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### Mission Statement

Oasis is dedicated to feeding and clothing needy women and children and to offering them educational resources and skills to obtain meaningful employment and to break the cycle of poverty. Oasis offers these services in a safe, compassionate, nurturing environment. We are committed to fostering healthy family relationships, and we seek to preserve the dignity of people and their cultures.

### Vision Statement

To be an empowered community of women and children who have reached their fullest potential.

### Board of Directors

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 www.oasisnj.org**

**Changing Lives One Woman  
 and Child at a Time**

# The Nest

June 2010 Volume #16 Issue #2

## 2010 ANNUAL DINNER DANCE: An Extraordinary Success!



(l. to r.) Paul Onderdonk and Joe Kelly,  
 Dinner Dance Co-Chairs

This March, during one of the worst economic downturns our country has experienced in decades, our loyal supporters came through in the most incredible way: Our 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner Dance raised over \$698,000.

These extraordinary results were achieved through the leadership of Dinner Chairs **Joseph Kelly** and **Paul Onderdonk**; Journal Chair **Alfonso Daloisio, Jr.**; and Auction Chairs **Tara Roberts** and **Carolyn Vegliante**. Also key to the record-breaking results were the tireless efforts of the Oasis 2010 Dinner Dance Committee, spearheaded by **Jennifer Brady**, **Carolyn Vegliante** and **Susan Buchanan**; the Oasis staff; and the immense generosity of all who attended.

Nearly 600 friends of Oasis graced the elegant rooms of The Venetian in Garfield, making this the best-attended event we have ever hosted.

**Aldo Cascio**, owner of three popular restaurants in Wyckoff, was the 2010 Dinner Dance Honoree for his years of faithful support. In addition, a special "Spirit of OASIS" Award was presented to the **Chernalis family**, owners of **The Market Basket**. Over the years, the Chernalises have become known throughout Oasis for their legendary generosity to our community.

The Dinner Dance featured a live-ly cocktail hour, delicious dinner,



Live Auctioneer  
 Tim Perneti

and silent and live auctions. A special thank-you goes to **Tim Perneti**, Rutgers Athletic Director, who took our live auction to new heights this year through his easygoing wit and charm!

The kids from Oasis' Michael Wagner After-School Program worked hard with volunteer student-teachers from **In the Spotlight** for weeks to develop a high-energy dance performance for the enjoyment of Dinner Dance guests. This performance is always eagerly anticipated and, as usual, was one of the highlights of the evening.

### Our 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner Dance Sponsors

#### Event Sponsors

The Kelly and Onderdonk Families

Railroad Construction  
 Family of Companies

Rapid Pump and Meter  
 Service Co., Inc.

#### Dinner Sponsor

The Market Basket

#### Cocktail Sponsor

The Napoli Family

Amidst the increasing poverty of the women and children who live in Paterson, Oasis is a beacon of hope. Your exceptional hard work and generosity are keeping the mission of Oasis alive, and thus, keeping hope alive in the hearts of the women and children we serve. On their behalf, we thank you!

### A huge thank-you goes out to our Dinner Dance Committee for their outstanding efforts!



**Front row (l. to r.):** Leslie Rubacky, Carolyn Vegliante, Susan Buchanan, Jennifer Brady  
**Back Row (l. to r.):** Cathie Berger, Patti Reynolds DePhillips, Jamie Hoff, Jean Spatz, Janet Buczek, Tara Roberts, Doreen Merkovsky, Karen Hovey, Jean Gaviglio, Maria Onderdonk, Kathy Schappert, Nancy Hayden, Lori Pfeifer, Erica Mazzilli, Julie Sasso

**Not pictured:** Michele Alexander, Mary Boylan, Donna Brady, Jane Brady, Peggy Chagares, Dana Christie, Nancy DenBlaker, Ginny Hoag, Evelyn Innocenti, Liz Morris, Patty Murphy, Lauren Powers, Lilliam Ryan, Rosa Schiro, Dee Silva, Jennifer Tanis, Jennifer Tedford, Madeline VanDuren, Rachel Whiteman, Carolyn Ziegelheim

### SAVE THE DATE!

We hope you will join us for our next Annual Dinner Dance on March 11, 2011, at the Venetian in Garfield.

## Our Biggest and Best Easter Event Ever

“Biggest” and “best” seem to be the current themes here at Oasis! We had an attendance of **491** for our Easter holiday lunch, the most we have ever had.

Had we known this a couple of days before the festivities began, it would have seemed like a mixed blessing. At that point, we realized we did not have nearly enough Easter baskets for the normal crowd we expected. We reached out to our volunteers and donors and ended up with a total of **437** baskets.

A special mention goes to **Maria Koukoularis** and **Allyson Galinis**, who continued a tradition they began eight years ago by heading up a team of volunteers that assembled **310** Easter baskets. **Amy Nidds** and **Karen Grassi** gathered and donated goodies for the 310 baskets that were assembled. We are so grateful to all of the volunteers who contributed their hearts and hands to this effort. Between these baskets and those so generously donated for the event, not only were there enough to provide each child with one – we had

extra baskets that we donated to agencies that were not as lucky as Oasis!

