

dignity and peace

eliminating racism
empowering women **ywca**

spring 2010

issue 44

charleston, wv

on the cover: blacking out racism

by valerie ray

best in show winner

ywca eliminating

racism art contest



RACISM

Photo by Steve Payne

02 standing against racism

03 stop the hate rally

04 executive director letter

05 ywca people page

06 program thank you notes

07 spotlight on a family



thanks to 50+ organizations statewide for joining us in our stand against racism

Against

In collaboration with 71 YWCA associations across the nation, nearly 2,000 community partners (including the organizations listed

below), and an anticipated 250,000 individual participants, the YWCA of Charleston hosted our first ever Stand Against Racism Day on April 30. Groups here in the Kanawha Valley got creative with their “stands,” – hosting film viewings, poetry readings, petition signings, conference calls, presentations, sermons, group discussions and more. We are so thankful to the following groups for strengthening this community by promoting diversity and standing against racism!

ACLU WV; Asbury United Methodist Church; Capitol Market; CASCI Service Company; Charleston Area Alliance; Charleston Human Rights Commission; Charleston Police Department; Chillag Dunlap Family; Civil Rights Division of the West Virginia Attorney General’s Office; Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences of WV; Create WV; Congregation B’Nai Jacob; Covenant House; Dingess-Rum Properties, Inc.; Dinsmore and Shohl LLP; Ellen’s Homemade Ice Cream; The Family Refuge Center; The Forbes Group LLC; Highlawn Presbyterian Church; Islamic Center; Kanawha County Diversity Cadre, Sissonville; Legal Aid of WV; Me and My Peeps; Mountaineer Montessori; OneKanawha; Partnership for Furthering Arts and Education; Planet Earth Club; Princeton Public Library; Rape and Domestic Violence Center; Robin’s Desktop/Rand Community Center; SAFE; Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE); Saint Matthews Episcopal Church; South Charleston Public Library; Taylor Books; Temple Israel; Toyota Motors Manufacturing; Tug Valley Recovery Shelter; Unitarian Universalist Congregation; United Way of Central WV; West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence; West Virginia Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission; West Virginia FREE; West Virginia Human Rights Commission; West Virginia Media Management (WBOY-TV Clarksburg, WVNS TV Ghent, WOWK-TV Huntington, WTRF-TV Wheeling); West Virginia Women’s Commission; Women’s Aid in Crisis, Elkins; Women’s Aid in Crisis, Sutton; Women’s Resource Center; WVSU Student

Activities; YWCA Family Violence Prevention Program, Wheeling; YWCA Past & Present Gently Used Clothing Store; YWCA Resolve Family Abuse Program. (List denotes organizations signed up as of 4/19/10)



on the cover

Meet **Valerie Ray**, whose submission “Blacking Out Racism” won best in show at our Eliminating Racism Art Contest and earned a place on this issue’s cover.

business on board

Last month, the YWCA of Charleston was one of 24 employers to earn the Kids Count designation “Business on Board With Childcare!” We are honored to be recognized by the **West Virginia Kids Count Fund** for supporting our employees’ childcare needs. Considering our mission of empowering women, it’s a no-brainer to us! Thanks to the WV Kids Count Fund for leading the efforts in our state to provide information about the well-being of children, and to educate parents, policymakers and the public about our children’s needs.



Heather Snyder, Office Manager at the YWCA Mel Wolf Center accepts the award on behalf of the YWCA.

a gift that keeps giving

The YWCA Sojourner’s Shelter has a brand new van for our Children’s Education and Enrichment Program, thanks to the generosity of **Wilson Fund, Marvin Masters and Beau-Tea-Full Moments Tearoom**. On behalf of the hundreds of homeless children we serve each year, we can’t thank you enough!



