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Just Communities of Central Arkansas advances diversity, challenges assumptions and promotes understanding through educational programs and advocacy.

Initiated Act One Will Hurt Vulnerable Children

by Ruth Shepherd

Approximately 500 children in Arkansas are waiting to be adopted on any given day.

Consider who those children are:

- *Children who have no known parents.*
- *Children whom the state felt compelled to remove from their homes due to abuse or neglect.*
- *Children who are in foster care and all interventions by case workers, judges and advocates have failed to remediate the situation.*

Surely, through no fault of their own, these are some of our most vulnerable children.

If Initiated Act One is made law, any unmarried couples who live together would be eliminated as possible adoptive parents,

immediately reducing the number of possible homes for these children.

Arkansas Families First is a coalition of groups who oppose this Initiated Act that would first and foremost hurt our neediest children. Members of Arkansas Families First include:

*Ark. Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Ark. Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
ACLU of Arkansas
Arkansas Interfaith Alliance
Arkansas Public Policy Panel
Ark. Advocates for Children & Families
Stonewall Democrats of Arkansas
Arkansas Psychological Association
Just Communities of Central Ark.*

It is the belief of Arkansas Families First that placement of

children in adoptive homes should be handled on a case-by-case basis by those judges, caseworkers, psychologists, social workers, and pediatricians who are able to determine what is really in the best interest of the individual child. Their decisions should not be limited by an arbitrary law that bans a category of couples.

A similar law has previously been ruled unconstitutional by the Arkansas Supreme Court, and a similar bill died in the legislature during the last session.

For the sake of our children, I hope we will defeat Initiated Act One on election day, Nov. 4th.

For more information about Arkansas Families First: www.arkansasfamiliesfirst.org.

JCCAvoices

Just Communities of Central Arkansas

9th Annual Walk 3 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 9th!

Register today:
arkansasjustcommunities.org

Join Walk for
CommUNITY co-chairs
Pat Riley, Jr. and Shareese
Kondo to celebrate our
diverse and spirit-filled
community on Sunday,
Nov. 9th.



We will have entertainment, t-shirts and refreshments for all Walk participants. We expect around 1,000 walkers, and this is always a great time to visit with old friends and new.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Walk is invited to the Team Leader Luncheon, Tuesday, Oct. 7th, 11:30 - 1, at Mosaic Church of Little Rock, 6420 Colonel Glenn Road. Please reply to Mallory Jewell, 372-5129 or mjewell@justcommunities.org, to order your lunch.

All funds raised through Walk for CommUNITY go to support youth and community programs provided year-round by JCCA.

Walk 2007 Photo by Paul Bowen.



Walkers are encouraged to show their team spirit with signs and t-shirts. Strollers and pets are welcome and the entire route is wheelchair accessible.

To see all the photos from Walk for CommUNITY 2007, go to:
<http://community.webshots.com/user/shepherd256>

Join Our Growing List of Walk for CommUNITY Sponsors Today!

- Alltel
 - LR Athletic Club
 - City of Little Rock
 - AARP
 - Aristotle
 - City of North Little Rock
 - Clinton School of Public Service
 - First United Methodist Church of Little Rock
 - Flesher Family Foundation
 - Grundfest Company
 - Arkansas Lighthouse Services for the Blind
 - Little Rock Police Department
 - Little Rock Fire Department
 - Paschall Strategic Communications
 - VCC
 - Walden Chemical/Blue Water Pools
 - UAMS
- List current as of Sept. 20th. Contact Mallory Jewell to learn about Walk Sponsorship Benefits, 372-5129.

45th Annual National Humanitarian Award Dinner Recognizes Anderson and Moore



*Humanitarian Winner
Joel E. Anderson and his
wife Ann.*

Over 600 JCCA supporters attended the 45th Annual Humanitarian Dinner on May 13th to recognize the good works of UALR Chancellor Joel E. Anderson and Little Rock City Manager Bruce T. Moore.



*Tipton & Hurst, an
in-kind donor, provided
Eurogarden Centerpieces.*



*Humanitarian Winner
Bruce T. Moore*



*Dinner Speaker,
Katy Lyzhina*



Former Honorees Senator Jim Argue and Clarice Miller



*Dinner Chairs
Brad and Debbie Diner*

JCCA Board Members

Chair

Dr. Sue Weinstein

Vice Chair

Dr. Jay Barth

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Wynona Bryant-Williams, Ph.D.

Treasurer

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Greg Flesher

Sue Frueauff

Jack Grundfest

Sharon Heflin

Colette Honorable

Judge Henry Jones, Jr.

Chief Rhoda Mae Kerr

Zahra Khan

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Rabbi Eugene H. Levy

Pat Lile

Al Lowery, Jr.

Rev. Dr. Felton E. May

The Rt. Rev. Larry Maze

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David Mosley

Marla Johnson Norris

Dr. Eduardo Ochoa

Andrew Parker

John Riggs IV

Pat Riley, Jr.

Derrick Smith

Gus Vratsinas

Dr. Namvar Zohoori

Executive Director

Ruth D. Shepherd

Dates to Remember:

Walk for CommUNITY Team Leader Luncheon, Tuesday, Oct. 7

11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Mosaic Church of Arkansas, 6420 Colonel Glenn Road

Reservations: mjewell@justcommunities.org or 372-5129

Plowshares Community Conflict Resolution Training Workshop

Monday & Tuesday, October 13 & 14

For more information, Ruth Shepherd, 372-5129

or go to www.arkansasjustcommunities.org and click on

“Learn About Community Forums” (see article below)

Walk for CommUNITY

Sunday, November 9th

3 p.m. Little Rock River Market

Entertainment, Refreshments & Good Friends

Register today: www.arkansasjustcommunities.org

Plowshares Workshop Set for Oct.

Applications are now being accepted for this intensive training for Arkansans who want to help their communities turn conflict into opportunities for transformative action.

Here’s what past participants have said:

“After attending this training, I anticipate using my newly developed conflict resolution skills to further my ability as a mediator not only in my professional work in the community, but also in my personal life.”

“I enjoyed the trainers, the agenda and format, the community conflict examples they provided, as well as the multiple role playing experiences. I also appreciated that we concluded the training with a ‘roundtable discussion’ regarding true-to-life issues in our own community.”

Participants from throughout Arkansas are invited to apply, and one of our facilitators is fluent in Spanish so we particularly urge members of our growing Latino community to attend.

JCCA is committed to creating communities where all voices are heard, and through this program, we are training community problem-solvers to address current and future issues with civil dialogue, thereby promoting healthier outcomes for ALL our communities.

The fee for the 2-day training is \$50 and includes lunch and the Peace Skills: Manual for Community Mediators.

To get an application, go to www.arkansasjustcommunities.org and click on “Learn About Community Forums.”