

HISTORY

OF THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF SAVANNAH

In 1925 two circles of The King's Daughters, The Margaret Bottome Circle and The Elizabeth Butler Circle amalgamated volunteer forces to become a Junior Service League. On January 7, 1926, this organization was admitted to membership in the Association of Junior Leagues of America, and thus the Junior League of Savannah began.

Early Years in the League saw community volunteer activities covering a wide variety of efforts with many organizations:

- ◆ Health Care Clinics at the Telfair Hospital
- ◆ Publishing a Guide Book
- ◆ The Children's Theatre
- ◆ The Community Chest
- ◆ All-Star Concert Series
- ◆ Telfair Academy
- ◆ The American Red Cross
- ◆ Bethesda Boys Home

The League's first fund-raiser was the Junior League edition of the Savannah Morning News. Members also raised money by holding teas, balls, a horse show and a golf tournament. The League held its first Follies in 1934.

The 40's gave the League the opportunity to rise to the challenge of a nation in war, and League members worked in a many different projects:

- ◆ Civilian Defense
- ◆ USO Travelers' Aid
- ◆ Volunteers were placed at hospitals, Telfair Art Gallery, and the Red Cross Blood Bank
- ◆ Civil Air Patrol
- ◆ Child Placement services

The Thrift Sale began during this time. The first Thrift Sale had a net profit of \$1,610
Approximate Thrift Sale total for the decade - \$5,455

The 50's saw League attention focusing on cultural and human welfare concerns:

- ◆ Children's Services and the Foster Home Program
- ◆ Project SABRE (Savannah Area Better Recreational Enterprise)
- ◆ The Owens-Thomas House
- ◆ The Savannah Symphony
- ◆ The Historic Savannah Foundation
- ◆ Tuberculosis Sanitarium
- ◆ The Pre-School Vision Testing Program
- ◆ Savannah Speech and Hearing Program

The first League Headquarters was begun at the Owens-Thomas House.

Two Follies and two Thrift Sales were held to fund community projects.

- ◇ Approximate Thrift Sale total for the decade - \$50,049
- ◇ Approximate Follies decade total - \$37,381

The 60's continued funding and staffing a variety of projects:

- ◆ The Historic Savannah Foundation
- ◆ Savannah Speech and Hearing Center
- ◆ Telfair Academy
- ◆ Youth Museum
- ◆ Board of Education
- ◆ The book, *Historic Savannah*, was published and dedicated to the Junior League of Savannah

Thrift Sale and Follies continued as major fund-raising events;

- ◇ Approximate Thrift Sale total for the decade - \$83,224.76
- ◇ Approximate Follies decade total - \$53,582.60

In the 70's commitments to the community included even more projects and funding:

- ◆ Association for Children with Specific Learning Disabilities
- ◆ Chatham County Environmental Council
- ◆ Drug Educational Program
- ◆ Child Abuse and Neglect
- ◆ Savannah Science Museum
- ◆ Chatham-Savannah Voluntary Action Center
- ◆ Savannah Tour of Homes
- ◆ Georgia Day
- ◆ Night In Olde Savannah
- ◆ The Historic Savannah Foundation
- ◆ Georgia Conservancy
- ◆ Georgia Public Radio
- ◆ Child Advocacy

Savannah Style Cookbook was developed and tested during the last years of the '70's.
Headquarters was moved to the Scarbrough House

- ◇ Approximate Thrift Sale total for the decade - \$125,529
- ◇ Approximate Follies decade total - \$109,686

In the 80's the League collaborated on projects with a number of organizations:

- ◆ SAFE (Savannah Area Family Emergency) Shelter
- ◆ Georgia Public Radio
- ◆ Commission on Children & Youth in Chatham County
- ◆ Georgia Conservancy
- ◆ Pregnancy Outreach Project
- ◆ Lincoln House Project
- ◆ Girl Scouting In the Inner City
- ◆ Project Read
- ◆ Youth Leadership Savannah Program
- ◆ Mothers Against Drunk Driving
- ◆ Pediatric Adopt-A-Unit
- ◆ Victim Witness Assistance Program
- ◆ Ronald McDonald House
- ◆ Kids Who Care Scholarship Program
- ◆ Grace House
- ◆ HMS Bounty Project
- ◆ Salvation Army

A new League Headquarters was established at the Girl Scout Carriage House.

