

The Crib Sheet



Mothers and More Chapter 230

Fall 2008

Mothers & More Mission

Mothers & More is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of mothers through support, education and advocacy. We address mothers' needs as individuals and members of society, and promote the value of all the work mothers do.

Our Website

<http://www.momsofwestchester.com/>

National Website

<http://www.mothersandmore.org/>

If you are interested in joining Mothers and More, please send an e-mail to newmemberinfo@momsofwestchester.com.

State of the Chapter

For the last four years, we have been experiencing rapid growth, although our growth in 2008 has been stable. In October 2005, our chapter had 48 members. By October 2006, we had doubled to 101 members. We were at our largest in October 2007 with 155 members. Currently we have 136 members and experience a consistent renewal rate of 60%.

Chapter Board Members

Book Club Coordinator- Abbie O.
Chapter Meetings & Discussion Events Planner- Whitney B.
Game/Wine Night Coord.- Dana Z.
Leader (seeking co-leader)- Robyn V.
New Member Coord.- Meredith Z.
Newsletter Editor- Bridget B.
Playgroup Coord.- Dana Z.
Public Relations Coord.- Camille M.
Special Events Coord.- Rebecca R.
Stitch & Bitch Coord.- Meredith Z.
Treasurer- Laura P.
Website Coord.- Christine M.

Letter from your Leader

Dear Members and Friends,
I thought I would start by telling you a little about myself. My husband, John, and I moved to Thornwood from Sonoma, California in May 2001. We met and courted in San Francisco. We have one child, Joseph (a miracle of modern medicine), who is 19 months old. I'm relishing in my new position as a stay at home mom. Before Joseph was born, I worked as a paralegal for a real estate law firm in Rye.

I joined Mothers and More in March 2007, and in a whirlwind, became the Leader in September. Although I haven't been a member for very long, I'm feeling more connected to the group and to a part of me that I often forget exists. I think it's what the "And More" is all about. Becoming the leader has forced me to be More involved, More organized and More independent. I've just begun to attend evening functions, and sitting with a glass of wine or a cup of tea in your hand, having an adult conversation is really nice. Perhaps I stayed out too late, and yes, I was tired the next day, but I found something at the book club that first night that I hadn't realized was missing in the journey of Motherhood.

"And More", is why we joined after all, isn't it?

As this newsletter goes to press, the Board Members of Mothers and More Chapter 230 are working together to offer the members more opportunities to enrich their lives. We have organized a calendar full of both daytime and evening events for the next three months. Our belief is that if we provide you with more advance notice, you might just be able to fit some of them into your schedule. December is a busy month, so we've kept the plans to a minimum. I'm sad that I will not be able to attend Game Night on December 4th or Book Club on the 5th because of holiday parties, but I hope that if you are free, you will join them. I'm really looking forward to the Holiday Lunch at Belizzi on December 9th and hope to see many of you there.

As the New Year begins, there will be plenty of opportunities to reconnect with the group. As I look over the calendar, there seems to be something for everyone. There are the usual suspects: Book Club, Game Night, and Stitch and Bitch. We have added an all ages playgroup and a Library Day. Get the kids out of the house and meet some new friends. We will also be resuming our monthly meeting schedule with a speaker on "Today's economy and the markets." I'm also excited that we scheduled the January 14th Board meeting in the evening to include more working moms in the group. As always, we need your input to make our Chapter what you want it to be.

February is also full of activity. You will notice another all ages

Welcome 2008 babies!



Congratulations to all the proud parents! (If your baby is not listed here, please email Bridget for inclusion in the next newsletter.)

Mark Daniel, born 2/08, to Amy G.
Maura Deborah, born 3/08, to Tara L.
Dylan Tyler, born 3/08, to Jenifer W.
Maddie Caroline, born 4/08, to Micaela P.
Lila Nora, born 4/08, to Bridget B.
Maxwell Ryan, born 4/08, to Tara G.
Alanna Paige, born 6/08, to Angelique H.
John Paul, born 7/08, to Colleen L.
Cassandra Hsiang-Chuan, born 7/08, to Li-Chiou C.
Cooper Beckett, born 8/08, to Tricia S.
Ava Nicole, born 10/08, to Patty M.