**Chris Zaccardi** has established another eagerly anticipated tradition here at Oasis. Each year when we have our Easter celebration, she brings supplies and a crew of volunteers for face painting. As always, the children gleefully lined up for this treat.

Each child also had a visit with **Jim “Easter Bunny” Walsh**. They were delighted with the Easter baskets he handed out to them!

With their trademark generosity, **The Market Basket** provided a delectable holiday meal of turkey-and-stuffing with all the trimmings and dessert. It was all served up by our cheerful crew of volunteers.

It is difficult to express how deeply we appreciate the unstinting generosity of time, of money and of spirit shown by the many volunteers and donors who helped make this the biggest and best Easter event ever for our grateful community!



(l. to r.) Tom Donovan, Teacher; Nelly; Angela; Marita; Samantha; Sawsan; Karen; Mercedes; Caroline Waterman, Executive Director; Roy Schrumph, Coordinator of Adult Education. Not pictured: Phil Tazza, Volunteer Teacher.

## Our Brand-New Oasis Employment Program

There was a glaring need here at Oasis: Increasingly, we were aware that our students diligently worked to achieve new levels of English in their ESL classes, obtained their GEDs, mastered their Computer Skills classes, and then – nothing. Between these high-achieving students and their goal of a job was a gap in basic employment skills, beginning with how to search for a job.

In response to this need, we launched the first session of our Oasis Employment Program (OEP) on February 22. It was taught by GED Teacher **Tom Donovan** and Volunteer Teacher **Phil Tazza**.

During each 18-day session, students attend two-hour workshops at Oasis on topics including employment readiness, assessments and evaluations; attitude, values and choices; career exploration; employment preparation; resume writing; interviewing techniques; and maintaining employment.

On April 14, we proudly celebrated the graduation of our first class!

All graduates are invited to attend Phase 2 of our new program, which involves searching for jobs online at Oasis and following up on job leads.

We hired one of our Phase 1 graduates, **Samantha**, to work as a part-time maintenance assistant as she waits for the opportunity to receive her Disabled Vocational Rehab assessment. As a graduate, she now attends Phase 2. “One important thing I learned,” says Sam, “is that you don’t sell yourself by saying, ‘I want a job’, but by revealing your interests. But what stuck out for me most was the information about networking and how important it is to continue networking wherever you go, whoever you come across, because you never know.” She concluded, “It was a good group. Mr. Phil and Mr. Donovan were very, very helpful.”

## Jim Walsh Honored



On April 3, **Wafa House** presented its Community Service Award for 2010 to our own **Jim Walsh**, Director of Social Services and Youth Development, at its Annual Gala Fundraiser.

Jim was honored because of his key role in furthering Wafa House’s mission of empowering and preserving the family unit in the Islamic community here in Paterson. They provide domestic violence counseling and many other services.

Jim richly deserves this honor, and the entire staff of Oasis applauds him!

## Earth Day at Oasis

Oasis Co-Founder **Ann Wagner** led an Earth Day celebration in the Peace Room on April 22. It included asking the women to reflect on how nature had affected each one of their lives as they were growing up. Ann then led a round of drumming for the earth by the students. They concluded the ceremony by going outside and planting flowers in the two big pots outside our front door.

During Community Lunch, there was a brief drumming performance to celebrate the day with the general community. Student **Sawsan Jedaan’s** performance was such a big hit that from now on there will be brief musical performances at lunchtime each Friday. There has been such a strong feeling of community during the special musical lunches! Everyone is welcome to come and take part in this magical experience.



Relaxing with horticultural therapy

## Oasis Celebrates Good Health

Nothing is more important than good health! To that end, more than 140 students attended our Spring Health Fair on April 16.

Seventy-five students had their blood pressure checked by *St. Joseph's Hospital* staff, who also gave helpful recommendations. St. Joe's also distributed information on Rehabilitative Medicine, Exercise, Breast Exams, Women's Heart Health, Infant Massage, Early Intervention, Diabetes Prevention and Treatment.

*Straight and Narrow* provided information on their childcare services.

*Dr. Carolyn De Maria* talked about Childhood Nutrition, Immunization, and Accident Prevention.

Volunteer *Dr. Lilliam Ryan*, assisted by Oasis Grant Writer *Doreen Merkovsky*, ran an absolutely delightful, crowd-pleasing workshop on Horticultural Therapy. Oasis volunteers *Susan Furey* and *Gail DeVito* presented their popular Self-esteem and Spirituality workshop, which is always well received by the students.

*Lighthouse Pregnancy Resource Center* personnel were available to give information on their services to the women.

*Northern N.J. Maternal/Child Health Consortium* informed the women about their programs: Postpartum Depression Education, Perinatal Addictions Prevention, Nurse/Family Partnership, and the Healthy Families/TIP Program, which offers home visitation services.

The *Paterson Health Department* contributed their HIV Mobile Unit, which did HIV screenings.

*Dr. Alexander Haselkorn's* office of Internal Medicine sent a representative to discuss Smoking Cessation.

