

# **WomanScope** "The voice of today's intelligent woman"

## NEWSMAGAZINE

Volume 1 • No. 4

COMPLIMENTARY

February/March 2008

## Women and Philanthropy

By: Susan Glenn

As women's economic power grows over the coming decades, so grows their giving potential. On November 5, the Bryn Mawr School of Baltimore and the H.P. Colhoun Family Foundation convened an expert panel to consider how women philanthropists will exercise their charitable clout as more than \$41 trillion in wealth transfers to women's control over the next fifty years.

Led by philanthropist, retired investment manager, and former Wall Street Week commentator Howard P. (Pete) Colhoun, the "Women and Philanthropy" panel addressed practical and philosophical giving concerns: How can women balance their desire to give with an assurance of future financial security? How and to what extent do they involve their children in deciding inheritance versus charitable bequests? What drives women's choices between competing worthy causes?

### INSIDE

From the Publisher's Desk .....	3
Woman of the Month .....	4
Power Points .....	6
Boomer Women .....	7
Wired .....	8
Fashion .....	13
The Savvy Entrepreneur.....	14
Health.....	16
Women of Faith.....	17
Mental Health & Wellness.....	18
International News .....	20
Fitness .....	21
Food & Wine.....	22
GirlScope.....	26

### Security versus charity

Women's comparative longevity, says panelist and veteran development consultant Abbie J. von Schlegell, is a significant factor in their philanthropy. On average, women live seven years longer than men and even wealthy women express more concern than men about making their money last. Consequently, women may be more inclined to leave large bequests than to make significant donations while living. Colhoun refers to this as "giving with cold hands" versus "giving with warm hands". And he and the panelists believe that women may be underestimating their financial position and missing the joy of seeing their gifts at work.

Financial literacy is the key to balancing this desire for financial security with charitable objectives. Panelist Charles W. Collier, a senior philanthropic advisor at Harvard University, cites community foundations as a key resource for philanthropic education. Local foundations such as the Baltimore Community Foundation, for example, can assist donors and their financial advisors in structuring tax-savvy gifts and establishing donor-advised funds. Such funds allow donors to have some control over their gifts while avoiding the administrative expense and burden of establishing a family foundation.

With the growing trend in schools and universities to provide financial education and philanthropic curriculum, the next generation of women may be better positioned to make smart giving decisions. For this generation, von Schlegell notes that banks and financial institutions are



jumping in with numerous programs for women.

### Are women really different – when it comes to giving?

An expert on women's philanthropy and co-editor of *Women as Donor, Women as Philanthropists*, von Schlegell sees women approaching their financial education and philanthropy differently than men. In the past decade, women have seized on investment clubs and women's giving circles to pool resources, learn collaboratively about investing and philanthropy,

and leverage their financial impact. By pooling their money, smaller donors can achieve a major philanthropist's clout.

In a recent telephone interview, von Schlegell said giving circles are a good demonstration of key differences in the way women make giving decisions: Women are comfortable working in groups and making collaborative financial decisions. They want to understand community needs thoroughly before making a gift. They expect more involvement with

PHILANTHROPY Continued on page 5

## REAL ESTATE



### Is 2008 your “window of opportunity”?

By: Kathy Huver

It seems like every time you turn on the television or open a newspaper, all you hear about the real estate market are tales of “doom and gloom” and foreclosure woes. You might be hearing terms such as “sub-prime borrower” and “credit crunch” banded about and you might be quaking in your boots as you consider the possibility of buying your first home, moving up into something bigger and better, downsizing or purchasing real estate for investment purposes. You might be sitting on the sidelines right now wanting to make that big move but like so many others, stymied by fear brought on by the relentless tap, tap tapping of keyboards across the country reporting on the downturn in the real estate market. If you are one of the many, waiting for the market conditions to “improve” so that you can finally make your move then rejoice, your time has finally come!

