday, November 12 at 6:30 PM at **Café Gambino** inside

Gambino's Bakery, 4821 Veterans Blvd., in Metairie. Last year their artwork was a sell out. Come join us and help make the magic happen again. If you do not wish to attend, but wish to give a donation, it would be greatly appreciated.

We were chosen by the **Tulane Freeman School of Business** MBA students to be one of the recipients of their business plan program. **Carl Schneider**, Angels' Place Board member, **Marion Gilford**, Vice President and I, met with the group to begin the process. It is a fantastic opportunity and will be vital for the future success of Angels' Place.



Artist Joyce Laporte teaches brush strokes to the children

God bless you.



Mary Kantlehner, Childrens Program Director

Free Willie.

I was told I had Acute Myelogenous Leukemia (AML) on July 2009 when I was six. I remember having nosebleeds and lots of bruises. I was given blood tests by my doctor and two days later my parents got a call from the doctor saying I had AML and that I had to go Tulane Medical Centre in New Orleans quickly. I remember my mom running to my grandparents house crying. I was transferred from Tulane to Children's Hospital for the Bone Marrow Transplant. I knew something was very wrong and I was really scared. From that day on, life, as I knew it, changed for me and for my family. My mommy and daddy were in shock and devastated. You know, cancer is the easy part - after the transplant is the hardest part. I felt sooooo sick. I didn't want to talk or play at all. I had VOD (venal occlusive disorder). Then I got a BK virus and now I have the Graft vs. Host, stage 4. My bones are falling apart from steroid use. My hair used to be beautiful, blonde and long but I lost it all. I was growing it long for



Locks of Love before I was diagnosed with cancer. I still miss my beautiful hair although it is growing out again. I was asked if I would ever wear a wig and I said I didn't want to wear a wig because being bald shows I'm special.

I miss going to school and being able to play like other kids my age. But, I have the support of my mommy, daddy, sisters and grandma and grandpa. My grandparents would come to see me daily in the hospital and brought me a "SunshineBox." It was a box with a present to open every day for a whole month! I really looked forward to seeing my grandparents and getting my daily gift. I love my grandparents.

I'm a big LSU and Saints fan - something I was born into. One day when I was in isolation, I was told I could come out of my room, take my mask off and take a picture with Drew Brees. I was so excited but I didn't take off my mask - you know, even Drew Brees has germs! I predict the Saints will win the Super Bowl again. Sadly, I have never been to a Saints or an LSU game because I have been too sick.

I was asked what I wanted for Christmas. One of the things I want is a Squishy cuddly toy. I have had one since I was born but my mommy had to throw away all my cuddly toys because my immune system was so weak."

When I first met Sami in March 2010, she was very sick. Chemotherapy and bone marrow transplants are not easy treatments and some children suffer lots of setbacks and complications. Samantha had a difficult time.

In Dec 2011 the doctor will once again start taking her off the steroids but this will be the third attempt. She had a central line for over a year, so as to avoid the frequent 'sticks' she has to go through. You have to be careful not to get a central line wet. Her central line also got infected several times. Finally she had that removed and a port inserted, so now she can shower and wash her hair like everyone else.



"Hi, my name is Samantha but my friends call me Sassy Sami. I am 8 years old and live with my mom, Gabby, and my dad, Shane, in Ponchatoula. I have three sisters. My most favorite food ever is my dad's medium rare steaks, mashed potatoes and salad - YUM! I love Scooby Doo and the movie

Wing Claps!

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) #725 for a kind donation

Danica Benbow for a kind donation

Carolyn Butler for a kind donation for school supplies

Laurie Rodosta Dupuy for a kind donation

Mr. & Mrs. H.D. Evans for a kind donation

J. Donald Garvey for a kind donation

Greek Orthodox Metropolis Philoptochos for a kind donation

Gulf Coast Bank & Trust Company for a kind donation

Potpourri Homemakers for a kind donation

Thomas & Mary Kennedy for a kind school supply donation

Neurology Monitoring, LLC for a kind donation

Sandra Oubre for a kind donation for answered prayers

Lillian M. Reed for a kind donation for Christmas toys

Rebecca Rhodes for a kind donation

Mrs. E. T. Robinson, III for a donation for a favor granted

School Supplies Thanks to the Lions Clubs



Jeffery Williams stopped by our Angels' Place office to drop off some school supplies. Jeffery's son, Jeffery Jr., is an Angels' Place child. Jeffery and his family belong to several local Lions Clubs and these clubs have been having fundraisers to purchase school supplies for our kids.

