

Fall 2006



# VOICES

## ***Safe Haven Shelter Holds First Annual Fundraiser: The 2006 Overcoming Family Violence Fundraising Luncheon***

As you may know, October marks Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This year it also marked a special event for Safe Haven Shelter. On October 12, Safe Haven Shelter held its very **first annual** fundraiser in its 28 year existence! The free "Overcoming Family Violence" fundraising luncheon at the Holiday Inn was the culmination of a year's worth of bi-monthly "Inside Story" presentations which included shelter history, information about our program and tours of our facility. The presentations and the fundraiser were successful in so many ways.

We had many new faces mixed with numerous familiar faces at the presentations, and then again at the fundraiser. The 220 people attending the fundraiser were personally invited by 20 + Table Captains who agreed to reach out and invite their friends, family, and colleagues. All of them did an excellent job. They were the backbone of the event.

During the luncheon, people were impacted by a video with moving stories presented by three survivors who courageously shared glimpses of their lives. After the video, those survivors stood up and shared, for the very first time, more of the trauma they had experienced in their abusive relationships. Each survivor agreed that it was an empowering experience to publicly share her story. Without their courage, there would continue to be a lack of understanding about how pervasive this violence is, and how much it impacts not only the families that endure it, but the rest of us as well.

The people who heard the survivors' stories have volunteered their time to do various

functions for Safe Haven Shelter including serving on the Board of Directors and donating needed items. Last but not least, due to tremendous generosity, Safe Haven Shelter received gifts and pledges totaling \$109,000 over a five year period from the fundraiser, and more donations have been arriving. We send a heartfelt thank you to all our supporters who understand the issue, heard that there is a huge need and helped us to reach out farther to meet that need. THANK YOU on behalf of women who are battered and their children.

**"We send a heartfelt thank you to all our supporters who understand the issue, heard that there is a huge need and helped us reach out farther to meet that need."**

If you have not been to a presentation or you know someone that would like to learn more about us, please let us know. We invite everyone who is interested to one of our monthly presentations.

-Cathryn Curley

### **Safe Haven Shelter's Holiday Wish List—How to Help**

Each year, donors and volunteers play a huge roll in making the holiday season more enjoyable for residents at Safe Haven Shelter. This year, Safe Haven Shelter is attempting to make it easier for supporters to help. In addition to posting our Holiday Wish List, we have opened registries at Kohl's, Target, Walmart, and Younker's. People serving as "Santas" for Safe Haven Shelter can go into one of the four stores, ask for our registry, purchase listed items, and drop them off at the shelter. Our registries are also available for online "Santa" shopping at each of the four stores. You can link to the registries at [www.safehavenshelter.org](http://www.safehavenshelter.org).

We are also in need of "elves" to wrap and label presents. "Elves" can set up a time to pick up presents from the shelter, wrap and label them, and drop them back off at the shelter anytime before Christmas. Labeling ensures that we will not need to unwrap the presents before Christmas.

Your support will make a big difference to residents spending the holiday season at the shelter, and your generosity is greatly appreciated.

**A SPECIAL HOLIDAY THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS SUPPORTED SAFE HAVEN SHELTER THIS YEAR!**

#### Women's Wish List Registry

- Kohl's
- Slippers
- Lotion/Body Spray
- Jewelry

- Target
- Mixer
- Coffee Maker
- Kitchen Towel Sets
- Place mats
- Shower Curtain and Rings

- Walmart
- Wash Cloths
- Towels
- Drinking Glasses
- Pans
- Toaster

- Younker's
- Bowls
- Measuring Cups
- Can opener
- Cheese Grater
- Sheets

#### Children and Teenagers

- 1.) Multicultural Dolls
- 2.) Gift certificates to the mall, Best Buy, or Target
- 3.) CD Players
- 4.) Educational Games
- 5.) Board Games
- 6.) Athletic equipment such as basketballs, footballs, softballs and soccer balls.