Playgroups



Chapter 230 has many wonderful playgroups, mainly organized by year of birth. We also have one based on location (north of 287) and a Saturday group. If you are interested in joining a playgroup, please contact Dana Z.

Stitch & Bitch



Held the third Wednesday of every month, Stitch & Bitch is a great opportunity to relax and chat with other moms while working on your knitting, quilting, scrapbooking, baby book, macramé, decoupage, or other creative endeavor. NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY! You don't have to be Martha Stewart - just come for the chocolate and the chance to get away from the kids!

playgroup. There will be no Stitch and Bitch, but Book Club and Game night are scheduled. We scheduled a Mom's night out on February 18th. I hope you can make it; I've already put the evening in my calendar.

We'll keep you posted as items are added to the schedule. If you have an idea for a gathering of moms, please let us know. We want to build this group to better serve its members. We are all enriched by each other's experiences and strengths. "And More" will make us better moms!

Very truly yours, Robyn V., mom of Joseph, 19 months

Letter from your Editor

Hello everyone and Happy Holidays! After rather impulsively offering to take on the role of Chapter Newsletter Editor, I had some second thoughts along the lines of: *what on earth am I doing? I have a fulltime job, a long commute, two delicious but time-consuming children, and a husband with whom I don't spend enough time.* But after further thought, I knew the answer.

I feel like I have Mothers & More to thank for our relatively easy transition from Queens to Westchester last year. Before we even moved, I joined M&M and asked the group for input on the towns we were considering. I received over a dozen emails welcoming me to the group and providing me with information. Thanks to chapter members, I found a real estate lawyer, a hair stylist, a moving company, a pumpkin patch, and much more. Since I work full-time, I haven't been able to attend many playgroups and develop the close friendships some members share, but I feel like I have some roots here now. A few people know my name. I can ask for help and someone will respond. In this increasingly electronic world, these connections are very special to me.

I'm also a sucker for groups that are well run (thank you, board members!) and inclusive (thank you, everyone!). I really appreciate how the chapter accommodates both stay at home and working moms with daytime, evening, and weekend events. So I guess I just wanted to give back. And besides, I have a little smidgen of time there between the time the kids go to sleep, we clean up the kitchen, and it's time to hit the hay!

I will be building on the great newsletter that Toby L. managed for a few years. **Please help me; this is your newsletter.** Volunteer to write an article or review a product, place, event, or class- anything is appreciated.

I look forward to getting to know all of you a little better. Wishing you and your families a wonderful holiday season.

Bridget B., mom of Maxwell, 2 years, and Lila, 7 months

Game Night/Wine Tasting



Game night/wine tasting night is SO much fun! It's moms getting out of the house once a month to have a glass of wine (or 2-3) and to play a game (if you want). If you don't like playing games, it's fun to just hang out, relax and meet other people in the same boat as you. We usually have about 8-10 moms attend. Please join us next time!

Book Club



The book club is active again after a summer hiatus. Last month, the group read *My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult, the story of a girl conceived by her parents as a donor match for her sister, who has a rare form of leukemia, and the effects the increasingly invasive procedures have on both her and her family. This month we read *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom, about a man who dies in an accident and in heaven encounters five pivotal figures from his life. Our discussion centered around how people can be interconnected without ever knowing it, how everyone has a lesson to share, and our own views of death, heaven and the afterlife.

The next book club will be held on December 5 at Abbie O.'s home in Scarsdale. The book will be *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole. Laura Pierson will lead the discussion. Meetings are generally held at 8PM on the first Friday of the month, unless a holiday weekend interferes. We rotate hosts on a

“Two kids in the same room! What??!! How did you do that?”

This is the most common question I hear when people find out that my two children share a room. I have to be honest: even though I took calculated steps, it's really a mystery as to how it worked.

As a coach, I always ask opinions, so I questioned adults who shared rooms as children, several sets of parents of cohabiting kids and non-cohabiting kids and finally, my mentor, Dianne M., who is the mother of five children and the grandmother of nine. I got 100% positive feedback. Those I chatted with had children of the same and mixed gender and children up to five years apart. They told me that gender does not matter- not at a young age. Plus, once they get older, no matter the gender, they will want to split and always amicably.

