

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

Pathways

Issue 7, Summer 2006

Mission Statement

The mission of Stepping Stones, for women of 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.

Pebbles from the President

By Betty Wentland

I recently drove by a playground on a gorgeous, sunny day. I decided to park for a few minutes to enjoy the sound of children's laughter and the sight of families playing together. I thought back to the days when my sons were little tykes and my husband and I spent quality time with them playing games, picnicking in the park, and experiencing countless other activities that brought us pleasure just because we were together.

Almost immediately my thoughts changed from the happiness that some families can feel to thinking about what our clients must feel when they see contented families.

According to HealthDay News a new study confirms the wide prevalence of domestic violence and its pervasive impact on women's physical and mental health. Memories of physical, emotional, or verbal abuse do not disappear when the victim is removed from the abuse. Regret, guilt and anguish can torment a woman long after the offender is no longer a part of her life. The more recent the violent incident and the longer it persists, the worse the victim's physical and mental health and social network are likely to be affected.

We are ardently working to relieve the pain and stress of the women and children in our program. We are committed to actively pursuing our mission statement: to empower women who are victims of domestic violence to develop financial and emotional independence by providing a safe, nurturing environment. Please pray for our families so that someday life will have a new and fulfilling outlook. All of us at Stepping Stones want to thank all of you for your continued and generous support. We couldn't do it without you!

SAVE-THE-DATE
Friday, October 20

DINNER AUCTION

The fourth annual Dinner Auction, **Steppin' Back into the 50's**, will be held

at the new Venuti's Banquets and Ristorante in Addison on Friday, October 20, 2006. The Development Committee is still looking for auction items.

The evening promises to have some new features to enhance the event for your enjoyment. We are certain it will be memorable. Call Betty Wentland (630/916-0577), Diana Eckert (630/894-3506), or Diane Middlebrooks (630)773-0350 to help with various aspects of this fundraiser.

WHAT A TEA PARTY IT WAS!

It was an amazing afternoon! Our Annual Spring Tea was attended by 147 women. Imagine 19 large round tables each having a unique theme. Themes included "the 50's", a summer barbecue, teddy bears, spring garden, feng shui, angels and on and on. Every detail at each table was meticulously planned from special tablecloths to china and tea cups by the hardworking hosts. Women of all ages were truly impressed by the array of decorating skills displayed.

Everyone looked so lovely and found time to visit with familiar friends and meet many new people. The Spring Tea

was held April 23, 2006 at the Belvedere Banquets in Elk Grove.

There were raffle opportunities and numerous vendors who generously donated their profits to Stepping Stones. An assortment of finger sandwiches and sweets added to this festive event.

This year a fashion show was added and everyone had fun seeing familiar faces bravely model evening wear, career wear, sports wear and pajamas! Yes, Dorothy Wiese surprised the crowd, complete with her teddy bear and fuzzy slippers! Dress Barn supplied the fashions and all had an enjoyable afternoon.

We thank Amy Herring, our engaging announcer, who kept us on track. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to Julie Miller and Betty Wentland who made the



Fabulous Fifties, Fran Reynolds, hostess.



Fabulous Fifties party girls.



Merry May Day (1st Place Winner) Christine Wilcox, hostess

Asian Fusion (2nd Place Winner) Linda Zerwin, hostess



Garden with Me, Dorothy Wiese, hostesses

Tea Around the World, Lois Mashio and Betty Dickson Brenton, hostesses

Spring Tea a huge success!!! And, kudos to our energetic, talented hosts who worked so hard on their respective table decorations. AND, to the many, many friends of Stepping Stones for attending and supporting our mission. We look forward to seeing you next year!

Your generosity is truly appreciated. Thanks to you, we raised over \$5,000. God bless you for sharing yourself with us.

