

# Pathways

Issue 2, Spring 2004

A newsletter for Stepping Stones, an organization creating a path to safety and empowerment for women of domestic violence.

## Mission Statement

*The mission of Stepping Stones, for women affected by domestic violence, N.F.P., a Christian-based organization, is to empower women who are victims of domestic violence to develop financial and emotional independence by providing them with a safe, nurturing environment.*

## Can You Help?

Opportunities abound for you to join us and make an impact in our community

- Monetary donations (\$10,000 per year is allocated for living expenses per family)
- Mentors — Completion of a training program is required should you be led to commit to helping a family become self-sufficient. A weekly commitment to the family is required and we encourage at least two mentors devote themselves to a family. Call Jeanine Wartan at 630/417-0062 for more information.
- Fundraising — Many opportunities abound here and much help is needed to reach out to others. We are in the midst of planning a tea, a golf outing and a dinner dance. Experienced or learners, we really need help. Call 630-235-3389.

Ready and willing to share your talents/gifts? If you have a passion to help women of abuse and desire to get personally involved, contact us at 630-235-3389 or by mail at P.O. Box 721156, Roselle, IL 60172. Our e-mail address is [stepstones@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stepstones@sbcglobal.net).



At our first fundraiser, Steppin' Out, held October 17, 2003, we unveiled our logo to our guests. Our designer, Catherine Vogel, of Catherine Vogel Design in Roselle, was at the podium along with Rogene Lis. Rogene explained how the typography, color and symbols work together to depict what Stepping Stones represents. The logo shows forward movement; a symbol of the hope we have for the women in Stepping Stones. The symbols above the typography represent the partnerships we form; one for Stepping Stones; one for Bridge Communities; and one for our client. The circles are also reminders of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who have given us the desire for this ministry and guidance in all we do. The shapes give us a sense that working together as one, we are stronger and can accomplish many things.

## Our First Fundraising Event

The Board of Stepping Stones for Women of Domestic Violence, NFP, a new Christian organization based in Roselle, would like to thank all the generous people who made our first fundraiser such a success. Nearly \$30,000 was raised at the dinner dance and silent auction, which will help abused women and their children. Many businesses and individuals donated to this cause. One lucky winner went home with a new Ford ZX2, thanks to the gracious sponsorship of Joe Kean of Friendly Ford in Roselle. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to all who worked so hard in putting this together. Thanks to everyone's efforts and concern, we can welcome our third family into our program. Together we can make a difference.

*Diana Eckert  
Co- Director*

## There's NO Excuse

1. No one has the right to physically harm you. That kind of behavior is against the law.
2. Domestic violence does not go away on its own. It tends to get worse and become more frequent with time, and is often harmful to your children as well.
3. Talk with a friend or relative you trust about what's going on. They may be a good source of support.
4. Contact your local domestic violence program to find out about laws and community resources (i.e., shelters, counseling, legal assistance) before you need them. They can help you plan ways to stay safe.
5. Arrange a signal with a neighbor to let them know when you need help (i.e., turning a porch light on during the day or pulling down a particular window shade).
6. Plan! If you decide to leave, take important papers with you (i.e., birth certificates, passports, health insurance documents, photo ID/driver's license, immunization records, checkbook, medication, food stamps, Social Security cards, etc., for both you and your children).
7. If you are being hit or hurt by your husband or boyfriend, call 1-800-799-SAFE for the name and number of the domestic violence program nearest to you.

*Our lives are not about dwelling on past issues, but rather about making new choices that lead to change.*

## Pebbles from the President

*By Betty Wentland*

- One out of every four American women report that they have been physically abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives.
- In a recent national survey, it was determined that approximately fifty percent of men who frequently assault their wives also frequently assault their children.

I read about statistics like the ones above and become increasingly angry. Violence is a learned behavior. Why isn't America doing more to control abusive individuals and helping the victims of such abuse?

Stepping Stones was created to take an active role in empowering women of domestic violence. I am proud to say that each member of the Board of Directors participates on a working committee designed to support our clients. It is easy to witness the passion of our mission in each meeting. I have participated on many boards and been a member of numerous committees and can truthfully say that the Board of Stepping Stones is unique in its enthusiasm. I am thankful to each one for their service.

