

# ink

  
JUNIOR LEAGUE OF  
DENVER

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give • grow • get connected

Winter Issue  
Volume 1617— Issue 2

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## Remembering JLD Sustainer Gene Koelbel's Life of Service & Generosity



*JLD Sustainers Sherri Koelbel and Gene Koelbel celebrate at one of JLD's supported nonprofits, the Denver Santa Claus Shop*

# Grow:

*to increase in size, number, or degree.*



*President Laura Perry*

## Message from the President: Thank you, JLD Sustainers

Throughout its 99-year history, the Junior League of Denver has made a significant impact on the Denver community. This year, JLD concluded a long-term strategic planning process that will guide our organization to our 100th Anniversary in 2018–2019 and beyond, putting priority to reconnecting with our mission and identifying critical issues and opportunities for growth.

The Junior League of Denver Foundation has also engaged in a strategic planning process to ensure our legacy of developing women to become impactful civic leaders and skilled volunteers will live on for generations to come. The overall reconnection to our mission across both arms of the organization signals an exciting future for all levels of membership.

Every member in the League is committed to enhancing our League's capacity towards community impact and civic leadership. Our Sustainer members have absorbed all that the Junior League has to offer and continue to give back to the League and to the Denver community.

In this issue of ink, we honor two amazing Sustainers who have made a permanent mark on the Denver community: **Gene Koelbel** and **Sue Anschutz-Rodgers**. The work of these women exemplifies JLD's mission and encourages all of us to help others in need. Our Sustainers are true trailblazers and provide immense institutional expertise to our Active members.

**Julia Child**, Junior League of Pasadena volunteer, once stated "the measure of achievement is not winning awards. It's doing something that you appreciate, something you believe is worthwhile."

We are proud to honor our Sustainers who have demonstrated time and time again how serving as a JLD member is the most worthwhile experience of a lifetime.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Perry'.

**Laura Perry**

2016–2017

Junior League of Denver President

[president@jld.org](mailto:president@jld.org)



*Laura Perry, Bonnie Hill, Christine Fedorowicz and Lauren Crist-Fulk*

# League Hosts Legislative Breakfast to Advocate for Denver Communities

By: *Emily Thomsen, Public Policy Liasion*

The Public Policy Council hosted a breakfast for Senators and Representatives on Friday, January 27 to meet Colorado's elected officials and to advocate for public policies the League supports.

"It is an honor to be at the Capitol and get face time with our legislators," **Jenn Stickel**, Public Policy VP says. "Our history in legislation began when the League realized that to solve community problems and be a catalyst for change, a formalized advocacy to defend and recommend a cause or proposal was essential. Being at the Capitol for the breakfast fulfills our mission to improve our community by using our voices for advocacy."

The Breakfast hosted a multitude of Legislators who had the opportunity to discuss upcoming bills, issues and policies that will impact Colorado's women, children and education. The Legislators also learned more about the JLD, our impressive history and witnessed the passion that brought a group of women to the Capitol.

**Melanie Lewis Dickerson**, Public Policy Events Chair, says, "We look forward to this legislative season and for the opportunity to use our dedication to help Colorado's communities."

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*JLD President Laura Perry and State Senator Jack Tate talk with other members and legislators who attended the Legislative Breakfast in January.*

# Give:

*to present voluntarily and without expecting compensation.*

## **JLD Sustainer Sue Anschutz-Rodgers Receives Lifetime Achievement Award**

On November 10, 2016, National Philanthropy Day of Colorado and the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Colorado Chapter awarded JLD Sustainer Sue Anschutz-Rodgers its prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award.

As chair and president of the Anschutz Family Foundation, Sue's work to bridge urban resources to rural Colorado has left a positive and significant mark in the state.

Sue's generosity extends to the JLD as a financial supporter of both the League and Foundation. She has also been active in the Leagues of Wichita, Little Rock, and Cleveland.

One of Sue's memorable Junior League experiences was her provisional project in Cleveland. Her job was to connect imprisoned mothers to their children, by driving their sons and daughters to jails for visitations. She recalls the experience being both enlightening and sobering.

"I just have to give the Junior League 100 percent credit for making me the volunteer that I am," Sue said. "They did such a great job teaching you how to volunteer and how do it right. That is one of the greatest things I have taken from the Junior League."

The Junior League of Denver congratulations Sue on her remarkable achievement!



*Photo courtesy of Association of Fundraising Professionals, Colorado Chapter*



*JLD members volunteer at a Done in a Day for the Denver Preschool Showcase in January. Sign up for upcoming Done in a Days online! Questions? Email [doneineaday@jld.org](mailto:doneineaday@jld.org).*

# The Legacy of a Joyful Heart of Service: JLD Sustainer Gene Koelbel Passes at 90

By: *Michelle Yi Alexander, ink Editor*

If the meaning of life is to serve humanity with a joyful heart, then Junior League of Denver member and Sustainer **Gene Norgren Koelbel** lived hers with unmatched purpose and happiness. **Sherri Koelbel**, Gene's daughter-in-law and JLD Sustainer, says that Gene mentored her not only to serve the community, but also to do it with a big heart.

"So many of us volunteer because we're compelled by a sense of duty, but Gene modeled it by doing it with a pure joy," Sherri said. "Her compassion was infectious. She had all of her friends enlisted on one of her projects. At first, you wanted to do it because it was so fun, but then you stayed because it was important."

Born in 1925, Gene spent her entire life bettering Colorado's communities. She met fellow student Walter Koelbel at CU, and they married in 1952 and stayed together for 62 years, until his passing in 2011.

Together, they raised five children, and delighted in their 14 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

As a member and Sustainer of the Junior League of Denver, Gene embodied JLD's mission of promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers.