Models (from l to r): Lynn Cieslewicz, Jolene Bell, Marissa McArthur, Tina Drzonek, Dorothy Wiese



STEPPING STONES 2005 ANNUAL REPORT

MENTORS

Our mentors are the very heart of Stepping Stones. These men and women have made a commitment to meet weekly with our families to provide guidance. During 2005, we welcomed three new families during the year and saw two families move onward to independent living.

Challenges of daily life during 2005 included car repairs, reliable transportation, childcare, health issues, steady employment and budgeting. Another challenge faced by our clients is loneliness. The women often have no friends and have been fearful to make them. Recognizing this, the mentors organized "A New Year, A New Beginning" party in February for our families at Chuck E. Cheez with all the pizza, pop and tokens made possible by donations and the management of the establishment.

In July, a family picnic was held at Turner Pond. Through the support of many, a great time was had by all. The Roselle Lions Club helped children catch fish — it was the highlight of the warm afternoon.

The Aloha Girls of Lake Park High School sponsored a fundraiser to provide monies for additional outings.

The Lake Park National Honor Society provided Thanksgiving dinners for our families.

Our sincere thanks to the following mentors this past year:

2005 MENTORS

Lois Maschio, Betty Dickson Brenton, Mollie Olson, Carla Tonk, Sandy & Chuck Theis, Mina Field, Mary Bialek, Tina Drzonek, Sherrie Hayes, Kelly Banks, Maria Patton, Jolene Bell, Betty

Wentland, Helen Stanisavljevich, Renee Lange, Aleese Ekola, Jane Hove, Jeanine Wartan, Diana Eckert

SET-UP

The Set-Up Committee is responsible for setting up the new client's apartment. The committee looks for, picks up and stores small household appliances, cleaning supplies, paper products, sheets, towels, bathroom and kitchen items.

Three clients moved into apartments during 2005. It takes tremendous organization and coordination of volunteers to act on short notice and secure the necessary furniture, bedding, small appliances, et cetera that fill an apartment. Every year, these rather spur of the moment moves are required.

Would you be willing to add your name to the list so that, with short notice, we can contact you to help? Call Jeanne Calvert at 630/893-1688.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

In November 2005, the Board of Directors decided to restructure the Development Committee. A chairperson would oversee all fundraising with three subcommittees: major fundraising, minor fundraising and grant writing.

The Board of Directors would like to thank Sheila Andriola for her devotion and efforts the past three years as chairperson of the Development Committee. The entire Stepping Stones organization appreciates her creative ideas for fundraising and her performance in carrying out the overwhelming job of running the major events.

For this fall's major fundraiser, Steppin' Back into the 50's, you can help by doing one or more of the following:

- solicit or donate auction items
- make up a basket
- buy or sell ad space
- help with any of the many tasks on the night of the event
- purchase a ticket..... or a table!

Contact Betty Wentland (630/916-0577) or Diana Eckert (630/894-3506) or Diane Middlebrooks (630/773-0350).

RESOURCE COMMITTEE

This year, the committee concentrated on a database. Julie Miller had headed this initiative and diligently worked on this project. Dario Zadro graciously volunteered to design a new database.

This year has been a year of refocusing efforts. In addition to our master mailing list, the Resource Committee focused on locating and tracking items for clients. As time went on, we were connected to Sharing Connections and securing household items became somewhat more manageable.

The committee continues to seek professional services, such as attorneys and dentists, for clients should the need arise.

We thank Julie Miller for her talents, services and guidance to our organization.

Now we are seeking a data base manager, a programmer who knows PHP and a web-site manager, call Julie Miller at 630/924-1236 if you can help.

