

# HouseLine

House of Ruth Maryland Changing Attitudes. Saving Lives.

Spring 2018

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**House of Ruth  
Maryland**



## Kids Zone

Your kids didn't go to school today because they didn't have clothes to wear.

For most of us, this is not a reality we ever face, yet for some victims of intimate partner violence it is their reality. "When a woman decides to leave her abuser, she often has very little time to get organized, pack a bag and get out. Sometimes, she's truly running for her life and for her children's. She comes to House of Ruth Maryland's Emergency Shelter with nothing for her, nothing for her kids," said Janice Miller, Director of Programs and Clinical Services at House of Ruth Maryland.

Many years ago House of Ruth Maryland created a Women's Clothes Closet so that clients could "shop" free of charge in a "boutique", rather than rummage through donations piled in a storage closet. As this women's shopping area was unbelievably successful, one of our volunteers wondered why we didn't have a similar area for children's clothes?

It was that question that ignited a passion for Jacquelynne Erlendsson and the Kidz Zone was born. Jacquelynne set to work, worked with staff to find a space in our shelter to get the project started and off she went. "The moms should be able to shop for the young kids in addition to themselves. It allows a greater sense of dignity in this setting, rather than sifting through a pile of donations. **Continued on page 2**

**Cover, continued from page 1.**

Helping the kids find outfits for school is one less thing that the moms need to worry about during challenging times," said Jacquelynne. Determined, beginning with a near empty space, Jacquelynne began laying out the space with donations of racks, shelving, and storage units to suit the room. Dedicating long hours to sorting clothing, designing the space, and organizing the area known as the Kidz Zone came to life!

Jacquelynne, with the assistance of a handful of reliable volunteers as well as small groups, has spearheaded the organization and coordinated operation of the Kidz Zone since its inception in 2012 and its official opening a few years later. In addition to the day-to-day operations Jacquelynne also loves setting out costumes for various holidays such as Halloween, cute outfits to wear with Santa around the holidays, and first day of school uniforms. She also coordinates a back-to-school drive for each student to be provided backpacks and school supplies in August.

Jacquelynne admits that although it's a lot of time, hard work, and quite a commitment in keeping this closet running smoothly she affirms that it's an extremely positive experience. "The relationships I've formed here are priceless, I love that I can meet this need for the kids and moms, it's so important." Further, she's adamant that House of Ruth Maryland has amazing donors. "People donate really nice stuff, brand new items with tags still on them, and very thoughtful, cute, outfits. It reminds our residents there's still many good people out there in the world"

When their world is in turmoil, volunteers like Jacquelynne make life a little bit easier and help victims of intimate partner violence begin to rebuild their sense of self, by meeting some of the most basic needs for their children.

House of Ruth Maryland could not do the work that we do without amazing volunteers like Jacquelynne. We are so grateful for each and every one of our volunteers!

## Letter from Executive Director

Dear Friends,

When the news broke that senior White House aide Rob Porter had been involved in intimate partner violence, in two prior relationships, he quickly resigned his position. What was interesting to me was how Kelly Anne Conway, Counselor to the President, although not her intent, so succinctly put words to the overall attitudes and beliefs of our nation and our communities around this issue.

First, Ms. Conway stated that she was "horrified" by the allegations made about Porter – and that it seemed so out of character for him, based on the person she knew at work. This sentiment is incredibly common for those who find out that someone they know, a family member, colleague, teammate, etc., is accused of any form of partner abuse. These men are often very charming, which is one of their powers. They have the ability to convince their victims that they themselves provoke his behavior, while leading the people around him to believe that he would never do that type of thing.

Ms. Conway was supportive of the victims, as she very clearly stated, "I have no reason not to believe the allegations made against Porter." This isn't always the case. Too often victims are afraid to come forward – as we've seen recently with the revelations about noted individuals like Rob Porter, Matt Lauer, Harvey Weinstein and others – for many very real reasons. They fear being blamed for not doing anything about it, they may have been threatened not to disclose, they think that their lives will be destroyed, that they will never work again, or that no one will believe them.

Ms. Conway continued the walk through assumptions when asked about Mr. Porter's then girlfriend, who was also Ms. Conway's work colleague, Hope Hicks. On Hicks, Conway said, "she's a strong woman, I'm not worried about her at all." And in that simple statement, reinforced the judgement, humiliation and stigma that so many women face when they speak out. "If she were a strong woman, she wouldn't be in this position – she's making poor decisions." This focus also puts responsibility squarely on the woman for being in an abusive situation.

