

Parent Rap

25th Anniversary Celebration Draws Record Attendance

The Parents Anonymous® of New Jersey, Inc. 25th Anniversary Celebration was magnificent with over 225 parents, professionals and honorees gathering November 7 to commemorate the occasion. Armando Sanchez, Vice President of the Board of Trustees, enlightened and entertained as Master of Ceremonies before adjourning everyone to their chosen workshops.

Dave Gergely shared the Keansburg Affirmation to open the festivities.
(Published in the May 2003 Parent Rap.)

Keynote speaker Dodson H. shared his experience as a father and how Parents Anonymous® helped him get through some tough issues as a single parent. Another Keynote speaker, James S. from P.O.S.S.E. shared his experience and gratitude at having come to Parents Anonymous® and getting the support and encouragement he needed to be the best father he could be. Afterward an attendee remarked, "Those fathers made me feel as if I was in church. Very spiritual."

Thomas Blatner Receives Torch of Friendship Award

Kathleen Roe, Executive Director of Parents Anonymous®, presented Thomas Blatner the Torch of Friendship Award for his generous

support 23 years ago as the Director of the Department of Youth and Family Services. Roe told how Blatner by chance visited a regional office where a Parents Anonymous® meeting was being held and sat in on a group. He listened to the parents talk about their struggles and saw how the Parents Anonymous® group worked to support parents who reached out for help. Roe also said

... common sense to know Parents Anonymous® was something that could be very successful . . .

Parents Anonymous® was also struggling, with two staff members working out of a trailer in a medical school parking lot.

Thomas Blatner said DYFS was under fire even 23 years ago and headlines then could be compared to those of today. He went on to say as he sat in on the group meeting, he had

enough common sense to know Parents Anonymous® was something that could be very successful and helpful to parents.

Today Thomas Blatner is the founder and President of JANUS Solutions, a human services consulting firm that specializes in strategic planning and development in the areas of children, youth, and families, behavioral health, welfare reform, and workforce development.

Celeste Sitarski Presented With 2004 Jolly K. Award

Union County Facilitator Joan Collins, told about her Parent Leader of 3 ½

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Inside:

- Mission Impossible
- Recycling & Identity Theft Tip
- Pop Quiz
- Geography & Culture Fun
- Give-Away Winner
- Toothbrush Tip
- Enter J.C. Dubowski

Online Parents Anonymous® Group up and running soon!
www.pa-of-nj.org

The online Parents Anonymous® group will serve the needs of parents who need support that are unable to get to a traditional 'brick-and-mortar' group. The online schedule will be announced on the web site.

Coming Soon!

2004 Parents Anonymous® National Conference

Washington, D.C.

February 8 & 9

Travel, Hotel and some Meals paid by Parents Anonymous®

Spaces are Limited!

Applications being accepted **NOW!**

For more information please contact the Parent Rap Editor:

ParentRap@att.net
or 1-732-901-0522

Jonetta Rose Barras

A native of New Orleans, Jonetta Rose Barras touched and enlightened conference goers with her informative 'Connecting Fathers and Daughters' workshop and life story during the luncheon. Barras works as a journalist, having written for The

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(Celeste Sitarski Continued from page 1)
years, Celeste. Celeste has three children; two sons aged 9 and 6 and a daughter age 7. Both boys have learning and other special needs while the girl often gets caught in the middle.

Out of necessity, Celeste has become an expert advocate in fighting for her children's needs. She stays in close contact with State offices and the school social services department to get the needed help for her sons. She is a parent volunteer in the school and active in the Parent Organization. At Board of Education and Town Council meetings Celeste requests more funding for schools and for smaller class sizes. This fall she helped campaign for a young man who wants to make positive changes in the town and its schools.

As the Parent Leader of the Cranford United Methodist Church Group, Celeste helps discouraged parents, shares parenting and advocacy skills and takes calls from parents wanting to know more about Parents Anonymous®. Celeste also works weekends as a hospital nurse while her family and partner care for the children.

10 Super Workshops

Parents had ten new workshops to choose from. Raising Sane Kids in a Crazy Culture, Communicating with Your Teen, Stress Management, Aggression vs. Assertiveness, Listening to the Heart of Your Children, Mediation, The Power of Fatherhood, Trust Walk, Gangs and Your Children, and an all day Reconnecting Fathers and Daughters.

Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listened to us are the ones we move toward, and we want to sit in their radius. When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand. —Karl Menninger

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen. —Winston Churchill

Past Due Congratulations!

Deborah and Gregory Dubowski join with son Gregory to welcome their newest gift, daughter and sister Jessica Catherine, into the world.

Jessica Catherine was born on June 29, 2003, weighing in at 8 pounds, 9.8 ounces and measuring 21 ¼ inches in length.

Gregory and Deborah are Parent Leaders in Charles Robinson's Burlington County Parents Anonymous® Group.

(jonetta rose barras Continued from page 1)

Washington Times, The Washington City Paper and the Washingtonian Magazine. She also writes fiction and poetry and spent time as a radio columnist in Washington, D.C.

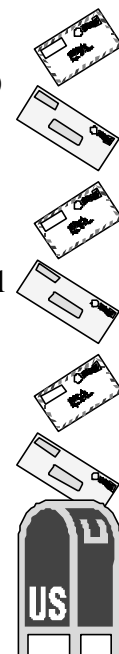
Growing up and losing her father and then stepfathers through abandonment and divorce had a profound effect on her life as a black woman. Through her own struggles and disappointments, Barras helps to reconnect daughters with fathers by shedding light on the subject in her writings, giving workshops and public talks.

