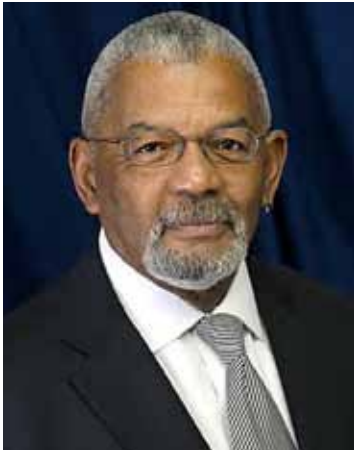


AUTUMN 2010

## Celebrating the Fine Art of Family: The Barker Foundation 65th Anniversary Benefit Gala



Jim Vance

In the stunning Renaissance Revival interior of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Barker community will mark its 65th anniversary by “Celebrating the Fine Art of Family.” The benefit gala on Saturday, November 6 will feature NBC News4 anchorman and Barker grandfather **Jim Vance**, as well as a memorial tribute to the beloved former executive director Robin Allen. Barker’s six-and-a-half decades of creating family masterpieces in our community will be saluted by a mix of tradition and innovation, including a before-dinner silent auction and a program-concluding “Barker family video,” an update of the classic slideshow.

Beginning at 6 p.m., guests can admire the art in the museum’s galleries while enjoying drinks and hors d’oeuvres and bidding on their

favorite items in the silent auction. Benefit co-chairs **Rachel Firschein**, **Maureen Golden** and **Mary Jaffe** have announced an outstanding line-up of vacation homes, sports tickets, spa packages, original artwork, and many more items worthy of the special occasion. When the bidding closes, guests will descend the white marble staircases to the Great Hall for a seated dinner, brief program, and plenty of time to reminisce with old friends and meet new ones.

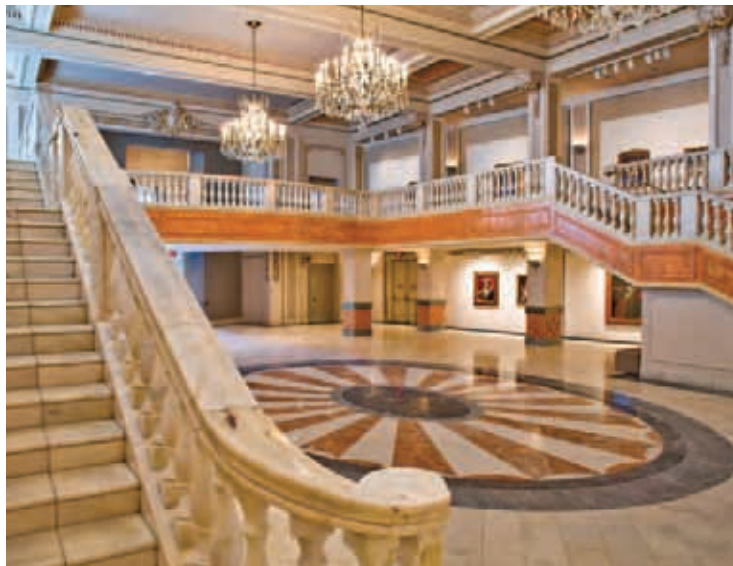
Program chair **Maureen Minehan**, producer of the video for the event, has invited Barker families to submit photographs to be included. Images of children at all ages and at significant events such as finalizations, graduations, sports achievements, weddings, or the birth of their own children will

be included in the video which will bring the evening to an emotional close.

Jim Vance, making his second appearance at a Barker Foundation gala, has a 40-year reporting career in the metropolitan Washington, DC area. He currently co-anchors NEWS4 LIVE at 6:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. with Doreen Gentzler. A Washington original, Vance is known for his incisive and thoughtful commentary on everything from the Redskins to the war in Afghanistan.

All proceeds from the 65th Anniversary Benefit Gala will help The Barker Foundation continue its vital services to all members of the adoption circle and ensure that Barker will be there to serve women, children, and families for another 65 years. “This event provides important financial support for Barker’s programs,” said Development Chair **John Freeman**, “and over 50 families and companies are already committed as financial sponsors.”

Co-chairs welcome anyone willing to help with the event, offer an auction item, or secure a sponsor gift. Please contact Mary Reyner in the Barker Development office at 301-664-9664 or [mreyner@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:mreyner@barkerfoundation.org) if you have any questions or if you did not receive a mailed invitation. ■



Guests will enjoy dinner in the beautiful Great Hall.