While these commonly held attitudes are far too prevalent, I'm encouraged by the shift we're beginning to see. The swiftness and volume of the pushback from victims and advocates, the community beginning to hold men who abuse accountable by ensuring consequences, and the conversations we're beginning to have about exactly what the control and manipulation of the abuser looks like. All of us can add to the momentum by understanding the dynamics of intimate partner violence and continuing to shine a light on it.

I'm asking each of you reading this to do just one thing. Believe her. Believe her without judgement. And when possible, support her as she rebuilds her life.

Sincerely,



Sandi Timmins  
Executive Director



Sandi Timmins

# Special Thanks:

- To **Barbara Bianco** for selling B-More Bags Weekenders, Jewelry and Accessory Bags from her store Lingerie Lingerie in The Shops at Kenilworth, and for donating bras to shelter.
- To **Richard Swartz** (Owner) and **Julien Polillo** (Store Manager) at **Mano Swartz Furs** for encouraging customers to donate furs to Ruth's Closet, identifying and appraising furs for Ruth's Closet, and selling Ruth's Closet furs at their vault sales again this season.
- To **Katie Bruetsch** at the Eileen Fisher Hunt Valley Company Store for regularly donating Eileen Fisher merchandise to Ruth's Closet.
- To **Diane Janeway, Ruth's Closet Volunteer**, for donating Ruth's Closet's membership in the newly renamed Northwest Chamber of Commerce and attending Chamber meetings representing Ruth's Closet.
- To **Linda Goldberg, Ruth's Closet Volunteer**, for upcycling old cashmere sweaters into warm and colorful mittens and scarves, as well as repairing and reworking broken jewelry for Ruth's Closet.
- To **Project Linus "Blanketeers" Marcia Halcomb, Bertha D. Lyons, Virginia Lynner, Yolanda De Monte, Terry Wilson, and Maryann McQueen** for handcrafting blankets ("holdable hugs") for children in shelter.
- To **Judy Schank, Ruth's Closet Volunteer**, for transporting donations from Eileen Fisher in Hunt Valley.
- To **Molly Kastina** and her **coworkers at Johns Hopkins University** for donating holiday gifts for the children in our shelter.
- To the **Plaisteds** for their generous donation of National Aquarium tickets for our childcare program to take an educational field trip.
- To **Pandora Ice Rink** at the Inner Harbor for the donation of skating and rental tickets for our "Brighten a Child's Day" program.
- To **Lucy Mulqueen** for her donation of movie tickets for our "Brighten A Child's Day" program.
- To **Christy Orser** for her donation of Wild Kratt tickets at the Modell Lyric.
- To the **Saint George's Garden Club** for their continued support in beautifying our Weinberg Center as well as their donation of gift cards for our clients.
- To **Michael Hineline** and **the Baltimore City Fire Department** for the holiday and fire safety program in December, kids and adults alike enjoyed the evening!
- To **Lura Fleece** and **the University of Maryland Cheerleaders** for hosting their fun, fabulous, and much-appreciated "Shop for Moms" event for our clients.
- To the **Youth Theater of North Baltimore County** for their donation drive for our Basket of Smiles program.
- To **Adopt A Block** for their donations of turkeys and toys during the holiday season.
- To **Carolyn Lawson** and **Lisa Allen** for decorating hundreds of Thank You cards for our annual Adopt A Family Program. The cards were stunning as always and extra special as they're thoughtfully handmade!
- To **Joan** and **Jon Schochor** for their donation of a catered meal to the House of Ruth staff.
- To **Sylvie Lauzon** and the **Johns Hopkins School of Public Health** for selecting the House of Ruth as the beneficiary of their Vagina Monologues event as well their R. House cocktail fundraiser.

## HOUSE OF RUTH MARYLAND BY THE NUMBERS

Last year,  
House of Ruth Maryland  
provided services to:

# 8,622

Adult victims (including hotline (anonymous and named callers), police lethality contacts, counseling, legal assistance, residential, services, service coordination, and Gateway victim contact)

# 571

Children

# 2,707

Friends, family, and supporters  
of House of Ruth Maryland

# 584

Male and female abuse  
intervention clients

# 1,372

Professionals receiving training



# Supporting All Victims

House of Ruth Maryland's mission is, in part, "to end violence against women...by confronting the attitudes, behaviors and systems that perpetuate it". One way we work to confront the systems is through our advocacy work with the Maryland General Assembly. Each year, we suggest legislation, present testimony, and work with state legislators to enact laws that protect abused women and their children, and laws that hold abusers accountable for their actions.

This year, we are fortunate to once again have the support of the lobbying firm Harris, Jones and Malone in our legislative efforts.

