Spreading Positive Joy!

As we have all prepared for the hustle and grind of a new school year, we gather supplies. New clothes, new dance and sports equipment, healthy snacks and lunch goodies, the latest haircuts and cool shoes...

But what about the supplies for the inside? As you prepare for all the other things, we have a prime opportunity to visit about what we will see, hear, and encounter as students, parents, teachers, and mentors.

We have all tried to be the positive change in the instance of bullying. But new starts and new experiences can be scary too. Make your challenge this year to empower another by sharing a smile or a simple “hello.” You never know what people face and that simple kind gesture can make a big difference in their day.

Ideas for executing a kinder, sweeter year:
Share a few words of wisdom, quotes that inspire by those that empower others and lift them up. Make a jar of some favorites for a desk at work, or for a teacher, or your own kids on the counter at home. Add one quote to a lunch or even two, so there is one to share. Spreading positive joy one scrap of paper at a time! Busymom tip: Dove chocolates have great messages on the wrapper and can be just the boost someone needs to read that day!

If you have great quotes, share them on the NAJA Facebook page; we’d love to hear your positive messages. Here are a couple of favorites:
God does notice us, and He watches over us. But it is usually through another person that He meets our needs.
- Spencer Kimball

Be a pineapple; stand tall, wear a crown, and be sweet on the inside.

“Doing What We Do Best!”

Last month, several areas in south Louisiana were impacted with an unexpected and devastating event that is now being called the “Flood of 2016.” Heavy and relentless rainfall over a period of several days caused unprecedented rising of water from rivers and bayous which overflowed and inundated thousands of homes and businesses. On Sunday, August 14th, people in over a dozen Louisiana parishes were raising possessions off of their floors, sandbagging their doors and walls or even fleeing their homes to shelters and other sources of refuge. 13 citizens lost their lives. On Monday morning, I decided that as an organization, and since some of our own service areas were in the flooded areas, to ask for assistance from our NAJA Chapters once I had assessed the scope of the damage and the need from the affected communities. I contacted some of our CSCs to get some information and input as to what we might do to help. Before I could develop a plan, however, two south Louisiana Chapters and one Mississippi Chapter were already posting on Facebook to request donations and aid for flood victims. They had already put temporary projects in place and were on a roll! In the days to follow, another Louisiana Chapter and two more Mississippi Chapters followed with similar efforts. This is not including the numerous Chapters who sent donations and to all who offered the best gift of all, their prayers!

If ever there was a time to “minister to the suffering and forlorn,” this was it and YOU delivered! I feel an overwhelming sense of pride today as your President. Watching our JA members take the lead and serve so many in so short of a time was one of the most gratifying experiences I have ever had. You all certainly found your super powers last year, and you are shining brighter than ever now! THIS is JA, ladies! It is what we do best!!

From the NAJA Time Capsule

On the occasion of our Association’s 50th Anniversary in 1991, members, Chapters and NAJA representatives wrote letters that were placed in the time capsule and sealed for the next 25 years. When we gathered for AEC 2016 in Memphis, the time capsule was opened and special letters and artifacts came pouring out. Below is a letter written by then NAJA Corresponding Secretary Jenny Lynn McClemore, to the women of Junior Auxiliary of the future.

November 1, 1991

Dear NAJA members of the future,

I write to those I do not know but with whom I hold a “sisterhood.” I have been a member now of JA for about 12 years and am approaching the age of 40 in December. I can truly say that my service in Junior Auxiliary has been a great part of making me the woman I am today. Yes, I, with my Chapter, have been able to fulfill many needs through our service, but I have gained twice as much from Junior Auxiliary as I have given. JA has fulfilled my life– and I have never been an idle person, but it is JA that has given me so much fulfillment. I would like to leave with you great words of wisdom but instead I hope that we have left you a legacy of service through love that has sustained our Association for the 25 years to come. And I hope I’m still in there with you serving when that 75th convention is here.

J.A. Love,
Jeanne Lynn McClemore
NAJA Corresponding Secretary 1991-92
Past President, Savannah, TN Junior Auxiliary

Jenny Lynn McClemore passed away May 19 of this year but her legacy lives on.

Building on Lessons Learned at Area Meeting

We want to express our gratitude to the attendees, speakers, Education Committee, Board and Executive Committee volunteers and, most of all, our staff at NAJA Headquarters.

Without you, Area Meetings would not be possible. This year we were able to provide ideas specifically to Presidents, Treasurers, and Provisional Trainers, as well as spread the word about important things to think about when creating a social media presence. We were able to focus on ourselves and the importance of helping ourselves while we help others through our “stress management” and “dealing with difficult people” workshops. Finally, we were able to share more ideas related to potential Child Welfare projects and general Chapter management. With these lessons learned, we know that you are excited about what the year holds. We are too – plan now to join us in May 2017 at AEC and bring us your stories of how you were able to build on these beginnings!