## FROM THE *Executive Director*

*[In lieu of my usual column, I am sharing the Eulogy I gave at Robin Allen's Memorial Service*

*on July 24. One of four eulogies, my remarks addressed Robin's "Barker years." What a challenge to try and capture that period of her life in just a few brief moments. I am certain that many of you will insert your own memories between the lines of my remembrance.]*

### Eulogy for Robin Bishop Allen

It has often been said that if you can land in a vocation where *your* greatest joy intersects with the *world's* greatest need, then you are truly fortunate. Robin could have been successful in any number of careers—music, theology, academia and research, to name just a few—but she found precisely that “sweet spot” where her joy, her passion, her talent intersected with enormous human need. Adoption changes people's lives and was her great life's calling. How very blessed our community—and yes, our world—has been as a result.

For many of you gathered today, Robin is a part of your family's story. Some of you have told me that she came out in a snowstorm or left a holiday dinner to place a baby in your arms... or she visited your child in an orphanage before he or she came home. For me, as someone who has known her as a colleague and friend for over 20 years, and am also myself an adoptive parent, it is an honor to speak about just a few of her many professional contributions.

Robin dedicated 22 years—exactly 1/3 of her life—to working directly with Barker, first as its International Supervisor, and then from 1986-2000 as its Executive Director, always, I should add, with you, Dwight, by her side pitching in. As Executive Director, Robin was well aware of the responsibilities inherent in leading one of the nation's oldest adoption agencies, one that has endured for so many decades that to many Washingtonians, the Barker Foundation feels like a “public trust.” Her accomplishments were many, and she began innovating almost as soon as she assumed the directorship.

And while her style was certainly measured and thoughtful, yet there was always a forward momentum and positive energy about her. As one of our current Board Trustees put it, “Things always seemed to happen around her. She was so positive, so *sure* that something would happen, so it *did*. She was a ‘part-er of the waters.’”

Let me highlight just four of the hallmarks of her years at Barker. One of her most important

contributions was the way she modeled respect for *all* members of the “family of adoption,” long before most people were talking about the importance of this. I know that in this beautiful sanctuary today are birth parents who made a courageous sacrifice and placed a child for adoption; adoptive parents who ached to hold a child; and adopted persons who were at the heart of the adoption plan. Robin emphasized the precious interconnectedness of birth parents, adoptive parents, and adopted persons, even in cases where we may never actually meet except in our minds and hearts and souls.

She also understood and articulated so well what we have come to call the “lifecycle model of adoption,” and she wanted Barker's post-adoption services to be warm and welcoming for everyone, even if many years had elapsed since the original adoption.

Robin also saw one of Barker's distinguishing features as a commitment to education and to understanding how adoption really works. She wanted both our hearts *and* our minds engaged. To that end, she ramped up Barker's workshop series, which eventually evolved into an Annual Conference arguably unmatched by any adoption agency in the country. The Annual Conference continues to this day as one of Robin's greatest legacies.

Over time, her reputation grew, and she was in frequent demand for major conferences and media appearances. How proud we were to have her poised, eloquent voice on programs such as “Good Morning, America,” the “Today” show, the “Diane Rehm Show,” and others. She maintained her equilibrium and respectful nature even when other guests grew contentious.

And lastly, to single out one more achievement, Robin championed the idea that a loving adoptive home could transcend differences of country, culture, race, ethnicity. She increasingly expanded Barker's services to communities of color and to other countries, such as Colombia. The adoptions Robin and Dwight themselves undertook of older children were by no means typical of either the Barker Foundation or U.S. adoption in general at that time. In many ways their adoption of Ernesto and Orlando presaged by three decades Barker's current **Wait No Longer** program which places children ages 8–16 out of our public foster care system. In recent years—even after she became ill—Robin and Dwight generously spoke to our **Wait No Longer** parent training groups, educating and encouraging them.

All of us who knew Robin recognized those qualities that made her a great leader:

uncommon wisdom and knowledge, gentleness yet strength, commitment to the highest standards of ethical practice, fully present and listening when one spoke with her, always non-judgmental, willing to embrace uncertainty and resist snap judgments, so positive and determined, yet so patient. In these last years, she would sometimes confess to me a certain *impatience* with the slowness of her cancer treatment, but then with a smile, she would add something like, “It's good I worked in adoptions, because adoption teaches you patience.”

