



# Los Angeles House of Ruth

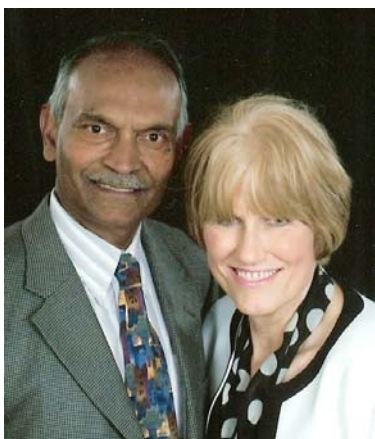
## NEWSLETTER

Fall 2007

### Mission Statement:

Our mission at the Los Angeles House of Ruth is to provide temporary and transitional shelter for homeless and battered women and their children. Through our mission, we offer women and children a caring and supportive environment in order to help them transition to long-term self-sufficiency.

## Board Profile: Betsy Azariah



**Betsy and her husband Eric**

It was a chance, maybe even divine, encounter that led Betsy Azariah to serve on the Board of Los Angeles House of Ruth. One of her friends invited her to a fundraiser that House of Ruth was having and at the fundraiser they passed out forms to people who may be interested in serving on the board. Betsy took one, filled it out, and, as they say, the "rest is history". As the longest serving board member, Betsy has spent the last 12 years as a diligent board member helping out with everything from encouraging her own church to donate money to the program to recruiting new board members. Her service to the community does not stop there, nor does it begin there.

Betsy Azariah is one of those special people that make serving other look so effortless. Two years ago, Betsy officially "retired" but continues to work hard in the community to better the lives of others. After getting her Master's Degree in Guidance and Counseling at Mount Saint Mary's in Los Angeles, Betsy spent the past 37 years working for the County of Los Angeles, most recently in administration for Los Angeles County of Children and Family Services.

In addition to her service on the House of Ruth board, Betsy serves on the Fuller Civic Light Opera Guild board, her college alumni board, as a docent at the Doheny Mansion and works as a Sunday School teacher at her church. When not volunteering her time, Betsy enjoys spending time with her husband Eric and son Aaron, both of who are very supportive of her work and always attend events and fundraisers with her. She enjoys traveling with her husband, attending plays and movies, and reading. Her favorite book is the *Prince of Tides* by Pat Conroy. Interestingly enough, this book is based on a classic description of a dysfunctional family, something she strives hard in her life to remedy for other s.

Her motivation to help others is based on her belief that one person can help make changes in this world and that living in a free society requires responsibility. When she first realized how prevalent the problem of homelessness was in the United States she was shocked. As she puts it, "I could not believe in a country like the United States, that we could allow people to be homeless and uninsured. Especially children. Anything we can do to help children, we must do. They are the next generation, and if they don't have our support, others will pay for it in the future." So when she found House of Ruth, she knew she had to be a part of helping homeless families and children find a better life. She was especially impressed with the staff and board and the fact that when individuals do leave our shelters, they truly have gained the skills to be on their own emotionally and financially. She believes the success of House of Ruth shows through the close relationship they keep with past clients from hiring ex-clients to work at the shelters to having a strong attendance of ex-clients at all of the holiday parties.

**We should all strive to be like Betsy, and follow her mantra, "There is not enough we can do for others". Thank you Betsy for all your hard work on behalf of Los Angeles House of Ruth!**

## House of Ruth Board of Directors

### Betsy Azariah

Asst. Director, Dept. of Children's Services  
Retired

### Linda Gustafson

Broker, Beiker & Co.