stop the hate rally

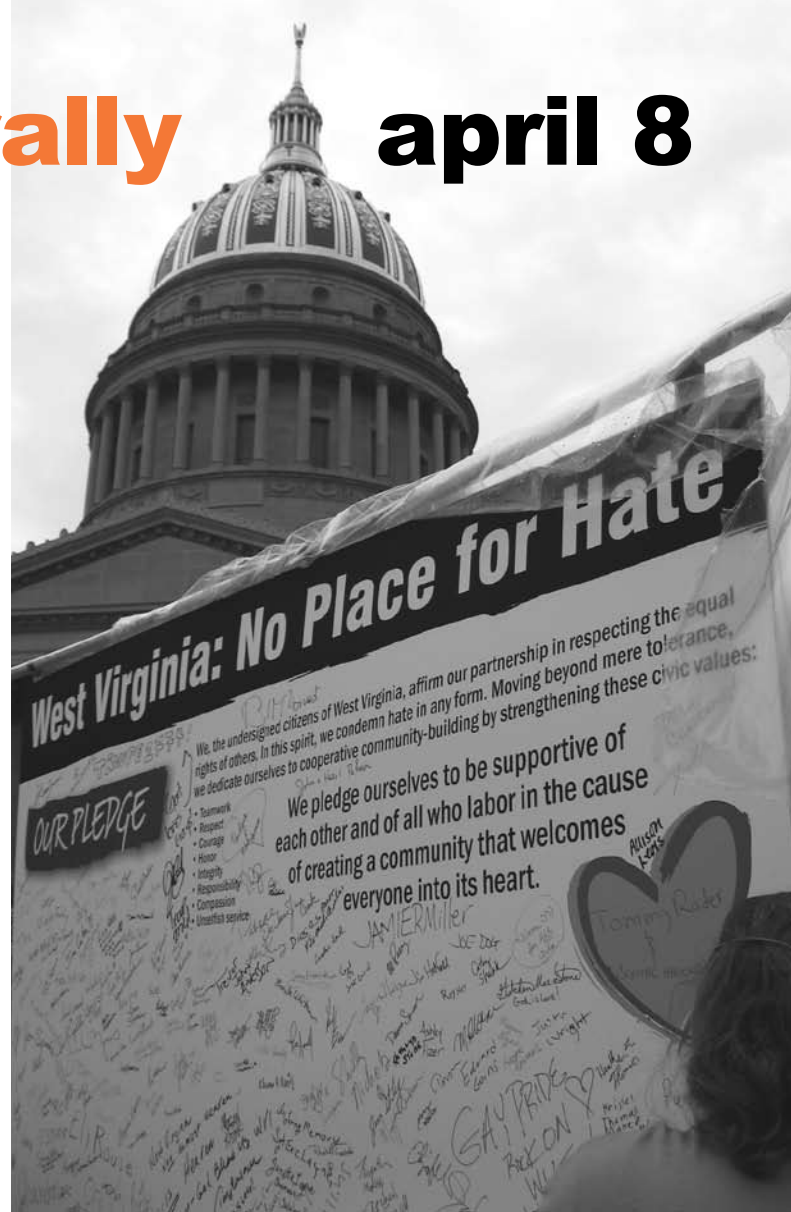
april 8

On April 8, the YWCA helped lead our community in one united, public statement: West Virginia is No Place for Hate. Teaming with leaders from entities across our valley and state, we quickly organized this event on the front steps of the WV State Capitol in response to targeted words and demonstrations of hatred toward various institutions in our community. Collectively, we encouraged all citizens who sought to stand up and speak out against hate to participate in this powerful event – moving the spotlight away from hate and toward positive expressions of peace, love and inclusiveness.

Despite the drizzle, more than 300 citizens from all walks of life joined our chorus of reassurance and care for victims of hatred and intimidation. Some members of the crowd brought copies of the full page “West Virginia – a Community of Love” newspaper ad we helped sponsor and the “West Virginia is No Place for Hate” yard signs that were graciously produced by the **WV Chamber of Commerce**. Others made their own signs and t-shirts. Many more simply made a statement with their attendance – plus we may have even brought a few indiscriminate joggers, dog walkers, and cyclists into our midst!

After singer-songwriter Ron Sowell led the crowd in song, Rev. Mel Hoover of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation guided us through a moment of silence, a call-and-response pledge that “We Stand United,” and shout-outs to the dozens of religious, civic, political, social, educational, and many other types of entities represented. Each attendee was encouraged to sign the official pledge (pictured at right). As you can see, while our voices were strong, our message was peace.

