

## FROM TUXEDOS TO PAJAMAS The SMLS Live Auction Moves Online March 1- 24



We are proud to announce a cutting edge new fundraiser - "From Tuxedos to Pajamas" - the first SMLS online auction! The idea of an online auction came to us after the SMLS "Night of Blues" auction dinner/dance venue fell through last November. Benefit organizers scrambled to find a suitable alternative, but the threat of a harsh New England winter and the impact it might have on a night of live bidding had everyone worried.

The appeal of an online auction became clear: participants could peruse auction items from the comfort of their own homes. An online auction would enable members to support the SMLS mission and would increase visibility in the more affluent suburbs where SMLS has had difficulty attracting supporters. The Campaign Committee's decision was unanimous: ditch the tuxedo and pull out the pajamas.

*Look out your window right now. Is it dark, wet or cold? Picture yourself under impossibly blue African skies on a safari for two that you won at the SMLS on-line auction. Or maybe you found the perfect Mother's Day gift - a spa package donated by Illusions Hair Design & Tranquilities- now instead of scrambling come May. Perhaps you'll bid on the one hour relaxation massage or you may prefer the week at Sugarbush. Feel the need for speed? How about a test drive in a Lotus or Ferrari? To make a wedding anniversary or a marriage proposal truly memorable, why not bid on the helicopter ride around Boston?. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, these are just a few of the great items we have to sell for a great cause.*

If you have items to donate, please visit [www.smls.cmarket.com](http://www.smls.cmarket.com) or call Liz Parra at 508-620-1830. We particularly need unique "experiences" that you might be able to arrange, such as a week in your vacation home on the Vineyard or a tour of Fenway Park and a chance to meet Curt Schilling. We will send you a reminder email to start bidding in early March. If we don't have your email address, send it to [smls@cmarket.biz](mailto:smls@cmarket.biz) or register online by visiting our website [www.smlegal.org](http://www.smlegal.org).

We still need to raise \$25,000 toward our \$100,000 goal; our upcoming on-line auction is a fun way for you to support SMLS' work!

Log on, shop and support SMLS from home and from your desk!

Please join SMLS and our title sponsor, the Peter Condakes Company, in helping to make the first SMLS online auction a success!

### A Message From the Director

A new year signals a fresh start, and with it the prospect of hope. Every day, low-income clients come to us seeking help from life's injustices. Often they have their faith restored by being able to access the legal system. Last year alone, SMLS helped over 2,300 people navigate through the system. Many achieved favorable outcomes as a result. We are fortunate to count among our supporters a loyal group of donors, whose financial support makes it possible to fund new programs, and a group of dedicated pro bono attorneys who help ease our staff's caseload. Thanks to their generosity, victims of domestic violence are protected from abuse, bankruptcy clients obtain relief from harassing phone calls, elders are shielded from physical and financial exploitation, and all are treated with dignity and respect as they seek to begin anew.

*(continued on page 2)*

# Aurea Was Penalized for Finding Housing

**A**urea Ortiz and her son Miguel needed a fresh start. After escaping a violent home, they had moved first to a battered women's shelter, then to a homeless shelter in Framingham.

Miguel hoped to move to a warmer climate, and Aurea thought getting far away would be a good idea. She began an intensive search for an affordable apartment, even applying for housing in Florida. Shelter residents are required to search for housing, but Aurea needed no prodding. She was more than ready to move on.

Aurea and Miguel were excited when word came from Florida Public Housing that an apartment would soon be available for them. Aurea told the shelter staff that she was going to Florida to see her new apartment and fill out the final paperwork. A relative agreed to care for Miguel for several days. "[The staff] all said 'congratulations' to me when I found the place," said Aurea.

**"I needed a lawyer. I called [SMLS], and [Scott] said 'stay right there!'"**

A week later Aurea was back in Massachusetts with a new lease in hand. She and Miguel would be able to move into the apartment in a couple of weeks, and Aurea planned to spend the time packing and preparing for the move. But she was in for a nasty surprise. A shelter worker informed Aurea that she had failed to fill out the necessary forms explaining her absence. As a result, she was considered to have abandoned shelter. A decision had been made to throw her out effective the next day, pending an appeal.