As I close, my thoughts turn to a simple homespun anecdote Robin shared with me during her final year of life, a story which at once has nothing to do with adoption, and yet everything to do with adoption. It seems that one May day, Orlando, you and some of your buddies found five baby kittens in a cardboard box in a telephone booth. Dwight and Robin were at the kitchen table when the boys came in, set the box on the table, wished Robin a “Happy Mother's Day,” and ran back outside, thereby transferring responsibility to Robin. Robin firmly told the children, “We'll take them to an animal shelter where they will have a ‘nursing mother.’” Everyone loaded into the car, and off they went to the shelter, but alas, no nursing mother was available. Robin counseled that it would still be best to leave the kittens there in order to secure a good home for them. Then a man at the shelter whispered in her ear, “You know, lady, people come in and get those little creatures to feed their snakes.” Robin made an executive decision! The man sent them home with droppers, and the Allen family (probably led by you, Jennifer) fed the kittens around the clock. Homes were found, and one kitten, Muffet, remained as their own family pet. She is still alive today at age 16, as a reminder of Robin's compassionate heart.

And so I return to where I began. How blessed we are that Robin found that sweet spot at the intersection of *her* passion and the world's deepest needs.

Yes, it is hard to lose someone who built what we treasure. But I am reminded of the words of William James: “The *great* use of life is to spend it for something that will *outlast* it.”

Robin left us—and the world—a legacy that will endure.

*Marilyn Regier*

Marilyn Regier  
Metropolitan United Memorial Methodist Church  
Washington, D.C.  
July 24, 2010

# A Loving Farewell to Robin Bishop Allen

In a beautiful service of remembrance, several hundred family members, friends, and colleagues came together on July 24 at 11:00 A.M. at Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church to celebrate the remarkable life of Robin Allen. The service began with prelude music played by Robin herself in a well-preserved recording. Robin's bravura performance of Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasy*, performed with the Columbus Symphony after winning a competition in high school, gave a special feeling of intimacy in the lovely cathedral setting.

Dr. Edward Bauman, Dr. Donald Stewart, and Dr. Eileen Guenther led the service which had been planned by the Allen family. The service included congregational singing, special vocal music, Scripture readings, and a homily by Dr. Bauman.

Four eulogies addressed different facets of Robin's life. Her brother-in-law, Gary Allen, first spoke about Robin's early years, noting that he grew to know Robin in the early 1960's when she and Dwight met in a 225-voice award-winning high school choir where Robin held the

coveted position of accompanist. He recalled Robin's early commitment to others, as evidenced by her college summers spent aboard a hospital ship serving the poor in New York Harbor. Recounting Dwight and Robin's marriage in 1966, respective graduate studies in Boston, moves to New York City and Washington, and the births of Jennifer and Carolyn, Gary reflected that "the foundation was laid for Robin's subsequent interest in and commitment to Barker," ultimately leading not only to her ascent as Executive Director, but also to the adoption of Ernesto and Orlando from Bogotá." On a personal note, Gary recalled that "she had a genuine interest in people and their stories. When she listened to you, it was as though no one else in the world mattered to her at that moment."

Eulogist Elizabeth Fitch began by observing that "a life well-lived is like a fine gem. You can't fully appreciate its beauty from any one vantage point. You have to see it in a different light and from different angles." Elizabeth brought the perspective of a "life coach" and friend to Robin during the last decade of

Robin's life. "In all her suffering, she never became jaded," Elizabeth said. "With all her accomplishments, she never became proud." Finally, Elizabeth spoke eloquently of the depths of Robin's spiritual nature and a life grounded in faith.

A deeply touching part of the service came when son Orlando Allen read a heartfelt thank you letter he had recently written to his mother but never had the chance to share with her. Recalling painful early years, Orlando remembered with joy the day that Robin came to his orphanage representing Barker: "You showed up at the orphanage, Mom, and we connected with nice smiles. I took your hand and showed you all around the orphanage. I was so happy that day that my angel came to save me."

In a final tribute, Marilyn Regier, Executive Director of The Barker Foundation, addressed Robin's 22 years of professional contributions at Barker, first as International Supervisor, and then as Executive Director. (See page 2 for full eulogy.)

Immediate family present at the service were Robin's husband, Dwight Allen; Jennifer and Michael Mitchell, daughter and son-in-law;



Carolyn and Rob Dubois, daughter and son-in-law; Ernesto and Elizabeth Allen, son and daughter-in-law; Orlando and Carolina Allen, son and daughter-in-law; and grandsons Nathan, Zachary, Will, Orlando, David, and Rafael. Following the service, guests joined the family for a reception in the Great Hall, where memories of Robin were shared well into the afternoon.