Below: Ralliers clap and sing to “This Land is Your Land” and “Lean on Me.”



Above: “Our Pledge,” signed by hundreds of rally attendees.

Below: Members of the YWCA board of directors showed their support. (L to R) Karen Farmer, Belle Manjong, Erin Magee, Jane Powell, Freddy Davis, Fonda Elliot, Kara Williams, Sue Sergi, Ashley Pack, and Janet James.



YWCA Alicia McCormick
Homes for Battered &
Homeless Women & Children
(304) 415-2682

YWCA Health
Promotion Services -
Nautilus
(304) 340-3550

ywca
supporting
stores

YWCA Past & Present
Gently Used
Clothing Store
(304) 340-3646

YWCA 2nd Seating
Gently Used
Furniture Store
(304) 344-1348



a message from ywca executive director

debby weinstein

They say “April showers bring May flowers,” but to the YWCA, April has brought so much more. By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have hosted our first ever Stand Against Racism, our second annual Eliminating Racism Art Contest, and an impromptu Stop the Hate Rally. I am so excited about the blossoming of our recently launched Racial Justice Program. “Eliminating racism” is the first phrase found in the YWCA’s mission statement, and joins our other goals of empowering women and providing peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

The Stand Against Racism movement was a collaboration of 71 YWCA associations nationwide and nearly 2,000 community partners including our participating organizations listed on page 2. More than 250,000 people took a Stand Against Racism together on this day. Governor Joe Manchin III officially declared April 30 “Stand Against Racism Day” in the Mountain State on our behalf! In partnership with the Clay Center, we hosted an open house for our art contest as the YWCA of Charleston’s individual “stand” event and were thrilled with all 174 unique entries from artists of all ages.

April also presented us with an opportunity to join other community leaders in promoting inclusiveness. We were proud to be a lead entity in developing a strategy for responding to acts of hate in our community. In addition, our Racial Justice Program is currently working on a statewide online directory of resources targeted to law enforcement programs serving victims of hate crimes. This directory, slated to go live next month, is a necessary component to improving services for victims of hate crimes. Through these programs and initiatives, we will continue our mission of eliminating racism and affecting real change in our world.

fresh faces at the ywca

Meet the newest members of the YWCA senior management team: **Ellen Allen**, Director of the YWCA Resolve Family Abuse Program, and **Lesli Beavers**, Director of Development.



Prior to joining the YWCA team, **Ellen Allen** served as Director of the Family Refuge Center – a licensed domestic violence and sexual assault program in Lewisburg, WV. Before beginning her work to help end violence against women, Ellen worked in the private sector and operated her own businesses in two states, though her career has long

included social activism. She was appointed to the WV Human Rights Commission in 2006 by Governor Joe Manchin, and is a past member of the WV Women’s Commission. Ellen currently serves on the WV Coalition Against Domestic Violence Board of Directors and the WV Foundation for Rape and Information Services. She has also served as an adjunct lecturer on the dynamics of domestic violence at the WV School of Osteopathic Medicine. A graduate of Concord University, Ellen holds an MBA from Averett University in Danville, Virginia.



A native of Dunbar, WV, **Lesli Beavers** graduated in 2006 from West Virginia Wesleyan College with a B.A. in Political Science/Criminal Justice. While at Wesleyan, Lesli was involved with the Institute for Social and Community Research and interned with the Buckhannon City Police Department.

After graduation, Lesli spent a year in Buckhannon working as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer as the Leadership Program Coordinator in the West Virginia Wesleyan Office of Community Engagement. There she helped facilitate volunteer relationships between students and several Upshur County social service agencies, created a site-based training model for students to create more effective community service events, and was active with the Upshur County Family Resource Network. Lesli came back to Charleston and joined the YWCA staff as the Executive Assistant in April 2009 and was promoted to Director of Development in November.

summer save the dates

tricky fish ywca nights

Every Tuesday in July at Tricky Fish Restaurant

bunco night

Thursday, July 22 at Edgewood Country Club

girls night out - luau on the lawn

Thursday, August 12 at Sunrise Mansion

ywca people

a tribute to the many faces of the ywca of charleston

the program participants, volunteers, staff, and donors that make our work worthwhile

holidays are a treat!