Here are some interesting facts to consider: Interest rates are still at near historic lows, it is possible to get a 30 year fixed rate loan for less than 6%! Combine this information with the fact that we are in a “buyer’s market” and you have a recipe for home buying success! So, you ask, what is a “buyer’s market” and how does this affect my situation? A “buyer’s market” put in the simplest of terms, means that the supply of homes available on the market exceeds the demand for those homes. In turn, this causes downward pressure on home prices and allows a home buyer to negotiate more favorable terms on a contract of sale. For instance, in a “buyer’s market” the seller is much more willing to contribute funds toward the buyer’s closing costs; this translates into you, as the buyer, coming to the settlement table with less money out of your pocket. With an excess of inventory, you are in the driver’s seat. Sellers

*With an excess of  
inventory,  
YOU are in the  
driver’s seat. Sellers  
know that they are  
competing and they  
are pulling out all  
the stops to get you  
to choose their home.*

know that they are competing and they are pulling out all the stops to get you to choose their home. In addition to great interest rates, competitive prices and plenty of choice, most of the homes are being sold in better condition than they would be in a “seller’s market”. This is just the natural consequence of healthy competition. Sellers have to “stage” their homes in order to showcase them in their best light in hopes that you, the lucky buyer, will bite. You can expect many homes to have new carpet, fresh paint as well as have updated kitchens and baths providing less work and a better value for you overall.

If you still aren’t convinced that 2008 is the right time to buy then listen to this: rents are on the rise! The National Association of Realtors price analysis report states that “apartment rents have been rising at the highest pace in five years”! In the Baltimore/Washington region an influx of B.R.A.C. (Base Realignment and Closure) families is expected to impact our market here as early as 2009, adding an estimated 25,000 new households to the region. Additionally, the Bureau of Labor statistics reports that in 2007 the Baltimore region added 9,800 new jobs to the workforce and that in 2008 the growth will continue and labor demand will remain strong. Based on the estimates of new jobs creation, including B.R.A.C., it only makes sense that the demand for housing will increase and accordingly, home prices will rise once again. The National Association of Realtors price analysis of the Baltimore region says “The outlook (for 2008) is positive! “A rise in home sales and a strengthening in home prices appear imminent.”

No one can predict with 100% certainty what direction the housing or mortgage markets might take but as an experienced realtor with 15 years in the business, this I can say with absolute conviction and confidence, the market is always changing. Like trends that come and go, markets rise and fall and time does not stand still. I know that now interest rates are low and supply is plentiful. I know that now rents are rising. I know that now, 2008, is your window of opportunity!

#### PHILANTHROPY Continued from page 1

recipients before and after a gift is made. And, in terms of causes, von Schlegell says their life experiences drive different choices. “Women are more aware of less advantaged women [such as] single mothers with children. They’re more concerned with the demographics of the people served [by their gifts].”

Von Schlegell cites fellow panelist Margaret M. H. Obrecht as a textbook example of the woman philanthropist. Obrecht riveted the panel’s audience with a description of her volunteer work in Uganda where she has helped fund and build shelters for the “night children.” These children, ages 7 and up, flee their villages at night to evade kidnapping and induction into the Lord’s Resistance Army, a notorious rebel group. Moved by her volunteer experience, Obrecht has evolved from volunteer to donor, fundraiser, and advocate for the cause.

Such passion and involvement, says von Schlegell, is typical of women’s philanthropy. “It all comes down to personal reasons – relationship, loyalty, and passion.” Since women’s generosity so often begins with personal involvement, charitable organizations are well-advised to provide ample opportunities for volunteerism and board service.

#### Our Children’s Legacy

One of the thorniest questions facing women is how much to leave their children and how much to bequeath to charity. The panelists suggest these decisions come down more to individual family values than estate tax planning strategies. In fact, says Collier, tax-favored vehicles are among the last issues to be considered.

Collier is also author of *Wealth in Families*, a wise reflection on the role of family wealth and philanthropy. Collier advocates using family discussions about finances and charity to create “an expression of one’s deepest family values.” Such discussions, he says, provide the opportunity to think strategically about the change your generosity could create in the world and to work towards that change as a family. With his fellow panelists, he urges women to have age-appropriate conversations with their children around giving and receiving and to think carefully about creating positive change in our society.

Women’s lasting philanthropic legacies, suggests the panel, will be fueled not only by an enormous transfer of wealth but by a transfer of values to our children.

*For extensive local resources on philanthropy, visit the websites for the Baltimore Community Foundation ([www.bcf.org](http://www.bcf.org)) and the Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers ([www.abagmd.org](http://www.abagmd.org)). To learn more about trends in women’s philanthropy, check out: the Women’s Philanthropy Institute ([www.womenphilanthropy.org](http://www.womenphilanthropy.org)); Women & Philanthropy ([www.womenphil.org](http://www.womenphil.org)); and the Women’s Funding Network ([www.wfnct.org](http://www.wfnct.org)).*

**NOTE:** *The Bryn Mawr School, host of the Women and Philanthropy discussion, is a private girls’ school founded by five women philanthropists in 1885.*