The family requests that memorial donations may be designated either to the Mesothelioma Foundation ([www.curemeso.org](http://www.curemeso.org)) or to the Barker Foundation's "Robin Allen Fund" ([www.barkerfoundation.org](http://www.barkerfoundation.org)). ■

## - With Sympathy -

We express our heartfelt sympathy to the DeLucia, Perry, Donnelly, Allen, Spethman-Lustig, Sidhu-Malik, Hibbits, Greenblatt-Adams, and Prince families as they mourn the loss of their loved ones.

Janet DeLucia, mother to Barker parents, Roger (Michelle) and Rob (Barbara), and their sisters Sally and Nancy, and grandmother to four Barker babies among her nine grandchildren, died on May 15, 2010.

Dr. William Perry, husband of Audrey and father to four children who joined the family through The Barker Foundation, Dr. Nena Perry, William John Perry, Richard Perry, and Aimee Perry, died on June 2, 2010. Dr. Perry's practice covered some 50 years, many of those years in Alexandria, VA as a family physician.

Susan Donnelly, who died on July 12, 2010, is survived by her husband, Ambassador Shaun Donnelly, and two sons who joined the family through The Barker Foundation, Alex and Eric Donnelly. Susan traveled the world with her family and was very active in American and International communities.

Robin Allen, former Executive Director of The Barker Foundation, died on July 17, 2010. She is survived by her husband, Dwight and their children, Jennifer Mitchell (Michael), Carolyn Dubois (Rob), Ernesto Allen (Elizabeth) and Orlando Allen (Carolina) and six grandsons.

Barker parent, Lana Spethman-Lustig, beloved wife of Scott Lustig and mother of Sean Min Lustig, died on August 9, 2010. The family requests

that memorial contributions be used to assist Barker families seeking to adopt internationally.

Dr. Bhag Singh Sidhu, of Winston-Salem, father of Barker parent Dr. Navjeet Sidhu-Malik (Dr. Rajesh Malik), and grandfather to Ashna and Neeraj Malik, all of Chapel Hill, died August 22. Dr. Sidhu was educated in India and was then awarded a Rockefeller Foundation Scholarship to attend Cornell University where he obtained a Ph.D. in Botany. He was not only an educator but also a leader in the community, active in philanthropic causes.

Daniel Hibbits (Danny), beloved son of Barker parents John and Mary Hibbits, brother to Erica, and father of Cadence, died on August 29, 2010. Last year, with the help of Barker, Danny was joyfully reunited with his birth mother Kim, her husband Bob, and half-sister Chelsea.

Thelma Adams, beloved mother of Barker parent Linda Adams (Jonathan Greenblatt), Denise Adams, Lori Adams-Chabay, and Michael Adams; and grandmother to Jesse, Liza, and Halle Greenblatt and Kyra Chabay, died on September 17, 2010, in Brooklyn, New York.

Michael Prince, beloved husband of Robin Prince and father of Millie, died October 11, 2010, in Manassas, Virginia. Michael was not only a Barker adoptive father, but he was also an adoptee who joined his family through The Barker Foundation.

The Barker Foundation extends deepest sympathy to each family and expresses gratitude for their designation of Barker as a recipient of memorial gifts.

# Two Barker Traditions: The Annual Conference & The Annual Meeting



On behalf of the Barker community, Frenice Rollins presented Collins Tuohy with a thank you bouquet at the conclusion of the keynote address. Collins, sister of Baltimore Ravens' Michael Oher (whose story is chronicled in the *Blind Side*) took the audience through her family's adoption journey and then greeted guests at a reception.



Scott Simon, host of NPR's *Weekend Edition Saturday*, brought the conference to an inspirational close, speaking on "The Miracle of Adoption." Simon, father of two children adopted from China, recently published

his memoir on the subject of adoption, *Baby, We Were Meant for Each Other*.



At the May 11th Annual Meeting, Bob Long presented The Richard B. Barker Award to Gary Diamond, "In deep appreciation of his enduring and selfless support, wise counsel, and steadfast devotion to the best interests of all children."



The 2010 Annual Conference, *From Patches to Quilt: The Joys and Challenges of Complex Blended Families*, featured many panels. One such panel offered insights into families where siblings joined the family both through birth and through adoption (domestic and international). Panelists, left to right: Hanna and Nora Schlang; Rebecca and Kevin Zwislser; Jackie Costa and Natalie Regier; Brian and Megan Hoover.



David Hudson, in remarks made before he was voted in as a new Trustee, spoke about adopting a daughter internationally through Barker, together with his wife Mary Gabriele. In accepting the responsibility of Board service, he quoted Garrison Keillor:

"Nothing you do for children is ever wasted."



