

The Crib Sheet



Mothers and More Chapter 230

September 2009

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.

Chapter Board Members

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

Letter from Your Co-Leader

Hello everyone,

I hope that you enjoyed the summer and are welcoming the change of season.

I look forward to seeing many of you this fall. We have planned several events that I am looking forward to in September and October- please check the calendar for the entire list. I want to call your attention to two events in particular. There is a Mom's Night Out planned at Rebecca R.'s house on September 25th. Who could pass up pampering and wine at the same time? We have also organized our annual Halloween Party on October 24th at 3pm. We booked Music by Zev to entertain the kiddos and adults alike. Please save the date for this event; a more detailed invite will be in your email box soon.

I would like to take a moment to talk to all of you about volunteerism, with the hope that I can inspire a few of you to step up and join us. The question is: why not join the board and help keep the Westchester Chapter of Mothers and More alive? I'm sure you are busy and don't have enough time to yourself and you wonder how you could possibly do any more in your day. The reality is that if our leadership does not get new volunteers, we will simply dissolve. We have two long time board members whose children have just started kindergarten. These lovely women have served you well and now it's time to let them step down. I have served as the only leader of our chapter for a year now (a chapter this size should have two leaders), and if this chapter is to continue to offer activities for us to enjoy, I cannot do it alone. Please take a minute to ponder what you would have done as a new mom without the connections that you made through Mothers and More. It's time to step forward to help the next new mom have the same experience. If you are new to our chapter or just haven't met a lot of moms yet, read Jennifer D.'s letter and think about sharing some of your time while getting to know some great people in the meantime. Please email me if you would like to talk about what a board position entails.

Robyn V. is mom of Joseph, 2 years old

Welcome New Babies!



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

Emma Sarah, (Dec 08), born to Nancy S.
Willem George, (Feb 09), born to Sarah W.
Camryn Leigh, (June 09), born to Loren I.
Aiden Jameson, (July 09), born to Erika M.
Ashley Michelle, (July 09), born to Liz T.
Sean Anthony, (Aug 09), born to Cathleen M.
Amaris Ruthlyn (Sept 09), born to Tenika B.

Playgroups



Chapter 230 has many wonderful playgroups, mainly organized by year of birth. We also have a Saturday group and occasional all-ages playgroups. If you are interested in joining a playgroup, please contact Dana Z.

Meredith Z. is also starting a support group for moms with children with special needs. Please contact her if interested.

Letter from Your Editor

Like so many of you, I sent a child off to school this month; Maxwell will attend a Jewish preschool three mornings a week. I've been trying to figure out something original to write for weeks. The whole "How did this happen? He was just born yesterday!" thing has been done before. While my eyes did well up at the most random moments during parent/teacher orientation, it was mostly in excitement and awe. I am so excited about everything Max will learn this year. I can't wait to watch the world open up to him a little more. He is very sincere and kind hearted, so my main worry is that his sweet heart will be trampled on and he will learn about meanness in school. Since we have so many terrific member contributions this month, I will keep this short and hopefully be inspired next time to write more about our initiation into the world of preschool.

In the meantime, have a wonderful fall and good luck to everyone who is seeing a child off to school!

And THANKS to all our newsletter contributors this month! I always welcome submissions to the newsletter!

Bridget B. is mom of Maxwell, 3 years old, and Lila, 18 months

Welcome New Members!



Welcome to the new members (and their offspring) who joined us recently! We are so glad you have joined our chapter. If by any chance you were left off of this list, please forgive us! We welcome you wholeheartedly anyway!

Elizabeth Z. and her son, Paolo (10/08), live in Scarsdale
Deborah G. and her daughter, Amanda (2/08), live in Scarsdale
Allie P. and her son, Liam (1/07), live in Scarsdale
Jennifer S. and her daughter, Silvia (11/08), live in Cortlandt Manor

Book Club



Book Club is held on the first Friday of every month at 8PM. Our last meeting, which about 6 people attended, was on September 11 at Abbie O's. The book was *Commencement* by J. Courtney Sullivan, but August proved a busy month for many book club members. Only a couple of attendees were able to read the book, so we used a brief synopsis of the plot, which followed four college friends through their early post-graduate years, as a jumping off point for a brief general discussion of our own post-college years. We then moved on to general gabbing about our lives and current events. We talked long enough that we never got a chance to pick a book for next month, so any suggestions are welcome! Our next meeting will be held October 2.