**The following list is legislation that we are supporting this year:**

**HB 388/SB 170 - Criminal Procedure – Violation of Conditions of Release -**

This bill would make violation of a pretrial no contact order a crime. If a person is arrested and released pretrial, very often the court sets special conditions of release for the defendant. A common special condition is to have no contact with the victim. Under current law, if the defendant violates a pretrial special condition, it is not a crime. The only the remedy is for the state's attorney to file to revoke the release condition. By making violation of release conditions a separate crime, it would enable law enforcement to arrest a defendant for violating his/her conditions of release, including to stay away from the victim. This change would add an important means of protection for victims of domestic violence and other crime victims.

**HB 1303/SB 491 - Family Law – Domestic Violence – Permanent Protective Orders –**

Under the current law, in order to be eligible for a permanent protective order the respondent must be convicted and sentenced to a term of imprisonment of at least 5 years, the crime must be one of a list of enumerated crimes, and the respondent must have served at least 12 months of the sentence. In addition, the current statute requires that the crime must be the act of abuse that led to the issuance of the final protective order. This bill would expand the current permanent protective order statute to include any crime, not just one of the enumerated crimes, and apply even if the crime was not the act of abuse that led to the issuance of the protective order.

**HB 255 and 633/SB 578 - Secretary of State – Address Confidentiality Programs –**

Shielding of Real Property Records – In 2016, the General Assembly passed a bill creating a Task Force to study and make recommendations about how to protect the identity and address of a participant in the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) when recording a deed transferring real property to an ACP participant. This bill would amend the ACP statute and create a system for recording deeds and protecting the confidentiality of an ACP participant's address.

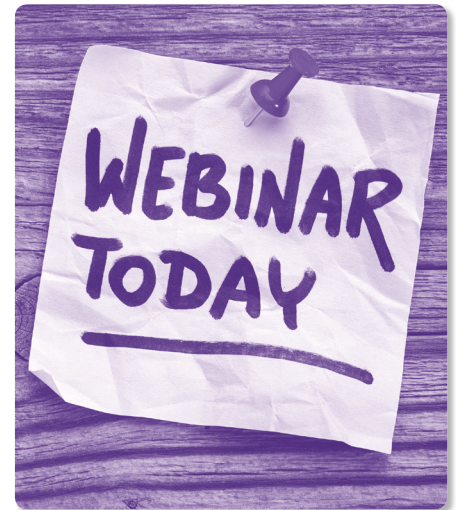
**HB 328/SB 121 - Family Law – Domestic Violence – Definition of Abuse –**

This bill would expand the way abuse is defined in the protective order statute to include misuse of telephone facilities, misuse of electronic communication, revenge porn, and visual surveillance.

**HB 1646/SB 1036- Criminal Procedure - Firearms – Transfer –**

This bill would require the State's Attorney's office to notify a defendant if s/he is charged with a domestically related, disqualifying crime and that, if convicted, s/he would be prohibited from possessing a firearm. It also requires the defendant to file a copy of proof of transfer of the firearm with either the court or the State's Attorney.

**To learn more about House of Ruth Maryland's legislative agenda, visit our website at <http://www.hruth.org/legislative-priorities/> or contact Dorothy Lennig, Director of Marjorie Cook Legal Clinic at House of Ruth Maryland at [dlennig@hruthmd.org](mailto:dlennig@hruthmd.org).**



## Training Webinars

House of Ruth Maryland is taking its training institute national! Starting in spring of 2018, we'll be hosting webinars to train service professionals or anyone who is interested in learning more about intimate partner violence.

"It's an opportunity to take what we've learned, as a direct service provider, to train others who are working in the field or who want to be more effective community partners," said Lisa Nitsch, Director of Education and Outreach at House of Ruth Maryland.

Upcoming webinars will cover topics, including trauma informed services for victims of intimate partner violence and responsive programming for LGBTQ victims.

**To learn more visit our website at [www.hruth.org/webinar](http://www.hruth.org/webinar).**

# A Full House

Numerous supporters helped WMAR-ABC2 Fill the House at White Marsh Mall on December 20, 2017, during a one-day donation drive! House of Ruth Maryland collected a total of 2,000 square feet diapers and wipes, new women's and children's underwear, bed sheets, pillows, and twin-sized comforters for the residents of our emergency shelter. In addition to the supplies and in support of Fill The House, GBMC raised over \$4,000 and the Scripps Howard Foundation made a \$10,000 donation to House of Ruth Maryland

Deneen Morgan-Burley, a former client of House of Ruth Maryland, showed up with a cart full of socks and blankets as a means to give back to women who are facing the struggles she overcame. Deneen said, "[House of Ruth] helped me, and now it's time for me to help somebody else." She describes how she used to blame herself for the abuse she endured, but eventually realized that she had done the best she could for her family. She states, "It's taken me 39, almost 40 years to start talking about it, but now I'm not going to [stay silent]."