Veda Russ, who with husband Greg adopted a daughter through *Project Wait No Longer*, spoke of welcoming the opportunity for Board service and especially looks forward to continued advocacy on behalf of children in the public foster care system who need permanent homes.



All smiles at the end of an inspirational meeting are, Back row, left to right: Gary Diamond, Richard B. Barker Award; Bob Long, Immediate Past President; Jelani Freeman, featured speaker of the evening; and John Duff, President, Board of Trustees. Front row, left to right, Chris Intagliata, recipient of The Executive Director's Award; Marilyn Regier, Executive Director; Suzi Bass, recipient of the Barker Student Appreciation Award; and Dr. Monika (Moe) Walters, recipient of the Barker Staff Appreciation Award.

The Annual Meeting ended with a reception in honor of Jelani Freeman, Barker Board of Trustees, who recently graduated from Howard University School of Law. Attendees raised their glasses in a champagne toast to Jelani. Also in the audience and in the law school graduating class was Rachel Yau (front), who joined her family through Barker and was also warmly congratulated. A reception followed with a beautifully decorated graduation cake enjoyed by all.



# Project Wait No Longer Chosen by FCBA as Beneficiary of 21st Annual Charity Auction!

Barker supporters will soon have a wonderful opportunity to enjoy an evening of fun and inspiration while also supporting Barker's older child adoption program. The Young Lawyers Committee of the Federal Communications Bar Association (FCBA) recently announced its selection of **Project Wait No Longer** as the primary beneficiary of its 21st Annual Charity Auction.

Upon hearing the announcement, Dennis Corbett—Barker

parent, past Barker Board Member, and an active, veteran member of the FCBA—said that he was “thrilled to learn that the FCBA has selected **Project Wait No Longer** as this year's Charity Auction beneficiary. The event promises to be memorable and enjoyable, bringing together two dynamic organizations whose hearts are very much in the right place, all for the ultimate benefit of a wonderful and worthy cause.”

The event will be held on Thursday, October 28, at the

Hamilton Crowne Plaza Hotel, Sphinx Ballroom at the Almas Temple, 1315 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C., from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. Admission is free, and the event is open to the public. For those who are unable to attend, we hope you will still support the program through purchase of raffle tickets. (Please contact Joanna Carmusciano at [jcarmusciano@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:jcarmusciano@barkerfoundation.org).)

The event features both live and silent auctions, raffle drawings, and delicious food. Over the past 20 years, the Charity Auction has

raised more than \$1,000,000 for D.C.-based organizations. This year's auction will also help provide scholarships through the FCBA Foundation.

Special thanks to PWNL parents, **Greg and Veda Russ**, who passionately shared their story and joined Beverly Clark, Mary Reyner, and Marilyn Regier in advocating for the program during the selection process and FCBA onsite visit. Barker's program is a groundbreaking program that seeks to place foster children ages 6-17 with a “forever family.” Barker will use the proceeds from the Charity Auction to expand and strengthen its work with older foster youth.

Please mark your calendars and join us! ■



Sarah Rhodes displays all her winnings after playing games at Dave & Buster's in a pre-auction event where FCBA attorneys had the chance to meet PWNL families and Barker staff.



Melissa Williamson and Jatahj are clearly enjoying themselves, about to speed away in a racing game at Dave & Buster's.



Sophia Phillips and Melat enjoy some down time after hours of fun!

## Congratulations to Our New Adoptive Families

### Domestic Placements

Kevin and Jennifer welcomed Nyla Fae  
Doug and Valerie welcomed Kyle  
Fred and Karen welcomed Ryan  
Adam and Anne welcomed Rachel  
Richard and Jill welcomed Daniel

Rick and Georjean welcomed Alexander  
Tim and Christine welcomed Andrew  
Edward and Ana welcomed Lilianna  
Peter and Gayle welcomed Brady  
Charles and Michelle welcomed Cole  
Dennis and Linda welcomed Patrick

Craig and Tracy welcomed Gabriel  
Michael and Raven welcomed David  
Jeremy and Melissa welcomed David  
Albert and Gloria welcomed Antonio and Luis  
David and Leila welcomed Natalie  
Mark and Lisa welcomed Jackson

Justin and Lorna welcomed Tenley  
John and Leslie welcomed Evelyn  
Nicolas and Myriam welcomed Clara  
Ken and Kim welcomed Kaden  
Melissa welcomed Jatahj  
David and Claudia welcomed Alexis