Following is my story. There are two parts: “The Prep” and “The Event.” I dreaded “The Event,” but was hopeful “The Prep” would help.

“The Prep:” Morgan, my oldest, was still in the crib when I was pregnant with my second, Carrington, and I didn't want to buy another crib. For psychological reasons, I wanted to get Morgan out before the baby arrived. My husband, Micheal, and I bought a bed when she was about 15 months old. We explained that the crib would be the baby's bed and that she was a big girl now!

I took her shopping to pick out her sheets (Dora, of course). That night we put Morgan in the bed explaining, once again, that she was a “big girl, now!” She laid there until we were done with her routine and started to leave the room. Then she got up and went straight for the crib. Sigh. This went on every night, even after Carrington arrived three months later, each time telling her that the baby needed the crib.

Since I was nursing, Carrington slept in our room in the pack-n-play. This went on until Carrington was *nine months* and sleeping through the night! “Why won't Morgan sleep in the bed??” I would ask myself. I finally told Micheal that I had had enough of the “snarffing” in the middle of the night that would wake me- it was time we forced “The Event.”

“The Event:” I prepared myself for nuclear meltdown, but I was determined. That night we gave the girls their bath, telling Morgan that Carrington was going to sleep with her in the room and “wasn't that exciting??” I nursed Carrington in their bedroom while Micheal read the bedtime story. We put Morgan in the bed and Carrington in the crib. They started crying as soon as we started to leave! Micheal attended Carrington, stroking her while she lay in the crib, and I stroked and talked to Morgan while she cried, “Crrrrriiiiib!” Micheal and I changed places, and then we changed places again and again. After about fifteen minutes of this, he turned to me and said, “Let's leave the room.”

volunteer basis. Everyone brings a snack or drink, and we discuss the book. Generally whoever suggests the book leads a discussion, using questions we find on the web. There are always people who haven't read the book.

Book club is a good excuse to read what we might not ordinarily read on our own, but it is also a great excuse to get out of the house and see friends!

Friday, January 9, 8pm - *The Ten-Year Nap* by Meg Wolitzer

Friday, February 6, 8pm - *The Audacity of Hope* by Barack Obama

Recent Events



The chapter hosted not one, but two Family Fun Days in 2008. They were both held at the Silver Lake Park in West Harrison, a terrific park with picnic areas and two playgrounds. The June event was originally canceled due to bad weather, but after multiple member protests, it was back on! Our children bounced to their hearts content in the two bouncy castles (thanks to Christine M.), while parents tried to chat outside. The rain held off until about 1pm, when we all huddled under the pavilion eating pizza. The September event was slightly less eventful - it was a beautiful day, and once again, the little ones and their parents enjoyed the bouncy castles, playgrounds, and tasty treats.

The Halloween Party was also a rainy day, but inside the Mount Pleasant Community Center in Valhalla, it was toasty warm! The kids were, of course, adorable. Volunteers did a terrific job hanging decorations and creating craft and cookie decorating

OOOhhh, I wanted to defy him! He is always the logical one. I thought to myself, "Ok, I'll leave but, I KNOW I'll be back because he's wrong!!! Wrong I tell you! This will never work!!!" We shut the door, leaving them to cry. I sat on a chest outside their room on our landing. He told me to come downstairs and I told him that I needed to wait and listen. He rolled his eyes. I sat there.

Morgan stopped almost immediately. Carrington then stopped. Then Morgan cried again for only a second. Carrington did the same. This back and forth went on for about two minutes and then...silence. I waited for the meltdown. You know, when they act as if they are attached to medieval torture machines? Right, that one. Silence. I thought to myself, "That's it? A couple of whimpers?"

I walked downstairs, defeated that my husband was right, but inside, relieved that my imagination was worse than reality. It's been over a year since "The Event" and it's been great. The best. I think it worked because we gave Morgan "The Prep". My only regret was that "The Prep" was too long. I don't think we needed to wait till Carrington was nine months for "The Event."