#### Registry Information:

**KOHL'S**  
Bridal Registry  
first name: Safe Haven  
last name: Shelter

**TARGET**  
Club Wedd  
first name: Sa  
last name: Fo

**WALMART**  
Wish List  
first name: Sa  
last name: Sa

**YOUNKER'S**  
Gift Registry  
first name: Safe  
last name: Shelter

Event Date:  
December 25,  
2006

State: MN



To access registries online, go to [www.safehavenshelter.org](http://www.safehavenshelter.org). Click on "Holiday Wish List." Then click on each store's name.

**Safe Haven Shelter Team****Board Chair**

Marilyn Bamford

**Board Secretary**

Gordon Ramsay

**Board Treasurer/Chair Elect**

Sharon Buchanan

**Board Members**

Sue Anderson

Elizabeth Blazer

William Burns

Bonnie Fraser

Lisa Heyesen

Sharon Kemp

Alissa Larsen

Laura Ness

**Executive Director**

Susan Utech

**Financial Coordinator**

Beth Elstad

**Shelter Program Supervisor**

Bonnie Kolodge

**Assistant Supervisor**

Janet Olson

**Front Desk**

Celesta Jackson

**Cook**

Mavis McDonald

**Maintenance**

Dale Minkkinen

**Women's Advocates**

Marie Mallett

Elizabeth McPeck

Kate Murphy

Tanya Parker

Misty Roth

Angie Wynn

**Casual Staff**

Kathy Mitchell

Kelli Ostern

Rachel Erickson

**Children's Advocates**

Nikki Kaul

Nate Kesti

**Intervention Supervisor**

Cathryn Curley

**Legal Advocate**

Margo Colomb

**Education Advocate/Volunteer Coordinator**

Ed Heisler

**A Note from our Executive Director:****Lessons in Gratitude Taught to Us by Those We Serve**

Being a person coming out of an abusive relationship is a tough place to be during the holidays – whether you are in the shelter or living in the community. The holiday season brings along heightened expectations for everyone. We want to achieve a new closeness with our family members, and experience a special joy from the holiday season. Each year, hopes are high that this season will be magical and perfect as we try to recapture the wonderment we felt as children waiting for Santa, or wait for a rush of emotion as we ponder the religious significance of Christmas and Chanukah. Rarely does reality meet our Pollyannaism. Living up to standard holiday expectations is even more difficult when you have just left an abusive relationship. Women taking off on their own at this time of the year can feel especially vulnerable to the fact that they may not be able to provide those holiday dreams for themselves or their children.

Yet what I have found after working five years at Safe Haven Shelter is that many of the women we serve are grateful during the holiday season for what they have. Their gratitude allows them to look back fondly at the holiday season they spent at Safe Haven Shelter. Thanks to our many supporters, we are able to provide most of the material trappings that make the holiday season special. I will never forget the excitement of a woman who received a bathrobe, or the time a church provided a special snow suit for a toddler. Instances of generosity have a huge impact on the beneficiaries. But for most women it is the new sense of community that they will remember. Most women at the shelter have had to repeatedly give up their idealized dream of what the holidays are supposed to be in the face of violence and tension. The pinnacle Hallmark moment probably will not be realized this season either. What will replace it, though, is more meaningful. Women experience genuine caring and respect, often for the first time, in our support groups. Such caring and respect is reinforced by one on one conversation with advocates. Women at the shelter are also invited to special events such as cookie making and decorating which create an opportunity to relax and have fun with their children and other residents. Experiencing community, fellowship and caring far eclipses many women's idealized holiday expectations. Each woman's heartfelt gratitude shows that the true power of the holiday season lies in positive, supportive and loving interactions between people.