### International Placements

John & Beth welcomed Max  
O'Ree & Maria welcomed Sean-Pan  
Jeremy & Lisa welcomed Marin  
Patrick & Maggie welcomed Henry  
Martin & Kathy welcomed Lia  
Ben and Alli welcomed Tae  
Darren & Kelly welcomed Margaret  
Dan & Jenny welcomed Wylie  
Mike & Sandra welcomed Ben  
Dann & Shawna welcomed Gabriel  
Ken & Becky welcomed Asnakech

Ollie & Ivana welcomed Liam  
Brian & Karen welcomed John  
Sajeew & Neerja welcomed Kishen  
John & Christina welcomed Chloe  
Kevin & Lawrie welcomed Benjamin  
Eric & Kristi welcomed Reid  
David & Cheryl welcomed Zoe  
Stephen & Diane welcomed Lianne  
Adrian & Jean welcomed Elyssa  
Antonio & Alex welcomed Camila  
Michael & Susan welcomed Naomi  
Steve & Kiva welcomed Liam

Randal & Juanita welcomed Serena  
Ronald & Christina welcomed Nathan  
David & Sarah welcomed Leah  
Charles & Kim welcomed Shiloh  
Mark & Maggie welcomed Ty  
Hallgeir & Marja welcomed Juliette  
Scott & Yedda welcomed Jonah  
Jonathan & Elizabeth welcomed Andrew  
Andrew & Barbara welcomed Cailin  
Alec & Sonya welcomed Sabrina  
Gary & Susanne welcomed Quinn

Ryan & Yuri welcomed Koji  
Thomas & Diane welcomed Kathryn  
Patrick & Andrea welcomed Bi Lan  
Russ & Julie welcomed Kai  
Ed & Michelle welcomed Quinn  
Erik & May welcomed Maia  
Leo & Cathy welcomed Olivia  
Kevin & Andrea welcomed Mia  
Micah & Foy welcomed Claudia  
Jorge & Jennifer welcomed Carolina  
Chad & Karen welcomed Aaron

# Colombia Homeland Tour Reunion: An Evening to Remember

by Diane C. Rolfe, Reunion Coordinator—Ridgefield, CT

In a world that is literally a-twitter with electronic socializing, the embrace of a familiar friend still draws a crowd.

To mark Barker's 65th birthday and the 5-year anniversary of its Colombia Homeland Tour Program, more than 60 guests from near and far gathered this summer for the first-ever CHT Reunion. The purpose of the event was three-fold: to connect

quesadillas, fresh fruit kebabs, and a dessert buffet. Hand-frosted Colombian and American flag shortbread cookies reflected the evening's theme.

Music set a festive mood, accented by bright yellow, blue, and red balloons. Family photo albums, embroidered wall hangings from FANA, and a framed print by artist Fernando Botero graced the venue. Also displayed was a poster featuring Colombia's scenic beauty and each year's

tour group, along with a published article of personal reflections by then-teen traveler **Vincent Giordano** (CHT 2006). A continuous slide show captured the diversity and delights of the Homeland Tour experience.

Parents talked with parents, reminiscing about their trips, comparing notes, and catching up. Teens and former teens mixed and mingled amid the affection and acceptance of the extended

Barker family. Soul-mate strangers recognized their common bond of loving Colombia simply for its gift of an irreplaceable child, now nearly grown and ready to leave the nest, but graciously given those essential roots and wings.



Barker staff members and former tour guides Meg Herman Dawson (at left) and Carolina Kenrick (far right) share a group hug with CHT Alumni.

Mature teens and the college-age crowd seldom have opportunities to participate in Barker events, which are usually intended for older adults or families with young children, so we were particularly pleased by the turnout. Specific contributions of our young adults deserve special mention: deepest thanks go to **Chris Giamporcero** (CHT 2006) for his iPod playlist, **James Rolfe** (2009 tour) for event planning and set-up, and for compiling photos for the PowerPoint video, and **Mitchell and Suzi Bass** (CHT 2006) for their invaluable brainstorming.

Many other helping hands assisted as well, quickly restoring the rental facility to its pre-party state. Kudos to my **Event Co-Chair**

**Debra Bass and her husband Rand** (CHT 2006) and to **Joe Slobodzian and Gail Purpura** (2008 Tour) for doing the lion's share of the clean-up at evening's end. Thanks also to **Nancie Ann Moebius** (CHT 2009) and **Debbie McGuire** (future CHT) for their help with phone calls issuing personal invitations to the party. And finally, many thanks to Mary Reyner, our Barker liaison, and to all of the staff who supported us and joined us on an evening to remember!