The last several months have been hectic, but prosperous and satisfying. On October 17th we hosted our first annual dinner/dance and silent auction. "Steppin' Out" was held at Alta Villa in Addison with nearly 200 people in attendance. The dinner was delightful, the fellowship heartwarming, and the auction successful! One of the highlights of the evening was the drawing for the Ford ZX2. The entire fundraiser brought in \$30,000, enough money to support three clients and their children for an entire year! We want to thank everyone who donated merchandise for the auction and all who bought tickets for the dinner and/or car.

With such a success behind us, an immediate decision was made to accept a new client into our program. Five months ago we began to organize our board with the mission to support and empower women of abuse. Today, we are providing housing and counseling for two families, with the third soon to be added. God has been with us in every aspect of our journey. He has allowed us to make "stepping stones" out of stumbling blocks for women of domestic violence.

## Gifts & Grants

Stepping Stones received gifts or grants from the following individuals, groups or organizations:

### Grants

Insights \$ 1,500

Thrivent \$ 5,800

Square D \$10,000

### Paul Wentland Memorials

Mr. & Mrs. Roy Adolfson

Mr. & Mrs. Chris Bauer

Mr. & Mrs. Al Bloodworth

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Cieslewicz

Mr. & Mrs. Nate Cracatta

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Dellar

Mr. & Mrs. G. Dinkelman

Ms. Jeane Dinkelman

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dumler

Mr. & Mrs. Fred Glover

Mrs. Marian Goltermann

Mrs. Janet Hayes

Mr. & Mrs. Carl Hayes

Mrs. Betty Iwert

Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Kaleda

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Kraus

Mr. & Mrs. Vern Kuerschner

Mr. & Mrs. Forest Lindsey

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Liotine

Mr. & Mrs. William Lussow

Mr. & Mrs. Carl Macaione

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph McDonald

Mr. P. McGenty

Mrs. Mildred Ott

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Ott

Mr. & Mrs. Fred Owens

Ms. Rose Poellot

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Ruble

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Schlewitt

Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Smith

Dr. & Mrs. Rick Steffens

Mrs. Rosalie Voras

Mr. & Mrs. William Wachholz

Mr. & Mrs. David Warning

Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Welsh

Mr. & Mrs. Todd Wentland

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Wiese

Mr. & Mrs. Tony Zernone

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Zeschke

Stepping Stones is able to provide resources because of the generous contributions of our supporters. Thank you!

## Scholarship Fund at Roselle United Methodist Church

We know that there are many barriers to women who are trying to break the cycle of domestic violence and get a fresh start on their lives. One of the top barriers cited by Bridge Communities is the need for childcare for the children involved. A single mom with young children just cannot obtain job skills, get and keep a job without making sure that her children are cared for.

Roselle United Methodist Preschool and Child Care Center has committed openings in their preschool and childcare programs for families served by Stepping Stones. It is an awesome opportunity to utilize a ministry that is

already in place and ready to make a difference in the lives of these families on a daily basis. The Center is currently serving our one Stepping Stones family with a child in their preschool program.

Roselle United Methodist Church has set up a Stepping Stones scholarship fund and is accepting monetary donations so that the Center can be prepared to offer full or part time child care or preschool programs to another family as soon as we receive word of this need. This scholarship fund is managed by RUMC's Finance committee and funds are transferred to the Preschool and Child Care Center as we serve Stepping Stones families.

By donating to this fund, you will be enabling a family touched by domestic violence to remove one of the most significant barriers to a new life.

Note: Checks can be made out to Roselle United Methodist Church with Stepping Stones Scholarship clearly marked in the Memo line.

Roselle United Methodist Church  
Preschool and Child Care Center  
206 S. Rush Street  
Roselle, IL 60172  
(630) 529-1309 Church office  
(630) 529-1399 Preschool and Child Care

## *The Reason I Chose to Mentor . . .*

My childhood wish to help women of domestic violence was inspired by my own experiences.