- ◇ Approximate Thrift Sale total for the decade - \$250,170.75
- ◇ Approximate Follies decade total - \$285,000.00

In the 90's the League continued the tradition of community support and service.

- ◆ Grace House - Magdalene Project
- ◆ Kids Who Care Scholarships
- ◆ Discover Science
- ◆ Grow Green
- ◆ Light Up the Lucas
- ◆ CCAC (Coastal Children's Advocacy Center)
- ◆ Olympic Flag Arrival Festivities
- ◆ STAR (Sight Testing and Referral)
- ◆ Greenbriar Children's Center Done In A Day

The first Community Focus Area was parenting, "Parent Power." Total funding for Parenting Community Program Projects exceeded \$131,200.

- ◆ Fast Friends Project
- ◆ Generations Project
- ◆ Hands On Project
- ◆ Community Awareness Project
- ◆ Done In A Day Children's Literary Festival
- ◆ Done In-A Day Child & Infant CPR

The second Community Focus Area was the elderly "Juniors to Seniors." Total funding for "Juniors to Seniors" Community Program Projects exceeded \$600,000.

- ◆ Adopt-A-Senior
- ◆ Hands On Homes
- ◆ Hilton Head Projects
- ◆ League Theater Players
- ◆ Magic Me
- ◆ Meals On Wheels
- ◆ Second Harvest Food Bank
- ◆ Seniors In Force
- ◆ Senior Leaders
- ◆ Senior Connections
- ◆ Club 55 of Senior Citizens, Inc.

League Headquarters was relocated to the Village Square office on Victory Drive in 1995.

Downtown Savannah Style was introduced as new cookbook and source of revenue.

- ◇ Approximate Thrift Sale total for this decade - \$666,881
- ◇ Follies total - \$310,000

2000 – 2007 Education became the Community Focus Area in 2002 with "In League with Success" working with various community partners:

- ◆ Chatham County Health Department – Reach Out and Read
- ◆ Chatham County Board of Education – Oatland Island
- ◆ Frank Callen Boys and Girls Club
- ◆ Georgia Historical Society
- ◆ Local Outreach Volunteer Educators (L.O.V.E.) Mentors
- ◆ Massie Heritage Center
- ◆ Savannah Speech and Hearing
- ◆ Savannah Technical College
- ◆ Senior Citizens, Inc.
- ◆ Union Mission

League Headquarters moved to the Senior Citizens, Inc. building on Bull Street in 2000.

The Southern Living Idea House was added as an additional fundraiser; netting \$44,246. The 2002 Follies raised more than \$100,000.

Thrift Sale continues to raise more than \$100,000 annually.

Christmas Made in South and Springtime Made in the South were added as two events where our members sell Cookbooks, netting \$15,000.

In 2005 Association of Junior Leagues International introduces “Kids in the Kitchen” and Savannah adopts the healthy kid initiative as a project area.

Present — Women and Children’s Advocacy became the Community Focus Area in 2008 with “Impacting Our Communities for 82 Years” as our theme. Our community partners include:

- ◆ Coastal Children’s Advocacy Center
- ◆ Chatham County Board of Education – Oatland Island
- ◆ Habitat for Humanity
- ◆ Union Mission

Thrift Sale continues to raise more than \$100,000 annually.

Christmas Made in South and Springtime Made in the South continue as two events where our members sell Cookbooks.

“Kids in the Kitchen” the healthy kid initiative continues as a project area for Savannah, the Golden Isles, and the South Carolina Low Country Projects.