A letter from a (former) member

Dear M&M Chapter 230 Members,

As I prepared to move out of state recently, I was reminiscing about the past two years of living in New York. It took a while for me to join the Chapter (almost a year) after we moved into the area. I was very hesitant about joining. But after the first year, I really missed adult connections on a daily basis, so I decided to join. It was one of the best decisions I made since I moved to NY. I really want to thank all the moms from the playgroups I attended, and also all the board members. I feel that having some other moms to talk to on a weekly basis kept me sane. The original playgroup I was assigned to was a group of four women. As time went on, I became curious to meet the other moms in the chapter. My son and I had been to the Halloween Party, and the room was full of families. So I decided to attend a board meeting at one of the member's homes. It was nice, and also a small group of friendly women. I ended up going to another board meeting. This one was in the evening, and I couldn't believe how "adult" I felt by going out to Panera Bread on a Wednesday night. I realized how the move and lack of adult activities had affected me. It felt so nice to get out of the house. Next, I made it to a mom's night out at a different member's house. I had a great time! It was nice to meet up with other women from the area, and share laughs and drinks.

At the following board meeting, I volunteered to organize the Earth Day Party. It was funny, because when I got home, I thought to myself "what did I do?". I had never organized a big party for a bunch of moms and kids. But it turned out to be easy, thanks to help from the moms on the board. We found a good location with entertainment and an easy snack menu. It was a beautiful day and worked out great.

So as we moved to our new home in New Jersey, I contacted the area Mothers and More chapter and became a member. I feel like it is necessary now. It was such a good resource: playgroups, activities, and friends all from one group of women. I think about all the members in the Chapter 230 group I never met, and wonder if you are having a similar experience. If not, I would advise you to go out and meet a few more women in the chapter. Attend a meeting, attend a playgroup, send an email out to see if anyone would like to go get coffee; you might just find someone that will help you get through the days.

So thank you all; Charlie and I will miss you!

Jennifer D. is Charlie's mom and now lives in New Jersey

**Upcoming Events
(contact is listed after the event)**



Fri Sept 25 - Leapin Lizards Day
10am (Christine M.)

Fri Sept 25 - Mom's Night Out
7:30pm (Rebecca R.)

Fri Oct 2- Book club (Abbie O.)

Mon Oct 12 - All Ages Playgroup
10am (TBD)

Fri Oct 16 - Leapin Lizards Day
10am (Christine M.)

Sat Oct 24 - Halloween Party, 3pm

Wed Nov 11 - All Ages Playgroup
10am (Dana Z.)

GOING GREEN

Please join us for breakfast

Tuesday, September 22nd

8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

709 Westchester Ave, White Plains

Going Green:

Living Green.

Investing Green.

presented by:

Whitney Pickering Bullard, CFP®

Joy Hunter Chaillou

Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

and

Kimberly McLoughlin,

An Eco-Consultant with Green Irene

On "greening" your home, office
and environment.

Spotlight on Rebecca R., Special Events Coordinator

I am a person who has never been good at asking for help. I like to do things on my own. Not that I am a control freak, but I would rather do it myself than bother someone else.

This approach worked pretty well for me most of my adult life. Then along came motherhood, and of course, my path was drastically altered. After meandering through the first six months of my daughter Ella's life, trying to be supermom but having no idea even how to be a good mom, I knew it was time to reach out and get some serious help. Who else to ask but other mothers going through the same thing? Mothers and More to the rescue! And rescue they did. Ella and I were plopped into a same-age playgroup with a dozen other kids and moms. Over the next several months, I grew to depend on the sage advice of my new friends, devouring every tip and moment of camaraderie I could get. I felt a sense of calm knowing I was not alone, that there were others who were experiencing this same wild ride and needed help just as much as I did. I decided to become more involved with planning events, leading little music classes and eventually joining the board as Special Events Coordinator.

Not too long after that, we had another little one, our son Charlie, who is now two. It just so happened that a good number of my playgroup friends were going through their second pregnancy, too. It made the thought of having two seem a lot less intimidating knowing I wasn't going it alone. We shared in the ups and downs of our growing families. And I will tell you that although my daughter and son love their playgroup friends, I think I am the one who gets the most out of it. It feeds my soul and reenergizes me for the rest of the week.

Throughout almost four years in Mothers and More, I have gotten to know even more remarkable women. I relish in the fact that I have over 100 other moms to whom I can turn for advice. What a fountain of knowledge we have among us! I truly believe in strength in numbers and am so glad to be bolstered up by all of you!