The first time I knew we were in serious trouble was a very cold night winter night. My mom and dad were fighting which was almost a nightly thing. I was about five years old, hidden under my bed where I went to feel safe. My little sister was cuddling close to me and we were very careful to make sure that no part of our body was showing from under the bed. After a long while we heard the door slam and it became very quiet. Relieved, I told my sister, "it's O.K., Daddy is gone, we can go to sleep now." I tip toed out into the living room to see if mom was O.K. I was startled to see Daddy sitting on the couch smoking a cigarette. I began to tremble and I slipped into my big sister's room. "Where is mommy; did Daddy kill her?" I whispered. We very quickly looked around the house and we could not find her. Then we saw her in the backyard. She was sitting in the snow in her nightgown crying. She would

never go to a neighbor for help; she would never cry out for someone to save her; she sat and cried in silence. The five of us began to devise a plan to get to the back kitchen door to let her in, but Daddy came and told us to get into bed or he would throw us away too. We were so afraid of him we could not speak. We watched our mother from a bedroom window as she began to freeze to death. Eventually she fell over, and we could not contain our fears any longer. We pleaded, "Daddy! Mommy is dead; please go get her. Please! Please! Please!" He told us to quit crying or he would give us something to cry about. Finally he went out and carried her very still body into the house. We put blankets on her and feverously tried to wake her, begging her not to die. In the morning she woke up to find us all sleeping around her; Daddy was at work. When he came home it was as if nothing happened. No one spoke a word about it, no one ever did. When I was about ten, I realized there had to be a place for moms and kids to go

when it was not safe to be at home. We were staying in a basement apartment of a friend of my mother's. It was empty while her friend was looking for a new tenant. There were cracks in the foundation, and the apartment had flooded. The brown shag carpet was wet, and there was no furniture. It was too cold for us to take off our coats. My little sister was lying on me so she would not get wet, and I was propped up in the corner so my back would be dry. My mom, armed only with an old broom, was on rat watch in the kitchen. She really was not very stable due to the stressful situation. After about three days we went back home. We had no money, no food, and no place safe to say.

At fourteen we made another attempt to leave; we were hidden in my aunt's home, just across the street from our house. When Daddy realized we had been staying there, he felt embarrassed and betrayed. He was really mad and this time he said he was going to kill all of us. He loaded his hunting rifle and came after us. We hid behind couches, under beds, in the shower, any-

*The Reason . . . Continued from page 3*

place we could feel safe. I remember shutting my eyes to try to block out the chaos. My uncle finally got Daddy back to the house. Eventually I fell asleep only to be awakened by the sound of my father's gun. We waited in utter silence for someone to tell us what happened. My mother came and got us and told us that Daddy had shot himself in the head, and it was all over.

After the ambulance took him away, we went back into our house and very bravely began to clean up the blood from the floor

and the furniture. My uncle boarded up the window that had blown out. We wiped hair and scalp from the hundreds of buckshot holes in the wall. When we were done, we finally began to cry. We were sure that Daddy would die, but we would be safe, finally safe.

I will never forget the sound of the phone breaking the quiet in our home. Nor will I forget the look on my mother's face when they told her she would need to come to the hospital and sit with Daddy because he was on suicide watch. They expected him

to live. She called our church for someone to drive her. She asked the Reverend for help, but no one wanted to get involved. I knew then that somehow, someday, there had to be a voice for women who were hurting, scared and alone.

Domestic violence is a terrible reality that I could not ignore; that's why I became a Mentor. Stepping Stones is in its infancy and there are so many directions for us to grow. I pray that we can continue to use our experiences, talents, and resources to educate, mentor, and protect our sisters in Christ.

## MENTORING: You Can Make A Difference

**Mentor** 1. a wise, loyal adviser. 2. a teacher or coach

**Mentoring:** a helping relationship where one person invests time, know-how and effort in enhancing another person's growth and responds to critical needs in the life of that person in ways that prepare the individual for greater achievement in the future.

Lots of words for a powerful message!

Experience has proven to be one of the best teachers. Having the advantage of another person explaining and answering

questions is a valued means of learning. Mentoring can be pivotal at various stages in a person's life. It provides another perspective, a kind of wisdom.

Mentoring never really stops. The impact a mentor has will always remain with those they help. The willingness to invest yourself in the life of another person is the key that unlocks the treasure of friendship, fulfillment and accomplishment. It can begin with you.

**Stepping Stones  
for women of domestic  
violence N.F.P.**

**405 S. Rush St.  
Roselle, IL 60172**