### Sharon Leahy

Project Supervisor, Dept. of Children's Services,  
Retired

### Anne Wetzel

Federal Bureau of Investigation

### Annette Colefax

Non-profit Consultant

### Bishop Gabino Zavala

Auxiliary Bishop, San Gabriel Region

### Deacon Gus Sebenius

Deacon, San Gabriel Region

### Tony Saldana

Community Relations, Exide Technologies

### Barbara Hudziak

### Karen Macfarlane

### Sr. Jennifer Gaeta, SSS

Executive Director

The Mary J. Palvesky Trust  
Martha K. Alvarez-Lamas  
Robert & Katherine Andrusco  
Frank & Rosemarie Artusio  
Betsy P. Azariah  
Lynn Barbe  
Elizabeth Bassel  
Susan Bast  
The Bernstein-Maslansky Fund of Calif  
Beatrice Breslaw Pres.  
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Joseph Broguiere  
Leon Broguiere  
Renee & Joseph Bronson  
Carmela R. Brown  
M.D. Bryant  
Marcia Burnam  
Ruth Burson  
E.A.S. Butler  
V.A. Butler  
Robert & Jude Campbell  
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Jill Carson  
Jacques & Brenda Castiel  
Brian M. Cavanagh  
Ralph R. Cerniglia  
Rodolfo Chacon  
V. Ann Chamberlin  
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Holy Family Church  
St. Cyril Church  
St. Joseph Church  
St. John Fisher Church  
ST. Thomas the Apostle Church  
St. Luke the Evangelist Church  
St. Monica's Church  
St. Bartholomew Church  
Assumption B.V.M. Church  
St. Margaret Mary Church  
St. Hilary Church  
St. Stephen Church  
St. Peter Claver Church  
St. Bernard Church  
St. John the Evangelist Church  
St. Teresa of Avila Church  
Holy Name Church  
St. Matthew's Church

## Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

This issue is dedicated to saying **THANK YOU** to the many individuals and groups who have helped us with funding, time, resources, and emotional support. It is difficult to truly say how much every second and every dime is appreciated, but all of us here at House of Ruth are truly grateful beyond words.

We have a marvelous Board of Directors (listed at right) which we could not survive without. Our longest serving board member is Betsy Azariah. In this issue, we share with you her story of dedication and service to House of Ruth.

There are thousands of families who still might be homeless today without the help from all our generous supporters. So, **thank you again** for all you are and all you do to ensure that Los Angeles House of Ruth can continue to change lives and create homes and positive futures for families that come to us without hope. You are their hope!

God bless you always,  
*Sister Jennifer Gaeta, SSS*

### THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS DONORS INCLUDING:

Ann Elizabeth Colfax  
Immaculate Heart Community  
Mr. & Mrs. Comon  
Miles Chemical Company  
Rev. Hugh Crowe  
Food Industry Crusade Against Hunger  
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AN EXTRA BIG  
THANK YOU TO...

The  
Ursuline  
Sisters

FOR THEIR SPECIAL  
HELP FOR THE LAST  
TWO YEARS!

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

### BECOME PART OF THE SOLUTION TO END HOMELESSNESS!

- Donate** by Check (enclosed envelope) or on-line (see back)
- Ask friends or family to **make a gift** to mark special occasions.
- Secure matching funds from your **employer**.
- Planned Giving:** Make a bequest in your will or set up a **charitable trust**
- Name *House of Ruth* the beneficiary of a **life insurance** policy.
- Make a **tribute gift**, honoring someone's special occasion (e.g., birthday) or remembering a loved one. (We'll send a letter of thanks and recognition.)
- Sponsor us** in any charitable giving program (employer, church, civic groups, etc)
- Volunteer** your time
- Donate materials** for our residents permanent housing (see back)



If your work participates in the **UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN**, you can use your employee contribution to help provide shelter, food, and support to hundreds of homeless families through Los Angeles House of Ruth. To designate your United Way donation for us, simply write our account number **#35419** on your "designation card".

## SHOP FOR A CAUSE!

### You can support THE LOS ANGELES HOUSE OF RUTH when You Shop Online!

These websites let you direct a portion of your purchases to LOS ANGELES HOUSE OF RUTH when you do on-line shopping with top Internet retailers!  
*Check it out and register today!*

#### [www.MyCause.com](http://www.MyCause.com)

MyCause lets you do a good turn while you shop and costs you nothing extra! Start today by going to:

[www.mycase.com/HouseofRuth](http://www.mycase.com/HouseofRuth)

No need to register – just start shopping and remember to bookmark your page!

#### [www.igive.com](http://www.igive.com)

At over 680 brand name stores, a portion of each online purchase is donated to your favorite cause!

Your stores, your cause, their money.

Go to [www.igive.com](http://www.igive.com)

-Under Step 1: Find and Select Your Cause, type in Los Angeles House of Ruth, Choose it at left, register with igive, and start helping House of Ruth while you shop and save!!!!

