The Mattie Legacy Project

Description

The Mattie Legacy Project is rooted in the life and work of Mattie Bell Kinney, a community leader whose efforts focused on public health, civic engagement, and improving the well-being of her community.

Mattie, along with her husband Sherman Kinney Jr. and their eight children, lived in North Avondale at 409 Clinton Springs Avenue, where their home became part of a life deeply connected to service, leadership, and community impact.

Over the past year, the Mattie Legacy Project has focused on researching, preserving, and sharing her story. Now, that work is beginning to take shape through community action.

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On Saturday, May 2, the Mattie Legacy Project will host its first public event â?? a volunteer-led Community Cleanup in the Avondale area. This event is one way of continuing Mattieâ??s legacy by bringing people together to care for the neighborhood and support the health of the community.

Volunteers will meet at Avondale Town Center in front of Saturday Morning Vibes Cereal Bar and help with light litter removal along the surrounding area. Gloves, trash bags, bottled water, and light snacks will be provided.

This cleanup is a small but meaningful step toward connecting past and present â?? honoring the work that has already been done while creating opportunities for continued impact.

Community members are welcome to join and be part of the effort.

Event Details:
Saturday, May 2, 2026
10:00 AM â?? 12:00 PM
Avondale Town Center â?? 3539 Reading Rd.

Volunteer sign-up: https://forms.gle/Fdq7EJvBwnfm3zs99

Laura Kinney-Porter

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She's 'Mother Of The Y

BY JO-ANN ALBERS

Assistant Women's Editor

TENACIOUS IS A GOOD way to describe Mrs. Sherman Kinney Jr., an attractive, dynamic, effervescent mother of eight.

Named "Mother of the Year" by the Wayfarers' Club of Cincinnati, she is in business with her husband and a supervisor for the Citizens' Committee on Youth, training youngsters from the Neighborhood Youth Corps in janitorial work.

The most surprising thing is that she could be old enough to have a 26-year-old son. She doesn't look much older than that herself.

THE KINNEYS were married during his military service in the Marine Corps. She is from Marion, Ala., "a city that never got on the map until Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s activities.

"In fact," she said in a voice with little trace of a Southern accent, "Coretta King is from Marion."

Mr. Kinney was born in Lexington but has lived in Cincinnati most of his life. A distinguished-looking, soft-spoken man with the air of a college professor about him, he encourages his wife in her community activities and work.

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Photo for the

WAYFARERS' CLUB "Mother of the Year," Mattie Kinney, poses with husb
Kinney Jr., and six of their eight children. Teresa and John Francis sit with
Standing, from left, are Aaron, Richard, Joseph and Sherman III.

Cincinnati Enquirer
FOR Women
18 Thursday, May 29, 1969

The Wayfarers' Club describes her as "an example of how hard work, determination and dedication, along with family togetherness, can create family success over insurmountable obstacles."

THE KINNEYS began the S. K. Janitorial Service Co., because she was firmly convinced people are willing to pay well for good domestic help.

She worked as a maid at both the Terrace and Netherland Hilton Hotels. "I was maid for the executive housekeeper, then was promoted to running the linen room at the Terrace," she said.

Mattie Kinney's current project is to improve the image of domestic service, urging people to realize that this kind of work isn't "just dusting and scrubbing. It requires a lot of

aries in executive housekeeping. But as long as maid's work is looked down on, the pay scale will stay low and people won't want the jobs.

"But, my job is as important to me as President Nixon's is to him."

She's thinking about writing the President to have something done in the area of elevating stature and salary of service people. "I'd like to set up an intensive training program for housekeepers, to equip women for all the positions that are available now," she explained.

"Each day I think about it more and more. There is such need. So many people, black and white, could come off the welfare roles if they were trained to be good housekeepers and paid more than a welfare allotment."

TWELVE YEARS AGO, Mr. Kinney was seriously ill with a back ailment that required five operations: His wife ran the business until he recovered.

Today, he manages the business while she teaches youngsters he may employ someday.

Between jobs, Mrs. Kinney finds time to be a member of the Woman's City Club, Urban League Guild and Catholic Human Relations Committee and to be chairman of the Avondale Community Council's Clean-Up and Beautify Committee. She has been a member of Friends of the Theater.

BECAUSE HER children are in so many schools, she belongs to four parent groups—North Avondale Parent-Teacher Association, Woodward Parent-Faculty Council, Cincinnati Country Day Mothers' Association and Sacred Heart Academy Mothers' Guild.

Richard, a graduate of Tennessee A&I with a degree in business administration, is working with the concentrated employment program of the Community Action Commission.

Sherman III, 19, will graduate from Woodward next month. Robert, 18, is living away from home now,

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FIGHT CANCER!
ESIDENTIAL CANCER CRUSADE

Mattie Kinney: Tireless Worker For All Ages

"The quality of many young lives has been enhanced through the concerted efforts of Mrs. Mattie Kinney," wrote one reader who nominated Mrs. Sherman Kinney Jr. as an *Enquirer* "Woman of the Year."

"Mrs. Kinney was a valuable asset as a Visiting Friend to the children of the Children's Unit School, a residential treatment center for severely emotionally disturbed youngsters," wrote another. "Her motivation comes from a real sense of caring about people."

"Mattie Kinney is the only woman I know who ever told the Hamilton County Juvenile Court 'any child that needs a bed, food or care is welcome in my home. I have a big house and plenty to go around,'" said Judge Olive L. Holmes, herself an *Enquirer* Woman of the Year in 1970.



Employed as a job placement specialist in the Vocational Education Dept. at Hughes High School, Mrs. Kinney, the mother of eight and grandmother of four, has carried her interest in young people throughout her personal and professional life.

She has devoted many hours to working with the Parent Teachers' Association, Big Sisters, Brownies, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Little League.

Mrs. Kinney's interest in helping others knows no age limits, however.

SHE HAS BEEN a tireless worker in the National Association for the

out cancer has also been a major concern of Mrs. Kinney through the years. In addition to working as a volunteer in several Breast Cancer Detection Centers, she has served in many capacities with the American Cancer Society. In 1974 she was co-chairman of the Cancer Crusade for Hamilton County.

In 1975, Mrs. Kinney was instrumental in securing $28,500, the largest single amount ever allotted, from the Ohio Division, American Cancer Society, for the screening of 1500 low-income black women in Lincoln Heights.

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