

The Jenna Foundation for Non-Violence

Issue 10

Autumn 2005



Executive Notes

Janice Grieshaber

There is so much going on at the Jenna Foundation right now that it's hard to find the words or the space in a somewhat size-restricted newsletter to convey them all to you. Let me start by saying that they are uniformly good!

Starting at home base, within the office we are seeing so much activity and growth that this is the seminal point for everything else. We have a new addition to staff in a "Jobs Plus!" client, provided



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by this agency and paid by them in a partnership that provides nonprofits like ours with clerical and general office assistance while we help train them to go out and start a new career. It is a real boost to our efficiency and a good feeling to know that someone is getting a solid head start in their job search by spending time helping us. In addition to this support, we always have volunteers and interns from local colleges, and this year will be no different. While we do not have a formal intern for the fall semester, we do have a volunteer. Spring and next summer see us already locked-in with two great interns from SU and the University of Richmond (Va.), respectively. We are able to take on two interns a semester so still have room, but we're delighted to have been approached so early on by students who obviously consider this a desirable internship assignment.

The help this brings us in the office allows all of us to focus on the job at hand, namely the growth and oversight of the mentoring program. The Juvenile Justice grant has gone a long way toward helping us to expand our vision, to increase the number of elementary schools involved in the Syracuse City School District, and to bring more to the table for each of these schools by way of supplies and other supports to their own programs and environment.

Jenna believed strongly in the importance of the individual in creating a peaceful world. She worked hard to provide, within her limited time and resources, as much of her "self" as she could, using her time, humor, honesty and integrity to contribute to the world around her. She knew that, as our favorite quote says, "we must become the change that we seek" (Gandhi), and she lived that every day.

It is this kind of understanding of individual responsibility that brings high school students to us for a place as a mentor in their school's program. It is this grasp of the need for good role models and healthy peer relationships that guide children down the right path that resonates with our teen leaders enrolled in the Mentors for Jenna programs.

We need more teens who "get it," who want to use what they've learned in their own lives and through our training, to guide these fifth graders each month, teaching our lessons and creating important relationships that are the foundation for peace in our community.

Jenna would be proud to know each and every one of the high school students who have gone through our program. These are not necessarily the kids you see at the football banquet (though some are), nor will most of them be valedictorian. They aren't the Homecoming Queens or the captain of the Lacrosse team (though many could be). They are just good kids who understand how very important they are, and how very important every single person is, contributing what they can, doing what they can, and living each day with the understanding that we are all responsible for one another and that their behavior helps to set a standard that makes our community a good place to live.

Let's help them to do the job. They need more mentors in the city schools, and we will be recruiting year-round for the next program training, to be held in summer of '06. We have a huge job ahead of us, as we attempt to integrate every single fifth grade student in the city of Syracuse into the program. We need many, many more mentors over the next few years and will be seeking high school students from grades 9-12 to do the job. We also seek your donations to help us to sustain this important work, to pay our staff what they deserve for working as hard as they do, and to hire additional staff as we grow.

We all play a role. We all can shoulder our own individual responsibility, just as the teens do, and help ... either by helping us to recruit, or through financial support through donations or participation in any of our fundraisers. And when you see a high school kid wearing a Mentor for Jenna shirt, or a Jenna Foundation pin, thank them. They do a great job!

Mentors for Jenna

A Principal's Perspective
by Steve Wolf, Dr. Weeks Elementary

When Tracy Caryl, Mentor Coordinator asked me if I would commit my feelings and experiences with the Jenna Foundation for Non-Violence to writing, I was extremely flattered and excited! Being on the receiving end of what the Foundation, in particular "Mentors for Jenna," has provided our school with, this is the least I could do.

Over the past two years, our fifth-grade students have been enjoying their mentoring relationships very much. They look forward to the days when their mentors arrive and are able to have conversations about the Foundation, Jenna and non-violence, as well as have an older brother and sister-type of conversation about life in general. Many of the "Jenna's Mentors" from Henninger attended Dr. Weeks School until grade 5.

Our students follow-up their mentoring sessions with further discussion and projects that relate to non-violence. This year, the influence of the Foundation was evidenced in a display that our fifth graders put together for the "Reach for the Stars" event at Carousel Mall in April. Pictures of the mentees and mentors together as well as their writing samples on how Jenna's experiences and life have affected them, were displayed for all to read and experience.

I am convinced that the Jenna Foundation plays a key role in providing an outlet for our young people in this community and that their hard work will pay dividends now and in the future. It is my sincere hope that the Foundation continues to expand its outreach into all our elementary schools and beyond.