## A Farewell to Bonny Taggart

Bonny Taggart's story starts out the same as many of the women served by the House of Ruth. She became a mother at age 19 to a daughter named Marie and a single parent at age 21. She worked full time while always trying to take at least one college class at night in order to complete her dream of graduating from college. Often times to make ends meet, she had to work at night instead of going to school. When her daughter was 7 years old, she told Bonny that she wanted to go live with her dad, who was going to have a "real family." Bonny made the mistake of signing custody papers, and when her daughter wanted to come back to live with her, her father forbade it. It took Bonny four years to undo that mistake. In the meantime, she continued to go to school, and by the time her daughter was 18, she had finally finished her Bachelor's degree and two years later earned her Master's degree in psychology. During those 20 years, her primary employment was as a typist or a secretary. At different times during those years she also worked as a "taxi dancer" – yes like the kind Tina Turner sings about; managed a 40-unit apartment building; and ran a typing business from her apartment.

By 1989, homelessness, especially homelessness for women with children, had become a national tragedy, and Bonny felt compelled to be part of the solution. On her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday that year, she quit her last secretary job, taking a \$400 a month cut in pay to take her first job in social services as a case manager with the Volunteers of America. She worked as a case manager for "On Your Feet" for three years, where she had the unique thrill of providing the funds to help families



move into permanent housing and follow-up services to help them stay there. Next, she became the Senior Case Manager for Watts Labor Community Action Committee in their Homeless Assistance Program. Two years later she was promoted to Director of Homeless Services, where she was responsible for the Access Center for Homeless Services, a 30-bed shelter for women and children, and an 18-unit mobile home site which provided transitional housing for 75-80 families every year. Over the past ten years, she has worked as the director of a "promotoras" type program (home visiting for young mothers and fathers) in Compton, the director of services programs on Skid Row in Venice and as a grant writer for a child care program in Long Beach.

Bonny has spent the last two years working as a consultant grant manager for Los Angeles House of Ruth. We will be forever indebted to her for her support and work. She sums up her experience working with the House of Ruth as follows: "It has been my privilege to work for Los Angeles House of Ruth. I have been able to get to know several of the women who support the women and children of our emergency and transitional housing programs. I am always impressed as I see them interact with the families by their level of professionalism, their kindness, and their dedication to the families. And I am proud to be a part of a service team that provides help and hope." Bonny is moving out of the area and although we will be sad to see her leave, we know she will continue to serve compassionately on behalf of homeless women and children – improving lives everywhere she goes! Thank You and Good Luck Bonny!



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*Los Angeles House of Ruth*

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*Fall 2007*

**A Special Thanks To...**

*We would like to thank the following foundations for their program contributions. This year they have helped us strengthen our client services, maintain our programs, and purchase a new shelter house!!!*

**Sisters of St. Joseph Healthcare Foundation**  
**Ahmanson Foundation**  
**Weingart Foundation**  
**Fritz B. Burns Foundation**  
**Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet**  
**Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation**  
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**Ralph M. Parsons Foundation**  
**Northrop Grumman Corporation**  
**Parish of St. Matthew**

**House of Ruth is now on-line!**

You can read more about us and donate on-line.

**[www.lahouseofruth.com](http://www.lahouseofruth.com)**

To donate on-line, go to the "Donations" Page and click on the picture below.



**Current Needs!**

We are always in need of items to help our residents make a new start in permanent housing! We appreciate any and all help!

**Large Items:** Kitchen Items (Stoves, Refrigerators), Couches, Beds (Twin & Double), Dining Room Sets

**Kids Items:** Clothes for Girls & Boys, Shoes, Toys, Videos in Spanish & English

**Baby Items:** Diapers & Wipes, Cribs, Clothes, Car seats, Bottles, Strollers, Formula, Baby Food Jars

**Apartment Start-Up Kits:** Furniture, Linens, Curtains, Pillows, Bedding, Appliances, and Kitchen and Bath Supplies

**Other Items:** Women's Clothes & Socks, Retail or Market Gift Certificates, Women's Hygiene Products, Cleaning Supplies, Food (the basics: rice, can goods, flour, beans), **CASH FOR DAILY OPERATING EXPENSES (\$850/day)**

**WE CAN PICK UP ANY DONATED ITEMS! Call SANDEE at (323) 266-4139**

**PLEASE CUT & POST!**