We are grateful for everyone who contributed and we look forward to seeing you at our second annual Fill the House in October 2018!

***Special Thanks to our 2017 Sponsors & Partners – WMAR-ABC2, GBMC, Von Paris Moving and Storage and People's Bank.***

## IN MEMORY OF:

Each year, House of Ruth Maryland is fortunate to receive gifts made in memory of individuals who are no longer with us. These gifts are a tribute to the person who has passed and they honor the memory of those we love and the things that were most important to them. We would like to recognize the following individuals who have been honored with a memorial tribute between August 1, 2017 and January 31, 2018. We thank the generous donors who make it possible for us to recognize their loved ones.

Harry Abplanalp Jr.	Dorothy J. Dixon	Etta Malloy
Eleanor Anderson	Jennie Dragotta	Barbara Malone
Cecilia Banashak	Ferd East	Yetta Markowitz
Ann K. Benfield, Esq	Jackie Fenwick	Jeff Matheny
James Bessling	Catherine Galiszewski	Edna L. McAdory
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Ruth Cannella3	Julie Kirk	William M.M. Robinson
Bernice Cohen	Amy Kiser	Dr. Salvatore
Jerome Cohen	Charles William (Bill) Klein	Melvin Sody
Alma Crews	Thomas Anglin Kelley	Sheryl A. Suissa
Mary Anne Cunningham	Wanda Ladzinski	Georgeanna Tsamoutalis
Ora Deans	Emma E. Long	Betty Elaine Wendelin

## 2018 Upcoming Events

April 28  
**FashionEASTa**

May 1  
**Spring Luncheon**

June 11  
**BIC Golf Tournament**

July 12  
**Crabaret**

September 5  
**Clearing House Sidewalk Sale**

October  
**Fill The House**

October  
**Adopt A Family Registration**

## House of Ruth Maryland Christmas Party 2017

On December 21, 2017, House of Ruth Maryland held the annual Christmas Party for clients in our Adelante Familia program, at the Southeast Anchor Enoch Pratt Library.

In attendance were 49 survivors, 104 children and 35 volunteers. While most of the volunteers were from the House of Ruth we also had 14 very generous high school students from Hereford High.

Festivities for mom included games, raffles and dancing, while the kids joined students from Hereford High, and their teacher Ms. Laura Blama, to have fun with arts and crafts.

While we truly appreciate the library staff, students from Hereford High School, and other House of Ruth Maryland volunteers and staff, we want to extend a special thank you to Mr. David Rosario, or as the kids know him, Santa Claus. Santa was bilingual and able to talk to the children in English and the mothers in Spanish. Santa also came prepared to give each child a special present.

***To learn more about our Spanish language programs and services, please contact Jesus Rivera at [jrivera@hruthmd.org](mailto:jrivera@hruthmd.org)***



**House of Ruth  
Maryland**

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# HouseLine

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Stephanie Romano

**Design and Production**

Debbie Saag

*If you receive multiple mailings or need to update your  
address, please call our Development Office at 410-554-8443.*

**SAVE THE DATE: MAY 1, 2018**

# Annual Spring Luncheon



*Laura Lippman*

Join us for House of Ruth Maryland's 17th Annual Spring Luncheon featuring Baltimore native and New York Times bestselling author, Laura Lippman. Ms. Lippman was a reporter for twenty years, including twelve years at *The Baltimore Sun*. She began writing novels while working full-time and published seven books about "accidental PI" Tess Monaghan before leaving daily journalism in 2001. She has won more than 20 awards for her fiction -- and been nominated for 30 more and has published 20 novels, a novella and a collection of short stories. Her latest book *Sunburn*, was published by Harper Collins in February 2018.

**Tuesday, May 1, 2018 • 11 AM – 1:30 PM • Hilton Baltimore Hotel  
401 West Pratt Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21201**

**Co-Chairs:** Jeri Hawthorne and Charlene Williams

Ticket price \$150 • Table price \$1,500 • Corporate Sponsorships Available

Reserve your ticket or table now by calling

Stephanie Romano at 410-554-8446 or email [sromano@hruthmd.org](mailto:sromano@hruthmd.org)

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**Table Hosts:** Sheldon Caplis, Jeri Hawthorne, Amy Newhall, Joan Schochor,

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