



# shared. blessings

spring 2006 • news from **sheltering wings** center for women

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.*

*II Corinthians 1:3-4*

"Fear for the safety of my children first brought me to Sheltering Wings. The realization that the abuse was beginning to escalate and could at any time begin to be directed toward my kids made me leave my ex. Even though he no longer lived with me, he still knew where we lived. He had begun to intimidate my oldest child's family by calling repeatedly, showing up at daycare, and banging on the door for long periods of time. I was frightened that despite the no-contact order he might be desperate enough to try to harm us or break the no-contact order. I came here and found women much like myself. I found faces and stories to go along with the various stages of my healing. I found commonalities that I never knew existed. Their experiences were much like my own; now I had not one voice, but many. I could begin to heal. Sheltering Wings has meant a lot to me. I have made more friends and received a lot of blessings and support, found a safe place for my kids, and become a bit closer in my relationship with God." *"Alice"*

## In 2005, we:

- handled more than 1,300 crisis calls
- housed 98 women and 120 children
- saw 77 percent of the women exit successfully
- educated over 8,000 people about domestic violence's impact

## More than just a safe place

A shelter is a respite – a safe harbor from a terrifying storm – and that's how many people see Sheltering Wings. But providing a safe haven for women and children who are escaping the life-threatening realities of domestic violence is only the beginning of how we serve them.

Our ultimate goal is to return them to safe, violence-free lives outside the shelter. Achieving that demands that we help them develop lifelong emotional and economic stability, minimizing the likelihood that they will re-enter unhealthy situations.

We use a variety of comprehensive programs to develop and strengthen the essential

life skills required to be a better parent, find financial freedom, cope with the stress of starting a new life, recognize signs of harm in future relationships and find legal representation. From classes to counseling, to case management and job training, we provide personalized support for each woman – along with programs to meet the needs of her children and help them become healthy adults capable of maintaining positive relationships.

By taking this approach, we rescue women and children from the immediate danger, and help them replace fear and uncertainty with the confidence of a brighter future wrapped in God's love. †

*If you or someone you know needs help, call 745-1496 immediately, day or night!*

*[www.shelteringwings.org](http://www.shelteringwings.org)*

I'll never forget January 14, 2002, when my phone rang and I learned that Sheltering Wings was about to provide a safe haven for its first resident. As people learned about the shelter, more residents came through our doors, and the community responded with everything we needed to serve our women and children.

The number of crisis calls we handled in 2005 is 400 percent higher than that first year, and we've doubled the number of families we house. Working with our many supporters, we're making a difference, one family at a time – but the demand for our services continues to exceed our ability to help.

That's why our Board of Directors recently developed and adopted a strategic plan to guide the shelter as we confront the growing need and other challenges. In the months to

come, that plan will help the Board and our team make critical, prayerful decisions about the future of Sheltering Wings and our role in the community. Those decisions will not be easy to make, but one thing that will help us make them with confidence is the knowledge that we can rely on so many people and so many organizations for support.

Everyone who has shared their time, talent or treasure with us should celebrate our successes, because you are an important part of Sheltering Wings. You have my thanks – but I can't say it as well as one of our success stories did: "For each person that touches our life during this time, we are thankful for your big heart and hard work. Thank you for sharing praises, hope, love, words of comfort and your smiles with us." †

## Achieving maximum impact

The recently developed strategic plan for Sheltering Wings focuses on four primary areas. In each edition of *Shared Blessings* this year, we'll examine one of those focal points in depth to help you better understand the challenges facing the shelter and what we're doing about it.

The first focal point calls for achieving maximum impact through comprehensive programs for the women and children we serve. While the shelter has achieved success and remained at operational capacity throughout most of our first three years of operation, we'll continue to use feedback we receive from the women we serve and the wider community to enhance and expand our programs. The ultimate goal is to fulfill our mission of providing emergency housing and a Christ-centered environment that builds stable and independent lives every day.

How will we do that? We plan to measure the effectiveness of our efforts over a two-to-three-year timeframe and identify key success factors. We'll routinely ask residents what they think about our services, and we'll conduct a survey to get feedback from the community on what people think of the shelter. We also plan to evaluate a researched and Biblically based children's program to see if we should add it to the services we provide. †

### What we do

#### **Emergency Services**

- 24-hour crisis hotline
- 44-bed shelter facility
- Security system
- Providing essential needs (food, clothes)
- Needs assessment

#### **Life Skills Training/Mentoring**

- Case management
- Legal advocacy
- Job training/placement
- Transitional housing
- Support groups
- Educational groups
- Family preservation counseling

#### **Children's Programs**

- Individual needs assessment
- Crisis intervention
- Structured educational groups
- Structured activities

#### **Outreach**

- Teen dating violence prevention program
- In-service presentations for businesses
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Other educational programs

Welcome to our newest Church Connection Council members: Hendricks Community Bible Church, North Salem Christian Church, Westlake Community Church of God, The Oasis Church and Calvary United Methodist Church. To learn more about CCC, call Mary at 317-902-7056.

