

# SHARED BLESSINGS

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

SUMMER 2007 NEWS *from* SHELTERING WINGS

## Celebrating five years of restoring independence

Sitting in front of the keyboard in the shelter computer lab, she can't stop the tear that trickles down her cheek. She says she can't do it. "I'm stupid. It's too hard. Why are they wasting my time? Please let me go back to my room."

She doesn't realize that her thoughts are only echoes of the abusive words she heard from her husband for five years. When someone you love tells you time and time again that you're stupid, you start to believe it. She descended into despair a step at a time, and her climb back won't happen quickly, either. Fortunately, she learned this fact during training she received at Sheltering Wings and now has the skills to keep focused on the task at hand.

A year and a half later, while driving home from work, she reflected on that moment of fear and frustration in the shelter's computer lab. The new hire that started at her office this morning was so terrified, just as she had

*"Once my children and I arrived at Sheltering Wings the staff began to comfort, protect, provide, and encourage. From assurance that the children and I were safe, to toys, clothes, and room and board. There were many programs offered to assist the children and myself. Each with a purpose to educate, encourage, and give me the tools I needed to succeed. Each staff member had a purpose to bring me forward in goal setting and goal achievement. My children and I were supported in everything we set out to accomplish. With the assistance of Sheltering Wings I was able to escape the cycle of domestic abuse, and move forward in my life, safely and completely. Their continued support helps to keep me on track, lift me when I fall, and encourage me when I need it."*

"Janelle"

been and smiled. Remembering how it felt to have such self-doubt, she treated the new hire just as patiently as she had been treated just a year and a half ago. By the end of the morning, that new hire understood what to do.

"Guess I'm not so stupid after all", she thinks as she parks at the daycare. Her son and daughter are so excited to see her, and the three of them drive home to their apartment for a quick dinner. As they say grace, she adds a silent

prayer of thanks for a place called Sheltering Wings.

**It has already been a busy year...and a busy five years.**

	Jan-April 2007	2002-2006
Crisis calls	320	4,500
Women and children housed	60	962
Educated through outreach	1,000	58,700

## Director's discussion: *April Bordeau*



This is a time of celebration for both Sheltering Wings and my own family. First, 2007 marks the beginning of our sixth year in serving women and children who are suffering the effects of abuse. While it is sad that we are needed in the community, it's reassuring to know that we provide a viable, effective solution for families in need. Since opening our doors in January 2002 more than 4,500 families have called us in crisis, more than 950 women and children have sought refuge within the walls of the shelter, and another 58,000 people have opened their eyes and ears to learn about domestic violence and how to prevent it. It's exciting when a community can come together to achieve change.

My family's celebration centers on the birth of our first son, Nathan. God has given Randy and me a great honor and responsibility: to teach, train, and model love and healthy relationships!

I can't thank you enough for your support and prayers over the past five and a half years. You have made a difference in the lives of women and children, and I know your support will continue. While my time is now primarily devoted to motherhood, I am staying connected to Sheltering Wings by helping our new CEO.

My life is changing every day, but the shelter's commitment to serving our community's women and children remains focused and strong. The passionate, professional staff I came to depend upon continues to operate Sheltering Wings, and our dedicated board of directors will continue to provide both support and vision to ensure that the shelter remains financially secure and grows responsibly. In addition to a new CEO, we've added a Chief Development Officer, who brings expertise we need to help us expand to help us expand the programs we offer.

Please take a moment and celebrate with me. You have been here every step of the way – and you can be confident that you have made a difference!

---

## Life Skills: *changing lives, step by step*



Over the past five and a half years, many lives have been changed as a direct result of our Life Skills program, through which each new resident is invited to begin the process of changing her life.

That process usually begins with our popular Healthy Relationships class, through which class participants learn they are women of great worth and value. They are encouraged to speak out about the abuse they have endured and learn they do not have to live the rest of their lives as victims. As one survivor said, "I love myself now because I have learned that I belong to God and am His child and He loves me for who I am."

Women who flee domestic violence often walk away from economic support. One of their greatest fears is that they will be unable to provide for their children. We offer computer classes to improve their job skills and resume classes to help them obtain higher salaries and better jobs. Budgeting classes, responsible finance classes, and classes comparing renting with buying all help women prepare for safe, independent lives outside the shelter.

The value of these programs becomes measurable when women who have moved on to new lives share their experiences. Consider what one young woman told us: "There were so many groups that were provided that I

really and truly benefited from, like budgeting classes, job skills, parenting class, and the healthy relationships group. I went to a job skills class right before I had a job interview, and while in the interview it was less than 10 minutes before she told me I had the job. I don't think that was a coincidence."

She added, "They had a woman come out to talk to me about schools in the area, what I needed to do to enroll, and which schools would be right for me. I start Ivy Tech at the end of August. I'm really excited about that! They did all these things to help me better my life. It didn't stop when I left. They donated a washer, a dryer, table and chairs, a couch, household supplies, and even helped me move. Sheltering Wings is a place to live and a place to grow."

### Our Life Skills Classes

Healthy Relationships 101 and 201

- Mom's Connection (Parenting 101 and 201)
- Resume Writing • Job Skills • Computer Class
- Budgeting and Finance • Health and Nutrition
- Stress Management

## Volunteer Voice: *Danielle Huff*

Without our volunteers, it would be impossible to provide all of the facets of our Life Skills program. Our volunteers help the ladies learn independence and self-sufficiency by leading groups on money management, healthy relationships, computer skills, and stress management. They support them by providing transportation to and from GED classes or job interviews. Volunteers tutor women who are working for those all-important diplomas or college degrees.

