

SHELTERING WINGS

HAVEN • HOME • HOPE

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SAVE-*the*-DATE



BROWNSBURG SERTOMA
PRESENTS THE

10th annual



ST. VALENTINE'S DINNER DANCE BENEFITING SHELTERING WINGS

Saturday, February 14, 2009

Primo West Banquet Facility | Plainfield, IN | 6pm-midnight

Community Blessings

businesses who have blessed the shelter ...watch for more in future issues

Rave Theater: comp movie tickets ~ **Arbonne:** fundraiser with proceeds to SW ~ **Texas Roadhouse:** SW night with 10% of ticket sales benefiting SW ~ **Monical's Pizza** (Avon): SW day with 25% of ticket sales to SW ~ **Fantastic Sams** (Plainfield): Bring in item for SW and take \$3.00 off a haircut ~ **Avon Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery:** Fund SW water bill each month ~ **Ray's Trash:** Funds SW trash pickup ~ **Brownsburg Radio Station:** monthly 15-minute program on SW ~ **Aqua Systems:** donate water and salt each month

Community Partner Blessings

organizations in the community that partner with the shelter ... watch for more in future issues

ProActive Resources ~ **Healthy Families** ~ **Strides to Success** ~ **Sexual Assault Task Force** ~ **Hope House Teen Council** ~ **Church Connection Council** ~ **Advantage Counseling** ~ **First Steps** ~ **Headstart Hamilton Center** ~ **Children's Bureau** ~ **Danville School District** ~ **Local Childcare/Daycare facilities** ~ **Communities for Kids** ~ **WIC** ~ **Indiana Coalition Against Sexual Assault** ~ **YMCA Survival Skills** ~ **Hendricks County Substance Abuse Task Force**

PLEASE NOTE: Help us update our records by sending any address corrections or changes to Linda at lwithner@shelteringwings.org or 317-718-5454 ext. 201. You may also sign-up online to receive future 'Shared Blessings' newsletters or the current Wish List electronically at www.shelteringwings.org -- you can even donate online using our secure Google checkout option!

SHARED BLESSINGS

“God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.” Hebrews 6:10

WINTER 2008 NEWS *from* SHELTERING WINGS

Changing Lives After Domestic Violence

Sheltering Wings' vision is extending the love and compassion of Christ to women and children in the desperate circumstances of domestic violence. But, because of safety concerns, the success stories are not always revealed. Here are two stories that give you a glimpse of the turnaround and hope that Sheltering Wings can give.

For three years “Darlene” had a safety card (produced by Sheltering Wings) in her purse. Her husband beat her and emotionally abused her regularly, but she said it took those years to gain the courage to leave him. The day that she decided to seek help she had endured three physical assaults from her husband. She hitchhiked to the shelter with the card in her hand. When she finally arrived at Sheltering Wings the staff immediately responded to her needs and began helping her to rebuild her life. In less than a year the shelter arranged an apartment - outfitted with furniture - and a car provided by a donor so that Darlene could get back and forth from her new job. Darlene says they gave her every “blessing imaginable.”

What she learned at the shelter was that she mattered, that her decisions mattered, and how to avoid poisoned relationships. Beaten in spirit as well as bruised, Darlene began to be herself once again with a bright and engaging personality.

“Penny” will always remember the day that her boyfriend of two years put a gun to her head and pulled the trigger.

“It jammed,” she recounts. “It took me two days to find somewhere to go and God opened the door.”

Since she took up residence at the shelter seven months ago, Penny has been thankful to all the staff for what they have provided her.

“They’ve given me the opportunity to get my life together,” she said. “They give you assistance in getting to your appointments. They offer in-house classes that change your life. They provide clothing, laundry facilities and food. They supply your every need.”

The staff is helping Penny to work on her General Education Diploma and then will assist her in getting a job.

“If you want to change your life,” she said, “they will help you.”

Upcoming Events in 2009:

Feb 14	Brownsburg Sertoma Dinner Dance
Apr 23	Dazzling Designs Fashion Show
Aug 13	Power Up for Generational Change
Sep 1	Clergy Training
Oct 3	Walk Me Home 5K Walk/8K Run

So Far in 2008:

Crisis calls	1214
Women & children housed	238
Educated through outreach	10727
Volunteer Hours	3945

CEO Corner by Maria Larrison



Today I was once again reminded of the blessed life I enjoy. One of our children residing at our shelter had “Grandparents Day” at her school. Something so ordinary in the life of a child can be very extraordinary for a child living at Sheltering Wings. Oftentimes when a resident and her children come to our “home” they leave not only their physical belongings, but also their extended family. There might be a danger to that family member or a distance that cannot be traversed. In trying to bring some normalcy to the family situation we try to meet every need as best as we are able. So, for this little one, she needed a “fill-in” grandma for her special day. Without hesitation a volunteer stepped up to the task.

As she sat in the audience watching our little one amongst the crowd of children singing their well-rehearsed lines, she slowly waved to her from the audience. Our child saw that there was someone who cared for her, enough to spend the morning watching a child she barely knew in a Thanksgiving

program. Afterwards they went to her classroom where they spent the remainder of their time cutting and pasting holiday decorations. The moments went by quickly and it was soon time to go, and our sweet volunteer hugged our little girl and drove home.