STEPPING STONES 2005 ANNUAL REPORT (continued)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

2005 EXPENSE/INCOME REPORT		
Total Expenses		\$ 84,460
Client Expenses	\$57,316	
Large & Small Fundraiser Expenses	\$17,048	
Mailings, Newsletters	\$ 2,500	
Brochures, Stationery, Envelopes	\$ 2,650	
Liability Insurance	\$ 2,670	
Administrative Expenses	\$ 2,276	
Total Income		\$131,270
Major Fundraisers	\$68,941	
Spring Tea	\$ 8,320	
Dinner Dance	60,621	
	<i>(a 232% increase over 2004)</i>	
Small Fundraisers	\$ 1,792	
2 Solicitation Letters	\$ 7,065	
Grant & Matching Funds	\$24,850	
Square D Electric	\$10,100	
DuPage County Foundation	5,000	
Thrivent Financial	7,500	
Zurich	40	
ITW Foundation	1,710	
UBS Foundation	500	
Zurich	40	
Trinity Lutheran Church	\$17,775	
Miscellaneous Income	\$10,847	

Stepping Stones acknowledges its many donors and is very grateful for their financial support.

Our goal in 2006 is to expand our mission to provide support to ten families. Each family requires approximately \$10,000 which includes rent, utilities, car repairs, etc. Keep us in your prayers.

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Our Loss

It wasn't very long ago that Jim Ekola was invited to serve on the Board of Stepping Stones — less than a year ago. Shortly thereafter, Jim's daughter, Aleese, became a mentor and we are blessed to have her. Jim's background in finance and his love for people made him a valued contributor. But our Lord had other plans. Jim was at our Board meeting on Tuesday, March 21, 2006 involved and looking forward to another project. Wednesday, March 22nd, God called Jim home shortly after he enjoyed dinner with his family. His death was unexpected, but his impact on people was great. He is truly missed by many.

On behalf of the Board of Stepping Stones, we want to acknowledge our friend Jim and again thank his wife, Judy, family and friends for their generous memorial gifts to Stepping Stones.

WE APPLAUD YOU!

We celebrate the successes of present families with their continued employment, promotion, raises and newly acquired driver's licenses. One client even received her U.S. citizenship! With God's help and the generosity of many, Stepping Stones will continue to support women and their children who need our help.

We humbly thank our mentors for their dedication to the families. Mentors serve with devotion and give Stepping Stones its very purpose. We applaud you for the individual talents you share with our clients.

Our generous donors help meet the clients' basic living needs in a safe environment. God bless you all for reaching out and helping others.



HELP EMPOWER ABUSED WOMEN — *BE A MENTOR*

Mentors first attend two instructional classes presented by Bridge Communities, our partner in supporting women who have suffered domestic violence. It is the goal of Stepping Stones to build and support living skills so that those in our program become self sufficient and confident in their decisions and can then recognize their own identity and abilities. Stepping Stones will provide all the necessary tools for a family to begin life in a new neighborhood. Our mentors help them to find comfort in their surroundings, and most important, spiritual stability. Spiritual growth and awareness are essential to the well being of our families.

Mentors work in teams of two or three per family so that the entire responsibility is not shouldered by one. There are monthly Stepping Stones meetings to support the challenges, concerns and successes mentors experience. A Bridge Community case manager who works with the family also works closely with the mentors. Should you find it in your heart to help, please contact Jeanine Wartan at 630/417-0062.

The rewards of mentoring are numerous. With your loving patience and guidance, you model behaviors and provide stability for the client. You are able to open doors that have

been shut. You are a friend that she values as you have her best interests at heart. You have a chance to give her a new outlook on life through your care, faith and steadfast love. We cannot do this alone. We need to continually grow our mentor base to sponsor more families. We work together with churches, schools and local organizations to get the word out that the cycle of domestic violence can end. We must make the most of every opportunity, educating both men and women. We must be committed to teach, encourage, support and love. Together we are better; we are stronger. Together we can and will

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU

Needs are many
and include:

- an occasional mover
 - fundraiser
 - mentors, both male and female, for a one or two year commitment
 - graphic artist
 - marketing specialist
 - data base manager
- For 2007
- chair the Spring Tea
 - host a table at the Spring Tea



Call Stepping Stones at 630-235-3389.



P.O. Box 721156, Roselle, IL 60172
630-235-3389

The Board

Co-directors	Dorothy Wiese, Ed.D. Diana Eckert
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