In case you are wondering, one will wake up occasionally, but it's usually Morgan, now three, having a dream and Carrington, now twenty months, will sleep through it. Luckily, I have about nine years to figure out how to separate them! They'll probably figure it out for me! I'll report back.

Lorin M. is the mother of two everlasting-gob-stoppers, Morgan, 3, and Carrington, 20 months. She is a family and couples coach and is married to Micheal, an antiques dealer. She has been a member since 2006.



tables. The highlight of the party, though, was the performance by Zev, a popular local kids musician.

A big thanks to our Events Coordinator, Rebecca R., and all the members who volunteered! We donated over 90 pounds of food to the Westchester Food Bank.

Note to members: we always welcome your suggestions on how to make our events more welcoming to new members and fun for all. Please volunteer for our next event, or become a part of our board and share your ideas!

Class review- Music Together



My husband and I moved back to my hometown of Yonkers this past June. I really enjoyed taking my son, Rasoul, to Music Together classes when we lived in Connecticut, and I was hoping to find the same positive experience at the local Music Together class (aka OVER THE MOON MUSIC and MORE here in Lower Westchester). Rasoul has been enrolled in Music Together at the Tuckahoe Public Library, and I have nothing but wonderful things to say about the program, especially his current instructor, Gabrielle. She is soooooo animated and lively, and very funny. Rasoul tends to be shy, but he is very expressive during class, and he likes Gabrielle very much, especially her unusual selection of socks! If anyone is interested in trying a musical program for their tot, I would recommend Music Together, especially any class led by Gabrielle.

There are numerous classes at the Tuckahoe Library and many more locations throughout Westchester County.

www.overthemoonmusicandmore.com

Andrea N., mom of Rasoul

Welcome New Members!



Welcome to the new members (and their offspring) who joined us in 2008 (in order of their join month)!

Keren O. – White Plains - Zachary (11/07)
Pam S. – Elmsford - Gabriel (11/02) and Aurora (8/07)
Hanadi T. – Rye - Charlize (10/07)
Jessica W. – Eastchester – Jacob (5/04) and Rowan (10/07)
Delia E. – Yonkers – Sienna – (10/07)
Marion G. - Tuckahoe - Gianna (12/04)
Christina R. – Hartsdale - Jack (01/08)
Sharmika S. – Hartsdale - Miracle (08/06) & Aubrey (12 yo)
Christina S. – Mount Vernon - Pierre (07/07)
Jennifer Y. – Tarrytown - Henry (01/07)
Lindsey H. – Bronxville - Matthew William (04/08)
Stacy R. – Mount Vernon - Julian (02/08)
Robyn V. – Thornwood - Joseph (04/07)
Jennifer G. - Tuckahoe - Eli (09/07)
Loren I. – White Plains - Zoe (06/06)
Kathy P. - Bronxville - James (03/06) and Erin Claire (05/08)
Cathy S. - Pelham - Nathaniel (11/05)
Kelly G. – White Plains - Katie (01/06) and Meghan (09/07)
Rachel A. – Pleasantville - Lauren (10/03) and Zachy (05/07)
Ahilya G. – Thornwood - Uma and Rohan (11/06)
Tara G. - Scarsdale - Max (04/08)
Julie H. – Scarsdale - Kate (02/08)
Heeral M. – Dobbs Ferry - Anshuman (07/07)
Carole M. – Valhalla - Jennifer (06/04) and Caitlin (age 7)
Andrea T. – Rye - Henry (11/06)
Amy G. – Valhalla - Gregory (10/06) and Mark (02/08)
Monika H. - Harrison - Christoph (04/06)
Tessa K. – Tarrytown - Travis (09/05)
Bonnie M. – Croton-on-Hudson - Aedan (10/07)
Andrea N. - Yonkers - Rasoul (09/07)
Nancy S. – Irvington - Jack (04/07)
Tenika B. – Yonkers - Rianna (07/07)
Jennifer D. – White Plains - Charlie (06/06)
Carey L. – Harrison - Sophia (08/07)
Sherrie B. - Ossining - Jonathan (04/08)
Tracy O. – Thornwood - Ian (12/04) and Julia (07/07)
Wendy T. – Pleasantville - Abby (08/08)
Cruskaia A. – Yonkers - Amaya Luz (Sept 2007)
Caroline N. – Scarsdale - Eli (05/07)
Pikloo S. – Mamaroneck - Esha (03/07), and Amitav (03/04)

Upcoming Events
(contact is listed after the event)



November

Tue 11/25 Game Night, Dana Z.