Residents of the YWCA Shanklin Center and YWCA Alicia McCormick Homes thank the **Kanawha County Association of Retired School Employees** for recognizing their birthdays and to **SunTrust Bank** for Easter gifts and an egg hunt!



Easter Tea Party enjoyed by residents of the YWCA Shanklin Center.
Front: Loretta Epling, Glenna Hughes, Nelda Broughton, Beulah Lewis
Back: Frances M. Holland, Kyla Nichols, Karen Smith, Sandy Benedict



verizon helps curb teen dating violence

Left: **Joe Long** of the **Verizon Foundation** awards a \$20,000 grant to the YWCA Resolve Teen Dating Violence Prevention Program.

celebrating black history

Right: **Tanisha Harmon** reads the poem "Phenomenal Woman" by Maya Angelou.
Below: **Members of the First Baptist Church** perform a traditional dance for residents of the YWCA Shanklin Center and Alicia McCormick Homes.



giving hope to domestic violence victims

On behalf of the domestic violence victims we serve, YWCA Resolve Family Abuse Program is grateful to: **Beverly Cunningham** for Mary Kay items, clothing, and monetary donations; **Edmond Derderian** for numerous bags of clothing and household items; **Erica Fuller** for bedding and linens; **Ladies Ministry of Elkview Baptist Church** for numerous handbags with personal items; **Office of the State Auditor** for cell phones; **Woman's Club of South Charleston** for linens and personal items; **United Methodist Women - First Church** for linens and towels; and to **all who donated cell phones**.

kids say thanks

Thank you to **members of the University of Charleston football team** for volunteering their time at the YWCA Mel Wolf Center for Child Development, and to the **United Way** for donating puppets for the children.



Volunteers modeled fashions from Cache, Chico's and Kelley's Mens Shop at the Soroptimist International Fashion Show to benefit YWCA Sojourner's last month. Special thanks also to the numerous individuals and companies that donated door prizes, auction baskets and flowers.



Thanks to Jeanne King Cochran for providing live piano accompaniment and Ric Cochran for being the event's fabulous emcee!

sojourner's thanks

The YWCA Sojourner's Shelter thanks: **Charleston Friends; Clara Clay; Joan Engle; First Presbyterian Church; Terri Gallian and friends of EQT; Mr. and Mrs. George L. Hamilton; Claudia Jones; Kanawha United Presbyterian Church; Betty Koontz; Barbara Lacy; Rick & Kimberly Mallory; Lee A. Mitchell; Redeemer Lutheran Church; Rudd Equipment; Ruthlawn Kindergarten; St. Andrew Presbyterian Church Crusader SS Class; and the Honorable Robert E. Wise Jr. and Mrs. Sandy Wise.** Special thanks to **Kenneth Pike with Nazarene Church of Davis Creek** for making much-needed repairs in Room 10; **Soroptimist International of Charleston** for hosting its 23rd Annual Fashion Show to benefit our shelter; **Unity of Kanawha Valley** for their quarterly donation of much-needed supplies; and to **all the volunteers** who give of their time and resources to help improve our facility both inside and out, assist us in daily tasks, prepare special Sunday dinners, host various fundraisers and more.



Above: YWCA Past & Present celebrated the shop's extreme makeover with an open house on April 10.

Right: YWCA Past & Present staffer Craig Auge and store manager Heidi Richardson Evans.

Photos courtesy of Rudy Panucci.