"The Junior League of Denver was one of the greatest things to happen to me and she loved it also," said Sherri. Gene recruited Sherri into JLD, and more family members later joined with her daughter **Laurie Chahbandour**, and granddaughters **Fallon Koelbel** and **Stacey Malcolm**.

Sherri and Gene worked together at the Denver Santa Claus Shop, a volunteer-run, non-denominational nonprofit that has helped more than 1 million local children in its 86-year history. Gene first started volunteering at the organization through a JLD project, and continued to do so for a remarkable 60 years.

Sherri said that she and Gene believed that the best volunteers are from the Junior League. They were delighted when JLD's 100th Anniversary Steering Committee member and Fundraising VP-Elect **Lauren Crist-Fulk** became president of the Santa Claus Shop.

In addition to the JLD and Santa Claus Shop, Gene served on the board of the Denver Zoo and the Sewall Child Development Center.

Sherri said, "Gene loved working from the ground-up. She took an interest in her programs and the people she served. That was the most fun for her. She found so much joy in her service." After a lifetime of generosity, Gene passed away at the age of 90, on November 27, 2016.

"Gene and her family are a treasure to us and Colorado is a better place because we were fortunate to have her here," said JLD Sustainer and family friend **Connie Graham**.

Colorado's communities owe a great debt to Gene and her family for making Colorado a better place. The JLD thanks Gene, Sherri and the entire Koelbel family for their contributions to the betterment of our great state.



*Photo courtesy of  
Denver Zoo*

# Get connected:

*join together to provide access and exchange.*

## Fundraising Council Counts Up the Success

By: *Elizabeth Kerr and Drew Elsey, Fundraising Liasons*

Led by **Becky Schaub**, our Fundraising Council continues to find creative ways to support the League, while securing the success of annual events.

Many thanks go out to The Journey 2017 Chairs **Ashley Foy** and **Mary Beth McErlane** for navigating through changing Journey logistics this year. Our fifth annual event will be a celebration of the League's accomplishments, and a fun evening that includes live music and dancing to Funkiphino, a local Colorado band. The event will be held on Friday, March 3 at 6 pm at the Hyatt Regency Denver at Colorado Convention Center. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.jld.org](http://www.jld.org).



The 2016 Mile High Holiday Mart Committee, led by chair **Alyssa Jauregui Russo**, celebrated another successful year with total revenue of approximately \$136,000. Thank you for your hard work, ladies!

Libations for Literacy, a Mile High Holiday Mart Preview Party, raised about \$14,000. Thank you to co-chairs **Margaret Foust** and **Sarah Beth Thompson** for their dedication and commitment to this year's event!

Thank you also to our to Partner Projects Committee, led by **Sandy Hazzard**. Between the popular Athleta and Birdsall & Co. events, this committee raised nearly \$3,000!

If you would like to learn more about the Fundraising Council, please email [fundraising@jld.org](mailto:fundraising@jld.org).



Remember you can pick up cookbooks throughout the year! Questions? Email [cookbooks@jld.org](mailto:cookbooks@jld.org).

### JLD Member Prices

Colorado Cache: \$14  
Crème de Colorado: \$16  
Colorado Collage: \$18  
Colorado Colore: \$19  
Colorado Classique: \$19

# Sustainer Update: A Fabulous Winter Season, and A Bright 2017

By: Pam Weber, Sustainer and Karen Gutierrez, Sustainer Liaison

## Fun Club Holiday Brunch Success

On December 4, the JLD Sustainer Transfer group (a.k.a. “The Fun Club”) held its annual holiday brunch at Denver Country Club. A total of 104 Sustainer Transfers and their guests enjoyed mingling and kicking off the holiday season! Attendees helped themselves to mimosas, the company of wonderful friends, and a fabulous brunch. Thank you to chair **Suzie Draper** and her committee for the stunning and festive party.



*Meg Littlepage, Suzie Draper, and Kathy Daniel pose before the party begins.*



*Barbara Judd, Barbara Butler, 2016–2017 Fun Club President Jennifer Fronk, and Nancy Petry catch up on holiday plans.*

## Fashion and Connections

A group of Sustainers gathered at Flatirons Crossing in Broomfield for The Fun Club’s January Luncheon. Everyone had a wonderful time browsing the shopping center and lunching together at the Village Tavern. The Fun Club is open to all Sustainer Transfers and is a wonderful way to for new members to meet friends in Denver and the surrounding areas.



*Left to right: JLD Fun Club members Joyce Gravlee, Cindy Bauer, Michelle Smith, and Pam Weber model some of Nordstrom’s latest fashions during the January gathering.*

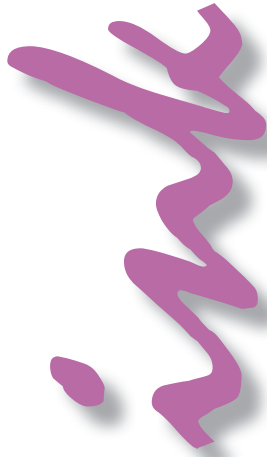
## Tables Extraordinaire Showcased Wonderful Displays

On December 1, Sustainers participated in the Tables Extraordinaire event at St. Catherine Greek Orthodox Church in Greenwood Village. Attendees marveled at the displays that so many put their time and effort into.



*JLD members and friends gathered in December to support those who designed intricate displays at the Tables Extraordinaire event.*

For more information on all things Sustainers, please contact Sustainer Vice President **Molly Ostarch Weiss** at [sustainers@jld.org](mailto:sustainers@jld.org).



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### **Mission**

The Junior League of Denver, Incorporated (founded in 1918), is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Our purpose is exclusively educational and charitable.



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