Our volunteers provide expertise and resources in their particular areas of knowledge, but that's only the beginning. Their one-on-one attention to the needs of our residents – even just helping them realize that someone cares about them – is vital to the success of the women we serve.

If you, your church, or business would like to help us meet this important need by providing individual or professional (legal, financial, health-related, or housing) services, please contact Danielle at 718-0735, ext. 304.



## 2002 to 2007: *A Progress Report*

This January, we marked the beginning of the sixth year since a woman named Theresa walked through our doors. Those of us who were here on January 11, 2002 remember every detail: the snow on the ground, the perfectly clean walls, every light bulb shining bright, and a faint scent of new shower curtains. For weeks, volunteers had been furnishing bedrooms, stocking the kitchen, and organizing the seemingly endless boxes of donated supplies.

We had officially been “in business” for just three days when Theresa made her call to us. We talked with her and gave her directions to the shelter. She was a tall, attractive woman with long, dark, wavy hair. Her warm brown eyes were tired, her face was bruised, and her soul was hiding somewhere. To the five shelter employees and ten board members, she was the realization of a dream.

More than 400 women and 550 children have followed her into the safety of Sheltering Wings. Another 4,500 desperate others have called us in crisis and received direction, referrals, and that most precious gift, hope. But if we focus on the numbers alone, we lose sight of the real story: each life that has been transformed through tangible expressions of God's love.

We remember women who had lost all hope, but are now living safe lives with unshakeable confidence. We remember children who slept soundly for the first time in months and were able to rediscover the simple joy of smiling. We remember the flash of recognition in the eyes of teenage girls who realized that the abuse their friends were receiving from boyfriends wasn't right or normal.

Here they found a haven. Here they were given opportunities and resources to regain hope in themselves, hope in their community, and hope in God, who made it all possible for them. These miracles of hope have flourished all because of you and your willingness to serve as God's instruments! Your faith – your willingness to believe without seeing – has helped to make it all possible.

Sheltering Wings has been able to serve so many people thanks to generous individuals, churches, businesses and other organizations who have chosen to invest in our continued (and expanding) success. Thanks to you, we have had the opportunity to introduce women and children to the wonders of God's love, and allowed them to witness His plan in action. We call that remarkable progress!

**5** years of  
measurable success

**70%** of Sheltering Wings residents successfully transitioned to safe housing, away from abusive partners.

**93%** received individual assessments and evaluations within their first three days at the shelter.

**96%** of residents received case management services and referrals.

**84%** increased their life skills in areas of income, transportation, support systems, child development, and housing.

### Want to grant wishes?

We will be glad to send you our monthly wish list by email, letter or fax. To receive it, contact Maria Larrison at 745-1496.

# SHELTERING WINGS

† HAVEN • HOME • HOPE

P.O. Box 92 • Danville IN 46122

Phone 317.745.1496

Fax 317.745.1497

www.shelteringwings.org

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Danville, IN  
Permit 12

## Our new CEO, *Ann Grayson*



We recently welcomed Ann Grayson, who joined Sheltering Wings as our Chief Executive Officer. She's an experienced defense attorney and longtime volunteer for domestic violence prevention who places Jesus and Biblical principles as the center of her life.

The University of Minnesota Law School graduate moved to Indianapolis six years ago to live closer to her family. An active member of Orchard Park Presbyterian Church, Ann is active in Bible study, community outreach programming and missions work.

Three years ago, Ann became a member of the Julian Center's fundraising committee, and saw that lending a hand to women and children suffering from physical,

emotional and/or sexual abuse could have a tremendous, life-changing impact.

"I did not realize that God was quietly but actively working out His plan," she recalls. "Ephesians 2:10 tells us 'For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.' I firmly believe that God has been preparing my heart and my skill set for my role with Sheltering Wings. When I learned of the opportunity, I felt called to apply."

When Ann isn't working, you'll find her running, reading, cooking, and in fellowship with friends and family. She looks forward to working alongside those who have been called to do God's good works. If you haven't had a chance to meet her, feel free to call her at 718-5454, ext. 207, or email [agrayson@shelteringwings.org](mailto:agrayson@shelteringwings.org).

### WISH LIST ALERT!

If you've signed up for our wish list since the beginning of the year, please visit our website and sign up again. Our computers decided to delete some of the people who had signed up. Our apologies – and thanks!

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

The Life Skills program is the single largest program offered at Sheltering Wings, with 40 percent of our overall budget earmarked for helping women develop the skills they need to lead independent lives, free from violence and fear. Thanks to such programming, 70 percent of the women who enter our doors successfully leave to new lives and safe homes. This summer, we will provide Life Skills classes to more than 35 women. Your financial gift will help us help them. Please give prayerfully and generously.

### CCC UPDATE:

We've added three Church Connection Council members! We're happy to be working with Amy Bergstrom (Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church), Pam Lyons (Plainfield United Methodist Church), and Kelly Dowdy (Bethel Family Worship Center). The Church Connection Council includes 50 local churches that help us accomplish our mission. If you'd like to be involved or know more, contact Mary Williams at 317-718-0735, ext. 301.

### FOR WOMEN AND TEEN GIRLS.

Did you know that one in every three teen relationships includes abusive behavior? On Saturday, September 29, we'll host "Pair Up" event for adult women and the teen girls in their lives. The focus of the event will be on teen dating violence and what women and girls can do to make a difference.

### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Thanks to the Realtor Foundation for investing in the Life Skills program.

For information on foursomes or sponsorship please contact Mary Williams at 317.718.0735.

SHELTERING WINGS  
GOLF OUTING  
presented by  
CORNERSTONE CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
JUNE 16. TROPHY CLUB