Aurea was distraught. "I was told we would have to sleep on the street," she says. "I didn't understand ... what had happened. I didn't know I had to fill something out, no one ever told me."

Aurea called South Middlesex Legal Services and was put in touch with attorney Scott Bernard. "I needed a lawyer," she says. "I called [SMLS] and [Scott] said 'stay right there!'"

Attorney Bernard moved quickly to obtain a one week delay in the appeal date. He then collected evidence from shelter workers and a housing search specialist, all of whom admitted that they were aware that Aurea was going to Florida to sign a new lease. After listening to the evidence, a hearing officer ruled in Aurea's favor. She and Miguel could take the time they needed to move.



"I was told we would have to sleep on the street," said Aurea.

## A Message From the Director

*(continued from page 1)*

*We are now more than halfway through our fiscal year and our fundraising efforts are in full swing. Despite record-breaking proceeds from last year's golf tournament, we remain \$25,000 short of our \$100,000 goal. To address this shortfall, we are planning something new for March – an online auction. We hope our cause alone will entice you to participate, but if it doesn't, maybe the prospect of bidding in the comfort of your own home will.*

*To all of our clients, donors and supporters, I want to thank you again for your involvement and commitment to us. I wish you renewed hope and a prosperous new year as we work together to achieve a more just and equitable society.*

*Nancy King  
Executive Director*

# STAPLES/SMLS 2006 GOLF TOURNAMENT

## REGISTRATION

FRAMINGHAM COUNTRY CLUB

MONDAY, MAY 22, 2006 (RAIN OR SHINE)



Registration at 11:30 a.m. Shotgun start 1:00 p.m. sharp.

that was easy:

**PRESENTING SPONSOR \$7,500**

Includes hole sponsorship  
Company sign at one tee and green  
Name in tournament program  
Company sign on registration board and on each golfer's gift. Name on all press releases  
Golf & dinner for 8

**SILVER SPONSOR \$1,000**

Includes hole sponsorship  
Company sign at one tee  
Name in tournament program  
Golf & dinner for 2

**PLATINUM SPONSOR \$5,000**

Includes hole sponsorship  
Company sign at one tee and green  
Name in tournament program  
Company sign on scoreboard  
Golf & dinner for 8

**BRONZE SPONSOR \$500**

Includes hole sponsorship  
Company sign at one tee  
Name in tournament program

**GOLD SPONSOR \$2,000**

Includes hole sponsorship  
Company sign at one tee and green  
Name in tournament program  
Golf & dinner for 4

**TOURNAMENT FRIEND \$300**

Includes 3 free raffle tickets  
Name in tournament program

**PEWTER SPONSOR \$1500**

(2 available)  
Includes Driving Range or Putting Green  
Company Signs, Name in tournament Program  
Golf & dinner for 2

**INDIVIDUAL GOLFER \$195**

Golf & dinner for 1

**TOURNAMENT DONOR**

Name in program with donation,  
raffle or silent auction prize

**New!! Register and pay online by visiting [www.smlegal.org](http://www.smlegal.org).**

Name on sign/program to read: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

My Foursome or Twosome is:

Please include each golfer's handicap.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment must accompany registration to guarantee reservations.**

Tear off and mail with check to: SMLS 354 Waverly St, Framingham, MA 01702 or register and pay online at [www.smlegal.org](http://www.smlegal.org). We also accept Mastercard, Visa and American Express. Call Liz Parra at 508-620-1830 for more information.

Thanks for giving so generously to our annual appeal!

SOUTH MIDDLESEX LEGAL SERVICES  
354 Waverly Street  
Framingham MA  
SMLS 

The SMLS online auction will be held March 1-24, 2006

Thanks to our online auction underwriter:



and sponsors:



Towns Served by SMLS: Acton Ashland Bedford Bellingham Canton\* Carlisle Concord Dedham Dover Foxboro Framingham Franklin Holliston Hopkinton Hudson Lexington Lincoln Marlborough Maynard Medfield Medway Millis Natick Needham Norfolk Northborough\* Norwood Plainville Sharon Sherborn Southborough\* Stow Sudbury Walpole Wayland Wellesley Westborough\* Weston Westwood Wrentham  
\* ELDERS ONLY