I sincerely thank Janice and her staff for giving our students an opportunity to participate in such a positive and productive relationship at Dr. Weeks Elementary School.



CONGRATULATIONS to 2004 Corcoran High School graduate Tajuana Cerutti, recipient of the 2004-05 "Jenna's Peace Ambassador Scholarship." Pictured at center above, (with Executive Director Janice Grieshaber, left, and Mentoring Coordinator Tracy Caryl, right), Tajuana is a former "Mentor for Jenna" and is attending the University of Buffalo this Fall. Standing next to Tajuana is her younger sister and, we hope, a future mentor!

Impact of Jenna's Law

Fewer Crimes, Fewer Victims 2001 - 2015

- 21,000 fewer assaults
- 64,000 fewer burglaries
- 63,000 fewer larcenies
- 48,000 fewer robberies

Estimates from research conducted in Michigan by Rand, Inc.

Jenna's Peace Bath Salts

Designed especially for The Jenna Foundation, *Jenna's Peace* contain hand-blended, mineral rich bath salts and therapeutic-grade essential oils including rose, rosewood and myrtle. Designed to help

clear the mind, relax tired muscles and restore one's spirit, they'll make a **perfect holiday gift** with proceeds going to **support our mission**. Prices are \$12 for 8 oz., and \$18 for 8 oz. in a cobalt-blue candle votive holder. Call (315) 422-0339 to **place your order today!**



2005 NY State Fair

Many Thanks to Sponsors & Donors

With much appreciation to event sponsors **Faye Panasci** and **Chris & Melissa Whyland**, everyone who stopped by our donation jar to drop in spare change and bills, and all who donated their time to staff our booth, the 2005 NY State Fair was a great success for The Jenna Foundation! Once again we enjoyed a great opportunity to connect with many people from the Central New York community and all areas of the country. Many wanted to learn about our mission and more than a few have offered to become active volunteers and expressed interest in college internships. Representatives from area businesses offered their support through donations and sponsorships of the upcoming *Jenna's Sweet Charity Ball*. And, most importantly, we were able to offer information and support to those affected by violence in their lives and sought us out for help. Our time at the State Fair is a vital part of our year and central to our mission. Many thanks to everyone who made it happen!

Jenna Foundation Helps Plan October "Cyber Safety" Event

The Jenna Foundation is proud to be continuing this important community awareness initiative, launched in May with a summit at the Syracuse Oncenter. We are now working with the NYS Governor's Office to assist with planning and attendees for an all-day event scheduled to be held at the Empire Plaza in Albany on October 20. Those in attendance will include members of the business community, legislators, educators, parents and students, and will feature a keynote address by Governor Pataki. Call 422-0339 for more information.

Welcome New Board Members

At our August meeting we were delighted to welcome four new members to The Jenna Foundation Board of Directors: Mark Elsbey, Vice President of GTS Transport in Liverpool; Matt Holleran, Account Representative at Northwestern Mutual Financial Network; Lorie Niebank Riedl, Director of Alumni and Parent Relations at Cazenovia College; and Steve Wolf, Principal of Dr. Weeks Elementary School in Syracuse. All of the new members, along with the rest of the board, are hard at work building support for *Jenna's Sweet Charity Ball*, scheduled for November 11, as well as long-term projects such as a strategic planning initiative to help us continue to define the mission and goals of The Foundation over the next few years.

Jenna Foundation Forms Partnership With "JOBS Plus" Program

We are proud to announce that The Foundation has become a volunteer site for "Jobs Plus," a partnership program between Onondaga Community College and the county's Department of Social Services. A "Jobs Plus" client has been placed at our office this fall for twenty hours a week of reception and clerical work. We look forward to a strong collaborative relationship with this great community program.



MASCOT LOVE: *The Foundation was represented by many volunteers, board members, high school mentors and former college interns at our NY State Fair Booth. Pictured above (L to R) are Executive Director Janice Grieshaber and volunteer Linda Bruce, with good friend Sue Tacy Ostuni. Below, Janice is with "Yorky the Beaver," the official State Fair Mascot (who is also, unrecognizably, CJ Young, our Executive Asst., who has been performing the furry character for almost a decade).*



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THINK AHEAD TO CHRISTMAS!

A Book Review

by Elise Kogut, Volunteer

Conquering Adversity

Soft cover, non-fiction, 92 pages.