Now remember how I said I used to not be able to ask for help? Well, I've gotten so good at it that I am going to make a plea for some serious help here in our newsletter. Mothers and More looks to volunteers to run the board of each chapter and ours has a dedicated group that has been actively involved, some for over four years. The national chapter suggests committing to a year of volunteering so that you don't get overwhelmed, but also so others can then join in as we bring in new members. A number of your board members (myself included) are looking for some fresh energy to join us. You don't need to be a supermom to become more involved. You just have to want to help other moms, and be willing to spare a few hours here and there to do so. If you have any interest in being our next special events coordinator or treasurer, or sharing in the leadership role with Robyn V., please contact me or Robyn and I can direct you to the right person. Thank you for your help! :)

Rebecca R. is mom of Ella, 4 years old, and Charlie, 2 years old

SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, Oct 24

Chapter 230 Halloween Party!

Let's come together to see those cute costumes! We'll have live music with Zev. This will be a fun event for the whole family.

Sesame Place Review

Google Maps says Sesame Place is about two hours away from our home in White Plains. Luckily, my parents live in PA, about 35 minutes from Langhorne. Regardless of the distance, we were able to spend almost the entire day with our three year old daughter Zoe and had a pretty good time. We hit the park on a perfect day this summer - low 80 degrees - which was warm enough to enjoy the water attractions, but cool enough so that standing in line was not miserably hot. Speaking of lines, we were worried about Zoe's ability to stand in line (which turned out to be moderately long) without tantrums. Shockingly, even though we had to wait for each ride to run its course three-four times, we didn't see any child, toddler or older, having too rough a time with waiting.

Because of the waiting for rides and lunch at one of the restaurants, we only got on five rides during the eight hours at the park. The "Sunny Day" carousel was pretty standard and we were able to get her on the purple horse she wanted both times she rode. Grover's World Twirl was a hit too (think Teacups at other parks). We made it on Flyin' Fish where you spin around in an Elmo themed car and can control your height. We have a nervous and slightly water-phobic toddler, and we made it half way through Big Bird's Rambling River, where a very nice park worker helped us out of the very calm "river" with a few sprinklers through a side gate with our screaming child. Sigh. We spent more time than we'd like in a little sandy beach area (can't we do that at the beach in Mamaroneck or Rye, or even in our own backyard?) and the sprinkler area called Ernie's Waterworks (check out a similar park at the corner of Post Rd. and Mamaroneck Avenue in Mamaroneck), but we enjoyed a bit of downtime while watching The Count spill 1000 gallons of water on older kids while standing safely in about 6 - 9 inches of water ourselves. We didn't get on the very cool water slides or climbing nets, but we did get to see and take pictures of a few characters without signing up for a meal. Be prepared to stand in line for this privilege too.

A few things we learned:

- If you can still get there (the park is open weekends through October), you can buy a 2009 pass that will work through 2010 as well.
- Most people might enjoy spending two days (the second may be free with a day pass) to get through everything. There are affordable hotels nearby with shuttles to the park.
- There is plenty to do with toddlers and school aged kids, but leave your infant at home if you can. We did.
- Bring your own food in a small cooler. It's allowed and the lunch lines were crazy. I stood on the line for mediocre food and few choices while my husband and Zoe watched and enjoyed a parade.
- Remember there are water rides - dress appropriately
- I still haven't figured out what you're supposed to do with your wallet, phone, keys, etc. if your whole group goes on water rides together. Maybe there are lockers somewhere?

All in all, you'll have a better time with a less tentative child, but we still had a good time and plan to return.

Loren I. is mom of Zoe, 3, and Camryn, 3 mos.

Have a
wonderful
fall,
everyone!

Hope to see
you at the
next event!

September Newsletter Question:

What's your favorite gift to give a second-time parent?

- A home-cooked meal
- Gifts for the older sibling
- Robeez or other soft-soled shoes. Usually baby #1 wears his or hers out.
- Cute clothes, like the dog-themed pants/onesies set from this etsy shop recommended by a member (http://www.etsy.com/shop.php?user_id=5163412)
- A pretty new baby blanket- even though they have some, it's nice to have something new for this special new addition
- "Your birthday book," a keepsake journal for parents who may be too busy to keep a traditional baby book
- A spa certificate for mom
- Diapers and wipes- mentioned by a few members as the most useful gift!

Our Chapter Needs YOU!

If you haven't noticed, we need some new volunteers! Please review the job descriptions below and think about whether you can spare some time.

Co-leader:

Ideally a chapter of our size (100 members) deserves two leaders. A one-year commitment is asked for positions on the board but many serve longer. The co-leader job description focuses on two areas.

- Preside over monthly planning meetings to ensure we have regularly scheduled daytime mom-and-tot events and moms-only evening events
- Report periodically on chapter to regional and national organization through surveys and conference calls

Treasurer position:

- Maintain bank account
- Deposit checks from national office
- Reimburse member expenses
- Develop annual budget
- Track expenses and complete year-end national report
- Check weekly online membership reports for new, renewing members and expiring members
- Communicate with national office