### Meanwhile, Back at the Y...

In March, 35 After-School kids took a bus out to their own children's Health Fair hosted by the *Wyckoff YMCA*. They were accompanied by Nurturing Center Aide *Gladys Lindo*, volunteer *Yacqueline "Jackie" Cruz*, and interns *Priscilla Dueñas* and *Linda Youkon*.

The children had a most excellent adventure! They learned how to nourish themselves with nutritious food at a Healthy Eating station and got to create their own snacks at a "Kids in the Kitchen" workshop. The yogurt, fruit and granola cups they enjoyed showed them that snacks can be both healthy *and* tasty.

The kids had plenty of opportunity for fun and vigorous activity on the obstacle course, enjoying karate and flag-tag, and moving to music.

One of the most popular events was a presentation by two contestants from the reality show favorite, *Biggest Loser*. They not only discussed how their excess weight had negatively impacted their childhoods, but how unkind it is to bully people who are overweight.

Most importantly, the children learned that good health can be synonymous with good times and fun!

## 2010 Capital Campaign Kick-off: Burn the Mortgage!

To those who are new to Oasis, and even to those who are not, it is easy to forget that we moved into our beautiful, functional and roomy new building only a couple of years ago.

In 2007, we were getting squeezed for space due to the many women eager for our services, and our dilapidated building was exposing the women, their children and our staff to health hazards like peeling lead paint, lack of heat in the winter and stifling heat in the summer. On days that were too cold or too hot, we were forced to close.

This led to our first Capital Campaign, through which we raised \$2 million toward the \$5 million mortgage that enabled us to build a true oasis for the women at 59 Mill Street.

**At this time we need your help to continue to make our services a reality.** As the number of our programs and enrollment continue

to soar, we are relying upon your generosity to help pay off our \$3 million mortgage balance so we can continue to offer our uniquely comprehensive and vitally needed programs. Private donations have always been critical to keeping our mission alive.

This month, we kicked off our Capital Campaign with an evening hosted by Oasis Board member *Susan LaMonica Pash* at her home and graced by Broadway singer *Rita Harvey*, who was accompanied by pianist *Dan Walker*. The theme of this second phase of our Capital Campaign is "burn the mortgage," and we sincerely hope that you will help us do just that!

If you are interested in learning more about contributing to our Capital Campaign, please contact Jocelyn at 973-881-8307, ext.107, or visit our website at [www.oasisnj.org](http://www.oasisnj.org).

## Cooking from Our Hearts

*Audrey Grier*, ESL Level 2 Teacher, was inspired by the richly diverse backgrounds of her students with an intriguing idea: Why not develop a collection of recipes showcasing their varied cultural backgrounds?

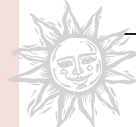
Thus was born *Recipes from the Heart: An Oasis Cookbook*. The ESL students contributed delicious recipes from eight different countries: Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Morocco and Peru. To enhance the unique flavor of the cookbook, the students'

writing was not altered for grammar or spelling unless it was necessary for understanding the recipes.



The printing and graphic design was donated by Board Member *Mary Conway's* firm *DialAmerica*. *Fred Ruh* of DialAmerica created the vibrant design.

Copies of this unique cookbook are still available for \$15 each. If you would like one or more, please visit our website or call Jocelyn at (973) 881-8307, ext. 107.



## Summer Paradise in May

*Diana Ross* of *Town and Country Apothecary* in Ridgewood, New Jersey, single-handedly created a Summer Paradise for Oasis. On May 13, over 60 women joined together to raise money for Oasis while viewing fresh *Leapin' Lizards* summer fashions and having one heck of a good time!

This fun and lively fashion show

was held at *Winberie's Restaurant*, which created an appetizing menu for the evening. Women lined up to have their brows done by renowned celebrity brow guru *Ramy*.

The evening's festivities raised \$5,000 to support Oasis. Thank you, Diana, for your unstinting efforts on behalf of the community we serve!



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Visit [www.oasisnj.org](http://www.oasisnj.org)  
 to view the brand-new  
 Oasis video we just  
 uploaded to our website!



**SAVE THESE DATES!** Two of our most popular events are just around the corner...

OASIS  
**Oktoberfest**  
**October 15, 2010**  
 Our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Oktoberfest promises to be as lively as ever! Enjoy German food, wine and beer, a live German band, and authentic costumes and dancing.  
 At the same time, you will be helping to provide food, clothing and education for the women and children served by Oasis.  
 We hope to see you at the festivities!



OASIS  
**GOLF** Outing  
 Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Golf Classic is scheduled for October 18 at the beautiful **High Mountain Golf Club**. Come out to play a round of golf with colleagues and friends! We invite you to be a sponsor, put together a foursome, or sign yourself up to be placed on a team. Golf rounds and contests of skill will be followed by a festive cocktail hour and dinner.  
 Please join us for a wonderful time while supporting the Mission of Oasis!  
**October 18, 2010**



For more information about both of these events, visit our website at [www.oasisnj.org](http://www.oasisnj.org) and click on the **Upcoming Events** tab. Or contact us at **973-881-8307**.