For information on the 2011 Colombia Homeland Tour, contact Abbe Levine, Director of Family and Post-Adoption Services at 301-664-9664 or by e-mail at [alevine@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:alevine@barkerfoundation.org). ■



Long-time friends Beth Holly (CHT 2006) and Katie Leitner (CHT 2009) visit with fellow 2009 Homeland Tour participants James Rolfe and Angela Moebius.

Homeland Tour Alumni, to share the CHT experience with prospective participants, and to celebrate the Colombian-American heritage of our FANA-born sons and daughters.

Catered refreshments included beef empanadas, smoked vegetable

## Always Fun—The Barker Family Picnic!

by Beth Kirby

Cabin John Regional Park was again the venue for this year's annual family picnic held on June 6th. Barker families gathered to welcome friends old and new, as well as to eat the delicious hamburgers and hot dogs prepared by Barker chefs Ken Kirkpatrick, Ed Lehner, and Bob Kirby. More than 200 family, friends, and staff were in attendance, and children were everywhere, from babies in arms to adolescents. We

Susanna and Jason Thornton and son Chase take a break to eat during a fun-filled afternoon seeing old friends and making new ones.

also had a special guest, Mrs. Jaisita Panigrahi, the Manager Trustee of Bal Vikas—Shishu Welfare Trust of Mumbai, India. Everyone enjoyed the festive afternoon even though



a pop-up thunderstorm tried to put a damper on things!

Many thanks to the families and staff who helped with setting up and breaking down. A special thank you to Jennifer Diamond for her face painting expertise. Please watch for next year's picnic flyer—you don't want to miss this popular annual event!

Staff Note: Warmest thanks to Beth Kirby for once again coordinating the picnic and making it a highlight of the Barker year! ■



Families in Barker's India program especially enjoyed welcoming Mrs. Jaisita Panigrahi. Left to right, Tina Ji, Director of International Programs; Mrs. Panigrahi; Marilyn Regier; and Beth Peterson, Barker's India Adoption Coordinator.

# An Opportunity to Honor... Far into the Future

When Mary and Arnold Meyrow learned of the death of former Barker social worker Sally Donelan in spring 2009, they were moved by their many memories of the woman they called their "fairy godmother." "Sally had a special talent for working with people," the Meyrows reflected. "One reason we feel connected to Barker is because of the meaningful relationship we maintained with Sally long after she retired."

The Meyrows' feelings of gratitude and connection prompted the couple, when they were recently reviewing their estate plans, to memorialize Ms. Donelan with a gift to the Barker Foundation through their will. "We wanted to memorialize Sally and thank Barker

for the most important gift we will ever receive, our children. To insure that the Barker Foundation's work will continue into the future, we have allocated a share of our estate to Barker. It is our wish that this blessing may continue."

The Meyrows, with their now grown-up children Seth and Sarah, were one of more than 300 families Ms. Donelan helped to create during her tenure at Barker from 1966 to 1985. The well-loved social worker, who joined the Barker staff at the age of 50 after raising four children, was known for her upbeat nature and the deep personal pleasure she took in placing children with permanent, loving parents.

A charitable bequest like the Meyrows' gives contributors an

opportunity to acknowledge the people and organizations that hold special meaning for them. These gifts also ensure that the donor's legacy will exert a lasting impact on the community. Planned giving costs the contributors nothing now, and they retain the ability to change the bequest at any time. Such gifts help strengthen Barker's financial foundation so that the agency can continue to build and sustain adoptive families for future generations.

As with any estate planning, please seek the advice of an attorney or financial advisor if you wish to make a gift to Barker



From left to right: Arnold, Mary, and Seth Meyrow with Sally Donelan at Seth's bar mitzvah in 1992.

through a will. If you have questions, please contact Mary Reyner in the Barker Development office at [mreyner@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:mreyner@barkerfoundation.org) or 301-664-9664. ■

## AGENCY News & Notes

A very special thank you to Barker mom, **Kathy Rometry**, for her thoughtfulness in beginning a tradition of sending cards to all Barker families on the first anniversary of their child's arrival home.

Congratulations to Barker Trustee, **Jelani Freeman**, on his graduation from Howard University School of Law on May 8. A large group of friends and colleagues, including Marilyn and Darrel Regier, attended the ceremony and reception.