Members of the St. Francis Hospital Domestic Violence Committee accept the 3rd Annual Hope Award from the YWCA Resolve Program for their tireless dedication to improving the lives of domestic violence victims and their children through service, support and awareness.

farewell, kind and generous friends

On behalf of the YWCA Sojourner's Shelter and the Roark-Sullivan Lifeway Center, we send a huge THANK YOU to **Wellington's of Scarlet Oaks** co-owners **Tom and Bobbie Grant, Dave Frazier** and their wonderful staff. You have been a true friend to the community, to our agencies, and most importantly to homeless individuals and families you never even met. For more than two decades, you hosted our Thanksgiving Benefit Dinner to Aid the Homeless and asked nothing in return. You will surely be missed by all. **Thank you!**



YWCA Resolve staff members attending Domestic Violence Awareness Day at the WV Legislature on February 3.



spotlight on:

gretchen young – a working mother, whose child finds the ywca childcare a home away from home

“Soon after my daughter was born, I began looking for a reputable and affordable childcare provider to assist me as a working mother. After contacting several local centers listed in the phonebook, I decided to give the YWCA Mel Wolf Center for Child Development (then called the YWCA Child Enrichment Center) a try – primarily because their facility is located in downtown Charleston just minutes from my office and I couldn’t find a better price anywhere.”

“At first I was unsure how long I would keep my daughter there, but the center exceeded my expectations – which are admittedly high due to my background in elementary education. The teachers provide hands-on activities for the children in a secure and educational environment. They are approachable, helpful and communicate well with the parents, and they even have a parent/teacher conference scheduled to continue that open line of communication.”

“My daughter, now age two-and-a-half, has developmentally reached milestone after milestone far beyond typical for her age group. I constantly receive comments from family and friends who can’t believe how advanced her language and social skills have become. Diversity is also very important to me, and I think it is so essential to have her in an environment where she can meet and learn about other children from all cultures, races and walks of life. I couldn’t be more satisfied with the services my family has received from this program.”



“I constantly receive comments from family and friends who simply can’t believe how advanced [my daughter’s] language and social skills have become.”
~ Gretchen Young, Lender Support at BB&T

sojourner’s food revolution

If you’ve driven down Washington Street East recently, you may have been caught by surprise at the sight of a huge new vegetable garden! This 70’ x 100’ garden near the corner of Ruffner Avenue is the YWCA Sojourner’s Shelter’s first ever garden project. Its goal is threefold:

- 1) To promote healthier eating habits in shelter residents
- 2) To perpetuate our mission of “teaching a person to fish” by empowering residents to learn new skills and develop pride in their accomplishments
- 3) To help decrease costs associated with providing three nutritious meals and two healthy snacks daily (Sojourner’s provided 79,905 meals to 1,234 homeless individuals last year, so we go through a lot of food!)

This project is voluntary and will not be a requirement to residents if they have no desire to participate; however, we

hope that the skills learned through this project will encourage families to grow their own gardens once they move out.

The garden will be handicap accessible with raised beds to encourage maximum participation. A non fenced-in “vandal garden” will also be established so neighborhood residents can help themselves to any fresh vegetables planted there. Special thanks to **Councilman**

Robert Sheets, CURA, City of Charleston, Junior League of Charleston, Stephanie Richards, John Porter, Delores Barber, Valley Gardens and our **many dedicated volunteers.**

Garden supplies and volunteers for this project are always welcome!



inside

- taking a stand against racism
- eliminating racism through art
- stoping hate with love
- spotlight on a family
- food revolution
- summer save-the-dates
- fresh faces
- extreme makeover
- ...and much more!



get ready for summer...camp!

Enrollment for YWCA Mel Wolf Center (formerly CEC) summer camp has begun! From June 14 until the fall school term starts, our summer camp offers children ages 6 (*must have completed kindergarten*) through 12 stimulating educational and recreational activities – including swimming, bowling, hiking, field trips, crafts, and guest speakers. Cost is \$100 per week and *Connect* accepted.

Call the center at (304)
340-3560 for info and
registration forms today.

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca



facebook.com/ywcacharleston
twitter.com/ywcacharleston
youtube.com/ywcacharleston
ywcacharleston.blogspot.com

(304) 340-3594

ywcacharleston.org

Charleston, WV 25301

1114 Quarrier Street

charleston, wv

YWCA
eliminating racism
empowering women

Change service requested.

strong alone.
fearless together.

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 47
Charleston, WV 25301