



JPA

Juvenile Protective Association



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Uncovering Our Past Gives Us Energy for the Future

Paper is heavy! That was one the many discoveries we made during JPA's recent Great Basement Cleanout over the last two weeks. Client and financial files aside, it's hard to imagine why we needed to hold on to decades of bland staff memos, hundreds of pounds of old training manuals, and other outdated information. But amid floor-to-ceiling stacks of paper stuffed in wrinkling paper boxes, we also uncovered priceless treasures.

Tucked into a file folder was a JPA annual report from 1910! In it, I was thrilled to see a Miss Jane Addams proposed for a two year term on the Board of Directors. Imagine, I was holding a piece of paper from the time Jane Addams was alive! In another annual report celebrating JPA's 50th Anniversary, I was moved to read about Miss Jesse Binford, who led JPA for 35 years from 1916 to 1951. Her tribute said: "We look to the past with pride in our accomplishments and with the strong realization that to a great degree these years of achievement are largely due to Jessie Binford. A warm, indefatigable, courageous personality, she has worked without fear or favor." She was described as an unfailing friend of Chicago's children.

So, in August, when we celebrate Women's Month, I am happy to learn more about the women who created and led JPA. I am honored to have such amazing role models to look to for inspiration. While women have greater freedom to choose the roles they will play, some things remain true. Women are strong and powerful when they act without fear or favor. They are strong and powerful enough to be kind and courageous, which I think means, at times, being as tough as nails. They kept the faith and believed in Chicago's kids.

I'll be thinking about these traits in today's women of JPA—our board members, staff and volunteers—as I drive a 1,000 miles east to visit my best friend of many decades, Angel. And I'll be thanking all the angels who work so hard to make JPA important in the lives of children and families—woman who make the world a better place.

In sisterhood,

P.S. JPA also appreciates the men who are unfailing friends of children. I look forward to highlighting their contributions in future issues.