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# Letter from the Presidents

Dear LAPA members,

Happy New Year! Five months have passed since the tragedy of September 11. Our families seem all the more precious to us now, and the healing process has allowed us to once again dream our dreams, strive to attain our goals, whether it means going back to school, buying a house, or adopting, for the first time, the second, the third.

During these five months, LAPA continued to provide social and educational events: the picnic just days after the attack; a Halloween Party in Westchester; a workshop at the APC conference and the fabulous weekend at Rocking Horse Ranch in November; the holiday party and welcome home in December, and an adoption workshop in January. None of those events would have occurred or been successful without the help of the following people: Florence and Vinnie Abate, Ermine Bennette, Lorna and Marc Hollander, Trisha and Dan Mackay, Maria and Brian Mulligan, Mary and Don Schuellein, Epy and Giulio Scrivano, Barbara and Michael Spiridon, Joe and Judy Tartaglia. Thank you!

This spring, we have some great events planned: April 20, Arty Facts at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, this time for the little ones, ages 4 to 8; May 3, Welcome Home/Latin Culture Night, along with elections for the new LAPA board (Anyone interested?); and a Teen Night, sometime in March or April for LAPA teens who out-

grew running around at picnics and holidays parties, to talk (without their parents around) with some young adults who were adopted from Colombia more than twenty years ago (see "Calling All Teens").

Thanks to our webmaster, Joe Tartaglia, the LAPA website has a new look and great new features. (See "News from The Webmaster.") We're striving to add more photos to the site, so if any of you have a photo you think we can use, send it to Joe (via e-mail or "snail" mail).

Speaking of e-mail, a lot of you received announcements of recent events electronically. We're trying to cut down on mailing costs, so we can have more money for events and contributions to the orphanages. Please give LAPA your e-mail address asap.

We had a great time giving the workshop in January. Our little Lucy played "hostess with the mostest" handing out cookies and helping in the cleanup (what a good LAPA volunteer). LAPA's reach is far. We had one family come to Brooklyn from Cooperstown and another from Hudson. It brought back memories of what it was like for us when we started our first adoption journey just about twelve years ago, and how embraced we felt when we first met LAPA.

We look forward to seeing you soon. And don't forget to make your reservations for the weekend next November.

Joan Giurdanella

Christian Smeets

The following quote originally appeared in *Del Sur*, published in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was sent to the *Que Tal* Editor, by LAPA member Gretchen Healy Schell:

### **Wishes for the New Year 2002**

In these difficult times, we share with you the hope of a different 2002 and more justice for all.

"Serve everyone with pleasure, and treat all of those you serve with respect. Look for equilibrium and justice in all of the acts of your life. It only takes one just man for the world to have been created." -TALMUD

## Calling All LAPA Teens!

A Special Event for you....

We know that it has probably been awhile since you've attended a LAPA event. You've outgrown Halloween parties and Coming Home events seem like they are for babies and little kids. How about getting together again with other LAPA teens, see old friends that you may not have seen in awhile, hang out and meet a couple of LAPA members who are now in their twenties and have been where you are?

Both James Greenberg and Angela Liberto were adopted as infants from Colombia. James is now an attorney and Angela is a full-time college student. Both presented last year at the parenting workshop to give parents a child's perspective on adoption. They both thought it would be a great idea if they could talk with you and wished that something like this had been available to them when they were growing up..

Come hear what it was like to be adopted and the

impact that it had on their lives, both the great aspects and the things they struggled with. They will share their experiences and you will get to talk too (if you want or you can just listen). You will be able to ask them questions about some of the things you may wonder about and because they too have been adopted from Latin America you may get some answers. How often do you ever really get to talk to someone who knows what it's like?

So where will your parents be? They will drive you to the event, then they will leave and meet up with the other LAPA whom perhaps they have not seen in a while. The date and the place for you and the meeting place for your parents will be set up once we get Jaime's and Angela's schedules coordinated. So watch your "snail" mail and e-mail for invitations.

This event will be open to all LAPA young adults ages 12 and up. We hope to see you there. ❄️