The **Delta Lions Club** and the **University Park Lions Cub**, along with the **Easter Seals Society** collected the money for the donation. We thank Jeffery, the Lions Clubs and the Easter Seals Society for thinking of the needs of the children of Angels' Place.

WhoDat in Booville?

Just when you thought something couldn't get any better, it does. The *Raider's Booville* was more fun than ever this year. Thank you to our hosts, **Archbishop Rummel High School Operation HeadStart Director Mark Firmin, Andrew Dinet and Russell Zimmerman, Asst. Directors, and The Operation HeadStart Students**

Angels' Place supplied the soft drinks, water, assorted chips and finger sandwiches and the Raider Booville population did the rest. Our kids had tables of fun crafts, and were escorted by Disney characters to the "land of trick or treating" where they were treated to lots of candy and games along the way. The kids participated in a costume contest and won prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place.



In Loving Memory

Anna Rickoll in memory of **Anne E. Bocskov**

Tom and Mary Kennedy in memory of **Dr. Martha Brewer**

Edward Sanchez & family in memory of **Glen F. Dastugue**

The Denny Family in memory of **Antoinette Riccobono Uddo Bossier**

The Denny Family in memory of **Anthony "Tony" Gerard Pontier**

Katy and Glen Hoffman in memory of **Ella Scroggs**

Rey Bienvenu in memory of **Salvator Teresi**

Anna Rickoll in memory of **Frances C. Tuca**

Anna Rickoll in memory of **Walter M. Whiteside**

Hi, My Name Is Sami (continued from page 1)

Samantha and her mom, Gabby, also spoke of their other family—the 4 West family. 4West is the cancer ward at Children's Hospital. 4 West families walk the path together and it is not easy. They have lost many of their little friends which is very difficult. Gabby describes the feelings of grief after another child passed, and decided she wasn't getting to know any more families. She couldn't bear any more losses. However, she received her strength to go on from Sami, who was thanking God for leading her down this path and having had the chance to know the child and all these other people. So Gabby said, "If she can be this way so can I." Gabby and Sami face another day. Samantha stills takes over 40 pills a day but is feeling relatively good now. She is still home schooled and attends clinic weekly. If she runs a fever she has to return to the hospital immediately. Sami looks forward to getting back to school in the future because she loves it. Samantha's philosophical outlook is wise beyond her years. "I thank God for every day He gives me and every breath, and I live life like I'm dying." Wise words from a very special little girl.

Thank you Sami for coming to the office to be interviewed. We always enjoy you visiting



Sami before cancer treatment

We were so excited about the great family turnout. We are always eager to visit with, and enjoy, our families.

The Disney characters, the pumpkins, the alumni, Rummel volunteers and the rest of the Operation HeadStart students were on hand to make our families feel extra special and make sure our kids had loads of fun.

You guys are very special to us and you do a stellar job! Thanks so much for all you do for Angels' Place and our families.


And, for an added bonus, Mark and crew had two large screen TVs on so Saints fans could watch the game during the festivities. Another added bonus—THE SAINTS WON! Woohoo! (continued on page 3)

Who Dat In Booville (continued)

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A big thank you goes to: Archbishop Rummel High School, Principal Michael Scalco, Faculty: Michael Mahoney, Janice Schaff, Laurie Waltzer, Donna Mascari, Denise Ofillio, Lisa Rose, and Jackie Weise Operation HeadStart Directors: Mark Firmin, Andrew Dinett, Russell Zimmerman, all the members of Operation HeadStart and their parents. As usual, you did a fabulous job. Bravo!




In Loving Memory
Shakobe Malik Peters
12/19/97–10/22/2011

Shakobe was called to his eternal home on October 22, 2011. He is completely healed and happy free from all pain.

Our deepest sympathies go out to his mother Jewel, his father Tomika and his brothers Semaj, Shyheim and Travis.

May the peace that passes all understanding be with you and the Lord keep you in the palm of his mighty hand during your time of tremendous loss



In Loving Memory
Ambra Holloway
1/7/94–10/1/2011

The Lord called Ambra home October 1, 2011. She is now happy, healed, without pain and resting in the arms of our Lord.

Our sincere condolences go out to her parents Alma and Bobby, her brother Bobby and sister Patricia. May your family find God's perfect peace and surround you with his precious love during your time of great sadness.

Thanks so Much!

Our families are so thankful and grateful to Donnie Butler and Elizabeth John for donating blood for their children.

Calendar—2011

School Supply Drive	On going
AP Christmas Party	Sunday, December 11, 2011



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Nonprofit Org.
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A non-profit organization that provides supportive services to seriously and terminally ill children and their families.