## Volunteer voice

Danielle Mittman

Those of us who work at Sheltering Wings know that there are always volunteers around, but it's difficult to grasp the scope of their contributions until we start to tally up the hours. In 2005, our volunteers gave us more than 7,500 hours of their precious time!

Their willingness to help benefits the shelter in two ways. First, they help us accomplish what needs to be done – everything from fixing residents' cars to staffing booths at fairs to babysitting so mothers can hold down jobs. And, because they do those things for free, we don't have to use dollars from our budget to

accomplish those tasks. That means we can devote more of our money to the programs that help women return to safe, healthy lives.

Right now, we have a special need for maintenance volunteers, such as people who can help us make minor repairs around the shelter, take care of the grounds, and handle those odd jobs that pop up around every home. We also need to refurbish some rooms, and would welcome groups of volunteers for those efforts. If you or your group would like to help us out, call Danielle at 317-718-5454 ext. 204. †

## Meet our staff: Larry Bellville

*When parishioners first approached him with the idea of a ministry for victims of domestic violence, Larry Bellville never imagined that he would one day work in the shelter that sprang from that idea. As plans for Sheltering Wings took shape, the senior minister of Brownsburg's Cornerstone Christian Church left Hendricks County in 2000 to serve as team leader for a new church in Nova Scotia. In 2005, he returned to serve as our Director of Pastoral Care.*

*Q. What was the original vision?*

A. It was of a small facility for battered women and their children that would be overseen and managed as a ministry of the church. There, victims would receive safety and needed services from a compassionate, Christian staff—mostly volunteers—who would provide the love of Jesus Christ. It soon became apparent that the need was much greater than Cornerstone could meet on its own.

*Q. How does that differ from the reality?*

A. It's the same as what was originally envisioned, except that it is done on a much larger scale and in a more professional and thorough way. I'm sure we did not know what we were getting into or what Sheltering Wings would become, but God has certainly caused the shelter

to develop and flourish in a wonderful way.

*Q. What does your position involve?*

A. I bring an additional emphasis upon Christ and His truth to both the staff and residents of the shelter. Also, I represent Christ and His work through Sheltering Wings to area pastors and churches as well as to other persons and groups in the community.

*Q. How do you see the shelter's future?*

A. Sadly, the problem of domestic violence in our area continues to grow along with the population – as well as with the sustained movement of our culture away from the stability of the “traditional” home. Sheltering Wings must continue to grow, and that growth means more staff, more programs, an expanded facility, and increased support from the community. †

## Safety Planning

If you think you may need to leave home because of an abusive situation, be sure to have a plan to assure your safety. In addition, have a bag ready with these items to allow a quick departure: money; keys to car, house, and work; a change of clothes for you and your children; address book with numbers

of friends, relatives, doctors, and lawyers; driver's license and car registration; prescriptions and medicine; important papers for you and your children, such as birth certificates, immigration paperwork, Social Security cards, school and medical records, bank-books, credit cards, insurance cards, and divorce papers. †



# sheltering wings center for women

P.O. Box 92 • Danville IN 46122  
Phone (317) 745-1496  
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www.shelteringwings.org

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*If you or someone you know needs help,  
call 745-1496 immediately, day or night!*

Welcome Dave Helm, Principal,  
Prestwick Development, LLC,  
to our Board of Directors!

## Be a bill sponsor

Would you like to help us in a significant way? We are looking for organizations and individuals who are willing to sponsor one of our utility bills. Operating an 11,000-square-foot facility with extensive security equipment assures the safety of our women and children, but it comes with a cost. Our average monthly energy bill exceeds \$900. By covering part of that cost, you help us devote our resources to meeting the needs of our residents. To learn more, call 317-718-5454 ext. 207.†

*Dazzling Designs*  
*Fashion Show*

**SAVE THE DATE**

Sheltering Wings Center for Women Presents  
"Dazzling Designs" Fashion Show

April 27, 2006  
6-9pm  
Primo West Plainfield, IN

Proceeds to benefit the Children's Program  
For more information call 317.745.1496 or log onto [www.shelteringwings.org](http://www.shelteringwings.org)

All that Sparkles  
and Glitters to  
Change Children's Lives

## Guided by principles

To ensure the constancy of our Christ-centered vision and mission, our Board of Directors believes that every decision they make – and all the activities of our staff – must be based on these commonly held principles:

1. We acknowledge that God is the owner and sustainer of the shelter, and that the families we are serving are His children.
2. We rely on the Bible for guidance and direction on all matters and commit to adhering to Biblical principles when making all decisions.
3. We interact with all board members, employees, volunteers, contractors, business associates, supporters, and detractors professionally, respectfully and courteously.
4. We follow and imitate Christ's example of love and compassion in every interaction we have with those in crisis or in residence, serving them as though we are serving the Lord.†

### Special thanks

• Thank you to Sertoma for hosting another successful dinner dance! Also, thanks to title sponsors ClaimAid Consulting and Hendricks Regional Health, as well as Nelson Jewelers and Clark CPAs.

• Thanks to the Realtor Foundation for their continued support of our transitional housing program! †