December

Thu 12/4 Game Night, Dana Z.

Fri 12/5 Book Club, 8pm, Abbie O.

Tue 12/9 Holiday Lunch at Belizzi in Larchmont, Camille M.

Thu 12/11 Board Meeting, 10:30am, Robyn V.

Fri 12/12 Leapin' Lizards, 10am, Christine M.

January

Fri 1/9 Book Club, 8pm, Abbie O.

Tues, 1/13 Steven Ayer, CIMA, on the current financial and economic crisis, Whitney B.

Mon 1/19 All Ages Playgroup, 10am-noon, Laura M.

Wed 1/14 Board Meeting, 8pm, Robyn V.

Wed 1/21 Stitch & Bitch, Meredith Z.

Tue 1/27 Game Night, Dana Z.

Thu 1/29 Library Day

February

Fri 2/6 Book Club, 8pm, Abbie O.

Mon 2/9 Laura P.'s birthday - all hail!

Mon 2/16 All Ages Playgroup

Thu 2/12 Board Meeting, 10:30am, Robyn V.

Wed 2/18 Moms Night Out, Rebecca R.

Wed 2/25 Game Night, Dana Z.

Join us Tues, January 13th for a talk by Steven Ayer, CIMA, on the current economic and financial crisis.

Location: 4 Manhattanville Rd. in

Purchase. Wine and cheese will be

served. Look for a variety of speakers

in the next few months, including a

life coach, a female wine-maker and

author of Women of the Vine, a

Cosmetic and Image Consultant, and

more!

Newsletter Question:

What's your Favorite Family Holiday Tradition?

I love being in charge of making Perogies (a traditional Polish dumpling) for Christmas Eve dinner. I make them only once a year, and started taking over the job when my mom passed away. It is a lot of work because I make HUNDREDS, but watching everyone enjoy and appreciate them is my big Christmas gift to my family. *Andrea N.*

My favorite family tradition is lighting the Hanukkah candles with my family. Each year at pre-school, the kids make menorahs. So far, we have 2 we light. By the time we're done with pre-school, we'll have 6. It's fun to light the candles and see what Charlie remembers about making the menorahs. *Toby L.*

My family's favorite holiday tradition is seeing the train show at the New York Botanical Garden. *Laurie Ann V.*

I would say the white elephant swap my family does every Christmas. Inevitably everyone is in tears laughing about something ridiculous someone brought. One year, my brother gave a signed photograph of himself. *Rebecca R.*

Our favorite holiday tradition is hanging out in our pj's on Christmas morning while we open gifts. We go to church on Christmas eve before we go to our families houses, so that on Christmas morning we (my husband, kids and I) can hang out in our pj's in the morning and really enjoy the time together. We have also let our family know that we will not be ready until noon, because my husband and I really feel it is important that we have that special time with our kids and we look forward to that time all year long. After the kids open their gifts, we have a nice family breakfast and then more family time around our tree. *Tara L.*

My husband's whole entire family goes to his Grandmother's house EVERY Christmas Eve. His father is 1 of 6 sons; my husband is 1 of 15 grandchildren; our daughters are 2 of 5 great-grandchildren. *Dana Z.*

My favorite holiday tradition is putting up the Christmas decorations. I used to love doing it with my mother and now my son really loves it. He is looking forward to it already. *Abbie O.*

I love making Hanukkah sugar cookies each year with my mom. My mom does the rolling and baking, while I decorate them with icing and sprinkles. The men make guest appearances. Last year we made cookies with my 1 year old son and his great-grandfather in our new home. It was Max's second Hanukkah and Grandpa's last- a very special memory. I am so excited to carry on this tradition with my kids. *Bridget B.*