

# Big Sister Volunteer Program Brings Hope, Sparks Ambition

By LAURA WHITE

Cathy L., 12, of Roxbury, thought she'd be a waitress, like most of the women in her neighborhood. Now her goals are college and a career where she can earn enough money to buy a sports car.

Patty Borges, 11, of Cambridge wasn't sure what she wanted to be. Now she's eyeing a career as a professional athlete. And maybe even go to college on an athletic scholarship.

Kathy Boudreau, 11, of Roslindale, considered becoming an ice skater, but expects to be the SECOND woman president of the U.S.

Pam M., 9, of Chelsea, had never been farther than the shadow of the Tobin Bridge and was afraid of planes. Now she thinks she wants to become a stewardess or even a pilot, when she grows up.

Why the switch? These young girls are just a few of those who've been exposed to new lifestyles, environments; and have had their horizons broadened through volunteers of the national Big Sister program.

"We have women volunteers in all career areas — professors, a mechanic, a minister, lawyers, medical students. They're just some of the women who've shattered the sex-role stereotypes and give the little sisters new models and worlds to consider," says Carol Huntington, executive director of the Big Sister Association.

There are about 300 women Big Sisters matched to young girls. But there are still 200 young girls on a waiting list for a one-to-one Big Sister relationship.

According to Ms. Huntington, about 80 percent of the girls are from the shy side of the socio-economic strata. The others come from either motherless or working mother homes, from large families, or from environments where they have little contact with women.

Pat Galton, vice president of The Grayline Inc., the bus company operating out of Park Sq., says: "My little sister, Cathy, was eight and motherless when we got together in 1971. Her father had thought it would be good for Cathy to have an adult female influence. Last year he died in open heart surgery."

Cathy has five sisters—two of whom are matched to friends of Pat — and an older brother who's assumed head of the family duties.

"When Cathy and I met, she wanted to be a waitress. I guess that was the only job she'd been exposed to. And then, maybe, get married as an escape," says Pat. "I've had her here to my office and she's impressed that I have a secretary, people working for me and free time."

Pat, a graduate of the University of Virginia, came to Boston when her late husband attended Harvard Business School. The 32-year-old widow liked the city and stayed. She started as a comptroller of the company and has climbed the corporate ladder to the V.P. rung.

"Cathy's really intrigued with my sports car, Porsche. I've tried to show her, that's just one of the tangibles earned through education and hard work," says Pat, who has offered to pay Cathy's tuition, if the youngster decides on college.

Dr. Ann Howe attended Radcliffe, Yale and earned a Ph.D. in English at B.U. She's a professor with tenure at Boston State College. She's matched with Kathy Boudreau, a bright as a beacon 11-year-old from Roslindale. Kathy's mother works and wants the girl to have exposure to new worlds.

"Kathy's interested in everything, and it's kind of a new experience for me to see things either for the first time or once again through the eyes of a youngster," says Dr. Howe, between classes at the Fenway campus of Boston State.

The two have traveled to New York to see the museums of Art and Science, the Empire State Building, and this spring, they'll go to Washington to see the Federal Government at work.

"I wanted to be an ice skater. But then I got interested in politics. I saw an ad in a magazine that said be a pen pal with your congressman. So I wrote him," says Kathy, with the matter-of-fact reasoning that 11-year-olds usually have. "Ann thought it was a good idea. I get mail about what's happening in Congress now, and all that. It got me interested in politics."

Kathy helped organize a student council campaign and election at her school, The Mozart, in Roslindale.

"After the last elections, and I saw all those women win, I figure I can be the second woman president. I'm only 11, so by the time I'm old enough, there'll probably already be at least one girl president," says Kathy. "Ann says a woman today can be anything she wants. She's the kind of a friend you can talk with."

Just in case she changes her mind about politics, Kathy is into art and ceramics at the Museum School, she's taking up the flute and writes "books" — several sheets of folded paper in which she writes short stories or poems.

"Kathy also shares the books she writes and the extra books her father gives her with some of the



PROFESSOR ANN HOWE drops off her "little sister" Kathy Boudreau, at the Museum of Fine Arts for a Saturday morning art class. (Staff photos by Ray Lussler, Bob Howard and Dick Thompson)

other young children I know," adds Dr. Howe, who has had Kathy audit some of her college classes.

Judy Ashton is a young attorney with Hausserman, Davison and Shattuck. Originally from Shawnee Mission, Kansas, she attended B.U. law and stayed in the Hub. She likes kids and wanted to become a Big Sister, to maybe create a little family atmosphere away from her own family.

"And I felt I could make a child feel important as a person. My Little Sister, Patty, is terrific. She's outgoing and great at sports. You know, we're kind of good for each other, I'm a little shy," admits Judy.

The 26-year-old lawyer says she sees her relationship with Patty on strictly a friendship basis. Patty's mother recommended her for a Big Sister because Patty's siblings are two-year-old and 21-year-old brothers.

"I'm not a substitute mother, guidance counselor or social worker. We're friends and like to do things together. Especially sports. She's taught me to ice skate backwards. And she beats me at bowling. Her average is about 80," says Judy.

Patty thinks, "It's neat to have a close friend to talk with and help me. I've met Judy's friends and the kids of the lawyers she works with. But mostly, we do sports."

Patty's quite the athlete. She does the 50-yard dash in 6.52.

"I'm always improving, last year it was closer to seven seconds. I play football, hockey, and basketball." Last week, I was playing football with my older brother and he was teasing me about if I was going to play professional football. I told him, no. But Billie Jean King better watch out, because there's going to be another girl professional athlete coming up—from Cambridge," laughed Patty.

With Title 9, a section of the 1972 Education Amendment, which decrees schools and colleges must make funds available for women's athletic programs, Patty may be able to get into college on an athletic scholarship.

Linda Gentile, who heads the accounting department at the State Street Development Co., which spe-



PAT GALTON BUSY ON PHONE

wanted to rush out and get her everything. But I realized that was wrong and did nothing to help Pam develop values," admits Linda.

Linda put the curb on the Lady Bountiful routine. And it's become a real giving, sharing, and understanding friendship, ever since Linda explained that they couldn't do a certain thing because she had to pay her rent that week out of her salary.

"Pam hadn't been exposed to having a person work to earn money for rent and food. Now she's more conscious of my money than I am," says Linda.

Expenses incurred for Little Sisters are tax-deductible with the Internal Revenue.

One of the big treats for Pam is to visit Linda at her apartment and help with the laundry or stack the dishes in the dishwasher.

"If I don't have any laundry to do, my clean clothes get tossed into the machine," laughs Linda. "Pam had never seen these appliances before. Things most of us grow up with and take for granted."

Living so close to the airport in the flight path of the large "silver birds" Pam...