Another Barker Trustee, **John K. Freeman**, was profiled in the *Washington Post* on August 7 for his support of programs and activities which benefit the families, and especially the children, who reside in his property, Kingsley Commons. These activities include soccer teams, a computer learning center, a 4-H club, summer camp program, computers-for-learning program, and a family resource center, all of which are administered by a 501©3 non-profit which John established. We are

also grateful that he provides office space in the property for the northern Virginia offices of The Barker Foundation.

The front page of the July 31 *Washington Post* featured Barker family **Sharon, Michael, and Frenice Rollins**, in a story about the growing interest in adopting older children from the foster care system. Thirteen-year-old Frenice joined her family through Barker's *Project Wait No Longer*.

Apologies and sincere thanks to those donors who were inadvertently omitted from the recent Annual Report: **Mark Alexander & Tawnya McKee, John & Priscilla Peterson, Delmar & Carol Stover, and Steve & Esther Weiss**.

Our development office is making a concerted effort to update our email addresses for Barker families and friends. Please help us save postage on some of our communications by sending your email addresses to Mary Reyner at [mreyner@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:mreyner@barkerfoundation.org).

The Barker Foundation joins with family and friends who mourn the loss of a beloved Barker parent, **Michelle Humanick, who died on Sunday, July 25** during the storm that swept the Washington area.

Our hearts go out to her devoted husband, Clay Gump, and daughters Sophie and Amelia Gump. Michelle will be remembered for her loving and compassionate ways, her community



involvement, and her dedication to parenting her two beautiful daughters.

In memory of Michelle, contributions may be made to:

### **The Sophie and Amelia Gump Educational Fund**

c/o Juliet Johnson  
SunTrust Bank  
2825 Smith Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21209

For information, call 410-602-9109.

## Thanks to All Who Made the Annual Fund Phonathon a Success!

With more volunteer callers than in recent years, spirits were high and callers were enthusiastic at the 2010 Annual Fund Phonathon. While we await final tallies, thanks are in order for all who made the three-night effort such a success. **Reznick Group** again provided wonderful space for the first two nights on September 21 and 22, and a small group used the Maryland

office of The Barker Foundation for the final evening, September 23. Everyone appreciated the delicious food provided by Barker parents, **Tom and Charleen Merkel, of Bradley Food and Beverage**. David Sherman again served ably as Phonathon Coordinator; John Freeman, Development Committee Chair, guided the overall effort; and

*continued on back page*

# Save the Date

**Federal Communications Bar Association Charity Auction to Benefit Project Wait No Longer** – Thurs., Oct. 28, 7–9:30 PM. Hamilton Crowne Plaza Hotel, Sphinx Ballroom at the Almas Temple, 1315 K St., NW, Washington, DC. Free and open to the public.

**65th ANNIVERSARY GALA CELEBRATION** – Saturday, Nov. 6, 6:00 PM. National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.

**Parents of Teens** – 2nd Tuesday of month, 7 PM

**Older Child Adoption Support Group** – 2nd Wednesday of month, 6:30-8:30 PM

**Birth Parent Support Group** – 2nd Thursday of month, 7 PM

**Adopted Persons' Discussion Group** – 3rd Thursday of month, 7 PM

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE** – Saturday, April 2, 2011, UMD Shady Grove Conference Center, Rockville, Maryland

## Annual Fund Phonathon

*continued from page 7*

Barker staff worked hard every step of the way, especially, Mary Reyner, Linda Adams, Beth Kirby, and Joanna Carmusciano.

Many dedicated parents served as volunteer callers, some of them on more than one evening, and we express sincere appreciation to each:

Larry Asbell, Betsy Biben-Seligman, Rick Blum, Debbie Boger, Rick Brenner, Jeff Chenoweth, Dennis Corbett, Barbara DeClerk, Roger DeLucia, Gary Diamond, John Duff, Nancy Elmgren, Carmelina Evans, John Freeman, Dan Himelfarb, Shelley Hutchins, Chris Intagliata, Bob Long, Robb Mackie, Howard Menditch, Jay Meriwether, Joe Nahra, David O'Bryon, Nancie Park, Priscilla Peterson, Betty Pyles-Harris, Gary Rappaport, Darrel Regier, Cherisse Robinson, Kathy Rometry, Veda Russ, Judy Sagall, Rick Seligman, David Sherman, Erika Shugart, Monika Walters, Trish Warner, George Wolohojian, Marilyn Zett, Carl Zwisler. ■

Barker accepts donations made through CFC (38308) and United Way (8806). Please send a copy of your completed pledge form to Barker's MD office, so that we can recognize your gift. Thank you!

THE  
**BARKER**  
FOUNDATION since 1945

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