In retelling this story to you I think of the times we all take for granted, the ordinary activities we do each day without a second thought. My wish this holiday season is that you think of our families and say a prayer for them, and then say a prayer of thanksgiving for how blessed you are.

From our “home” to yours we wish you a wonderful Christmas and a very special 2009!

*The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you;
And be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.*

Numbers 6:24-26

Volunteers Give (and Receive) Hope

Janet Stamper gets emotional when she talks about volunteering for the shelter. The wife and mother of three from Avon remembers fondly helping out a domestic violence shelter in college. Now she chairs the auction committee for the annual Sheltering Wings St. Valentine’s Dinner Dance & Auction. Last year, she spent more than 100 hours developing the silent and live auction.

“I get so much more out of it, I think, than I give,” she said. “It’s fulfilling to know that I help so many people. I’m also learning a lot ... about the generosity of the community.”

She added that she enjoys seeing the community come together for a common cause. But most importantly, she enjoys seeing the women and children learn about love.

“I’ve been blessed with a very supportive husband and a great home life,” she said, trying to hold back the tears, “and I wanted to demonstrate that it is out there. You know, this is what love is supposed to be about. I wanted to be a role model of what a healthy family can be like.”

Rita Leone believes that the good Lord cured her cancer so she could give back. Diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor, the Belleville resident now volunteers almost full time, not only at the shelter but for two other organizations. At Sheltering Wings, Rita offers administrative expertise. She sees that caring can make a difference in their lives.

“There was one lady who would never look you in the eye,” Rita said. “She would walk with her head down. She always seemed so defeated. It would tear my heart out. But now she smiles and she has a positive attitude. She’s on her own and raising

her daughter. I see this and know that it can happen for others. People can start a new life with a new beginning.

“It just makes you feel so good that you’re doing something to help others,” Rita adds.



Growing Need by Dan Bond, SW Board Chair

When you speak with victims of domestic violence, they often talk about the stress factors in their lives and in their abusers' lives. The increased stress that comes with a loss of a job or income on already pressured households can lead to a vicious and continuous cycle of abuse. A study released by the National Institute of Justice found that couples under financial strain had triple the domestic violence rate of others.

For Sheltering Wings, a recession brings on challenges and difficulties that are above and beyond basic economic

“The blessings of the shelter are the smiles seen on the children’s faces now that they are safe and comforted by the volunteers and staff.”

De Sanders – Board Member



concerns. Everyday we see the direct correlation between a downturn in the economy and an increase in domestic violence.

We know that the best response we can offer to the women and children caught up in this violence is immediate access to emergency shelter and support services. Unfortunately, at the same time the economic downturn increases the demand for our services, it also threatens our ability to raise the funds necessary to meet those needs.

I am writing this article simply to let you know of our need. The Shelter receives the majority of its income through private donations like yours, and we truly thank God for the ways in which you have blessed us with your generosity. The need

is now greater than anytime since the Shelter began serving abused women and their children nearly seven years ago. We ask for your continued support and your prayers during these times.

Church Connection Council

The spiritual community lifeline for Sheltering Wings

Sheltering Wings exists because the community supports it. The assembled volunteers donate thousands of hours to offer hope to the women and children suffering from relationship violence. One group offers a spiritual base from which generosity grows. The Church Connection Council is a collection of volunteers from the spiritual community who offer year-round support to the staff and residents of Sheltering Wings. More than 50 churches are represented at a monthly meeting where volunteers learn about the work of the shelter.

“I let my church know the needs the shelter has,” Nancy Hughes said. Nancy represents Hendricks Community Bible Church on the council. Whenever there is a shortage or a wish list need, the word is put out through the council members and then passed onto the spiritual community.

“Because of the connection, the staff will e-mail us to say they need copy paper or diapers or milk,” Nancy said. “I tell the church members and they’ve been real good about coming through and helping out.”

Each year several churches have clothing drives on behalf of the shelter. Clothes collected are donated to Goodwill which, in turn, offers vouchers to shelter residents. Phyllis Honey represents Crossroads Church of Avon and says the council means everything to her.

“It doesn’t matter what denomination you are, everybody steps up to the plate,” Phyllis said. “It’s a blessing to be able to help others in need. So many people have helped me and I want to give back.”

Phyllis also makes immediate needs known to her congregation and says items will magically appear and then she drops them off to Sheltering Wings. Both women say the monthly meetings are a highlight for them, especially when residents show up to speak about how the shelter has changed their lives.

Giving is Love Realized

Sheltering Wings owes its existence to donors like you. Tales of donors and their reasons are many times a mystery to us.

Linda Withner, administrative assistant at the shelter, gets to see all of the donations. She sees the scout troops and area athletic teams that hold collection drives for items for the shelter. She hears stories about five women who have been lifelong friends and meet monthly for breakfast and collect \$100 for the shelter. She counts the change gathered from a local restaurant’s wishing fountain. Perhaps these wishes are for a time when domestic violence is no longer a problem. The staff at the shelter work hard towards that goal, but for now the problem is real. As word of this ministry grows, the need is greater. As the economy struggles, more calls are received here.

Jesus said that all of the laws and all of the prophets hang on two commandments: a vertical love of the Lord your God and a horizontal love of your fellow humans. Giving is Love realized.

Donations to Sheltering Wings are tax deductible; but must be made on or before December 31 to count for this tax year. During this season of giving and giving back, please prayerfully consider donating to Sheltering Wings today! Thank you.