Author: Christopher Novak

Grief, anger, pain -- these are only some of the emotions that can take hold and rule as we struggle through adversity. However, as the title of Christopher Novak's book suggests, we can learn to defeat that which could defeat us. Novak draws on his own tragic experience in having lost his pregnant wife and unborn son in a fatal accident, and recommends six key strategies to overcome whatever adversity life may present. Crucial in Novak's approach is the importance of focusing not on what we perceive as lost, but rather on what we still have, here and now in the present moment we are living. As he urges, "never trade tomorrow's dreams for yesterday's nightmares."

This is not a "quick fix" handbook to anyone's problems. Novak's strategies require real cognitive and behavioral changes that can be best achieved through structured determination and commitment. For example, there are exercises and questions at the end of the chapters, which prompt the reader to think about and apply the strategies advised.

There are two other aspects that I thought set this book apart from other "self helpers." One is that Novak recommends using his strategies in the workplace as well in our private lives. In fact, the book's subtitle is for "you and your team." Illustrating how professional and private goals and values are similar is interesting because many don't consider work a place for support, and often suppress emotions. This can result in shutting down, closing up and neglecting other roles in life. But the goals are the same to Novak, and he illustrates that only by harboring value in his family could he begin to find value at work, and thus fulfill the roles he needs to as father, and businessman.

The second point is how much emphasis is put on not dealing with grief alone. By the third strategy, Novak turns from concentrating on ways we heal ourselves outside of a social context to the ways that social interaction is critical to conquering adversity. He understands that, while it is crucial to have a "healthy selfishness" and concentrate on cognitive optimism to combat self-defeating behavior, it is also important to find social support in loved ones and other networks, and maintain a role-commitment to others. Sharing laughter with those who "saw you through the hardship" helps with healing, and that, to Novak, is just as much about giving as it is receiving.

It takes perseverance to overcome the destructive emotions that adversity brings on. It is that much harder to love, share, and "celebrate" as the last strategy asks the reader to do, if something negative has interrupted life. Novak puts the living struggle well when he says, "the hard part is staying alive, staying afloat, fighting for every breath, kicking and paddling for some distant, even unseen shoreline." And, if applied diligently, his techniques can be incredibly helpful for readers who respond well to a structured approach to reaching this shoreline.



Active Volunteer: *Elise Kogut, pictured at left along with Mentor Coordinator Tracy Caryl, was an active volunteer during spring and summer 2005, when she kept regular part-time hours at our office and helped staff our booth at the NY State Fair. Elise is currently a student at the University at Buffalo, and is planning to graduate in 2008 with a major in Psychology.*

Executive Director Named to Commission, Receives National "Fight Crime" Award

Fall 2005 is a dynamic time for The Jenna Foundation. In September Governor Pataki nominated Executive Director Janice Grieshaber to serve as a victim rights' representative on the New York State Interstate Compact Commission, which manages the movement and supervision of adult felony offenders into and out of New York State following their release from correctional facilities.

On October 25, Janice will be accompanied by her husband Bruce at a Washington, D.C. gala event hosted by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, when Janice will receive the national "Champion for Children" Award. "Fight Crime..." is a national initiative to establish Pre-K and early intervention programs to assist families to raise children who are both physically and emotionally healthy.

Jenna's Wish List

As always the Jenna Foundation appreciates your donations. Currently these are the items we need for the mentor program, victims' services and general office use:

- Recordable CD's for Computers
- Bottled Water
- Gift Cards: Wegmans, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Staples
- Photo Paper for inkjet printer
- Laminating Machine
- 4 Folding Chairs
- Paper Towels, Napkins, Toilet Paper

Donors

\$0 - \$199

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Janice and Bruce Grieshaber

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Friday, November 11th, 2005

Jenna's
Sweet Charity
Ball

Come along for a **great party**, and a **great way to support** our mission to build a safer community for us all. Please consider joining other local businesses by holding your holiday office party at our event! **Live music** will be performed by the locally-popular band, Atlas, with **dancing, dining and divine desserts** all night long! Also featured will be a holiday gift-themed Silent Auction of dozens of wonderful gifts and packages.

All proceeds raised from Jenna's Sweet Charity Ball will directly **benefit the school-based mentoring and crime victims' advocacy** programs of The Jenna Foundation.

Yes! I want to support the mission of The Jenna Foundation by attending Jenna's Sweet Charity Ball.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Number of Tickets at \$75 each: _____

Please mail this form along with your check to:
The Jenna Foundation, 120 E. Washington St., Suite 200
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