Other works include: *What Ever Happened to Daddy's Little Girl; The Impact of Fatherlessness on Black Women, The Corner is No Place for Hiding and Last of the Black Emperors.*



Recycled Information Tip

- Use a paper shredder to destroy personal documents you no longer need. When junk mail arrives, shred anything that bears your name or any personal information— especially those unsolicited credit card offers.
- When you put a new plastic garbage bag in your kitchen can; put the shredded paper in the bottom of the bag. The shredded paper will absorb liquids and make them more theft-proof.



Arnold D. Herman, an expert in communicating with teenagers, offers advice to parents and teens online and will send you a FREE Parent Handbook:

1-888-525-SAFE (7233)

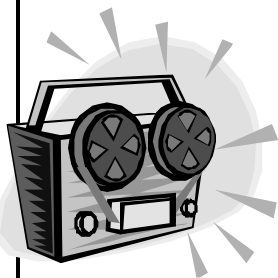
www.experiencecountsinc.org

Experiencecountsinc@aol.com

Experience Counts, Inc.

PO Box 41

Cliffwood, NJ 07721



Mission Impossible

The words, “I love you” are overused.

Our brains tend to *tune out* familiar words we hear too often.

Your task, *should you decide to accept it*, is to find a new way

to tell your children,

“I love you,”

without using the word **LOVE.**

Wander the World this Winter

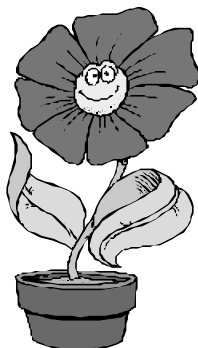
Try this family activity to inspire your children learn about other cultures and countries. Choose a country then have family members gather information about the country and its people. (Librarians love to help.)



Prepare dishes from the country while listening to its native music. (Use the web too.) Remember to make it FUN not a CHORE. Set a time limit and turn it into a scavenger hunt. The first parent member to contact the Parent Rap editor (info on page 4) will receive a world globe.

Here are things to look for: Capitol, Flag, Anthem, Languages, Political System & Leaders, Bordering Countries, Climate, Weather & Seasons, Exports & Imports, Current Conflicts or Wars, Religions, Ethnic Groups, Historical Costumes, Culture & Customs, Celebrations or Holidays, Music, Movies & Art,

Children in a FAMILY are like flowers in a bouquet; there's always one determined to face in an opposite direction from the way the arranger desires. —Marcelene Cox



Pop Quiz!



What Do YOU Know About Parents Anonymous®?

Mark each statement True or False then check your answers on page 4.

1. ___ All members must pay dues to attend a Parents Anonymous® group.
2. ___ Parents Anonymous® Parent Leader is a member who came to the group for help.
3. ___ Parents that attend the group meetings are not reported to child protective services when they injure a child.
4. ___ Parents Anonymous® Facilitators are caring professionals with links to community services.
5. ___ Facilitators welcome any unexpected visitor who wants to observe the group.
6. ___ Parents Anonymous® group members choose the direction of the group and how to use the time.
7. ___ New members receive the IPAP (Blue Book) with the names and phone numbers of the President and Secretary of State.
8. ___ Parents Anonymous® does not follow the Twelve-Step program of the other ‘anonymous’ groups.
9. ___ A Parents Anonymous® group is the same as a parenting class.
10. ___ A member who drops out may only return after approval of the group.

I can tell when I reach
my boiling point.

Before I start yelling
I ask myself,

“Will *yelling*
actually *help*
the situation?”



Answers to Quiz: 1. False, 2. True, 3. False, 4. True,
5. False, 6. True, 7. False, 8. True, 9. False, 10. False.

Michelle was the lucky

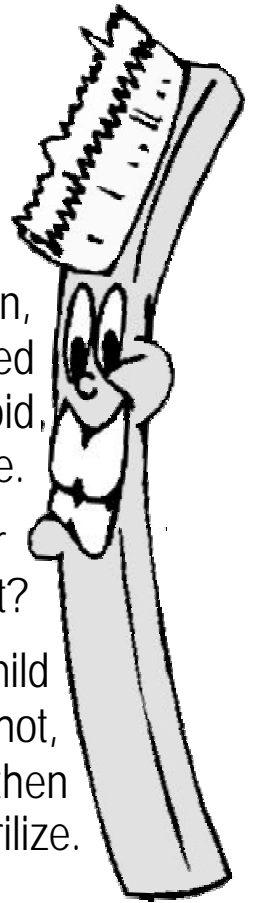
winner of the unclaimed Give-Aways! She received 2 Crazy Maze Puzzles, a Sorry Game, a Playskool Flashlight, a Pass the Pigs Game and a Decorative Mirror in a large blue Parents Anonymous® Bag.

Have You
Been Sick?

Once you are well again,
throw out your infected
toothbrush to avoid
a repeat performance.

Can't afford to throw your
toothbrush out?

Soak over night in a mild
solution of bleach and hot,
not boiling, water then
air dry to sterilize.



ANGER

... is only one letter away from DANGER

*From what we get
we make a living;
what we give,
however,
makes a life.*
-Arthur Ashe



How are we doing? What is most helpful to you? What would you like to see in your Parent Rap? Please share your tips, ideas, news and information with other members or to claim the Reader's Reward Give-Away by contacting the editor (Jackie) at either Parents Anonymous® address, by e-mail **ParentRap@att.net** or phone **(732) 901-0522**.



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