**Staff Highlights: Angie Wynn**

Angie Wynn has been a Women's Advocate at Safe Haven Shelter for almost 18 years, but her support for battered women began before that when she worked as a beautician. Based on her conversations with clients, Angie knew there was a great need for advocacy and support for battered women. Many of the women Angie talked to were not even aware that shelters existed. Angie saw an ad for a position as a Women's Advocate at Safe Haven Shelter (then the Women's Coalition), and jumped at the opportunity. She recalls, "When I applied, domestic violence was all around me. I was excited to be able to spread the word that there was a place to go for help."



Angie remembers that when she first began working at the shelter, "It was hard not to walk away with a sad heart." With the realization that she needed a shift in perspective, Angie began to focus on the empowerment that occurred daily at the shelter. She made it her goal to educate women about the abuse they were facing, and provide them as many

resources as she could before they left the shelter. Instead of feeling discouraged when women chose to go back to their partners, Angie made sure not to shame them, and let each woman know that if they needed anything else, she would be there for them. Helping women realize they are capable of anything is one of Angie's greatest rewards, "It's really great to see women leave their abusive partner to come to the shelter. We help build them up, until they can leave and lead successful lives."

Angie knows that holidays at the shelter can be hard for residents. She states, "The women are grieving the loss of their relationship, their hopes and dreams." Being in a shelter over the holiday season can intensify the sadness. When all is said and done, though, Angie hears many of the women say that holidays at the shelter were the best they ever had. Instead of anger, stress, sadness, and the threat of violence, residents build happy memories with fellow residents, smiling children, and Safe Haven Shelter's staff.

Thanks to Angie and the other Women's Advocates, the holiday season serves as yet another example that a positive and enjoyable life can exist outside abusive relationships.

***Many people despise wealth, but few know how to give it away.  
- Francois de la Rouchefoucauld***

## Concordia Lutheran Church: Always in the "Giving Spirit"

People often see the holiday season as a wonderful time to focus on giving. For many, one of the best things about getting into the "holiday spirit" is selflessly thinking about others. For over a year, members of Concordia Lutheran Church have given to residents of Safe Haven Shelter. According to Becky Anderson, one leader of the volunteer group, volunteering and giving on a regular basis is one way members of the congregation keep their lives centered. Anderson, along with Zelda Cherne, organize Concordia Lutheran's monthly donation drive for Safe Haven Shelter, and help plan the group's monthly activities with shelter residents.

Behind the scenes at Concordia Lutheran even more is going on. Anderson says that the congregation has many questions about how they can help. They are always looking through stores and rummage sales for items that might be particularly helpful to a woman who is starting over. Even the quilting club regularly donates its handmade quilts.

Year round, Concordia Lutheran gives time, resources, and energy to Safe Haven Shelter. We greatly appreciate the comfort and joy that Safe Haven Shelter's residents get from Concordia Lutheran's generosity. Anderson makes it clear that it is their pleasure. Anderson says, "It feels good when you are able to help someone else. I can't imagine giving everything up to start over again."

As the holiday season approaches, many of us will refocus on our belief that giving to people in need is a necessary part of our humanness. It seems fair to say that Concordia Lutheran serves as an excellent example of the positive effects of a "giving spirit." As Anderson states, "We feel passionate about helping people make it on their own after leaving an abusive situation." We at Safe Haven Shelter attest to the fact that their actions make a difference.



### Safe Haven Shelter appreciates your support!

If you would like to make a tax deductible contribution, please send it to:

Safe Haven Shelter  
C/O Susan Utech  
P.O. Box 3558  
Duluth, MN 55805

We rely on the generosity of our supporters. We can accept cash, check, and credit card donations. Thank you!

## Support Groups for Women

Sometimes it takes courage to share your feelings and experiences with others. You can start to heal knowing that you are not alone, that everything you feel is normal, and there is a safe place to talk about what has happened to you.

Safe Haven Shelter offers a weekly Healing Circle for community women, women who have used the shelter, and shelter residents. The Healing Circle is every Tuesday evening, and we welcome you to come and participate in a supportive group discussion. Many current residents attend this group. Child care and transportation, within city limits, are provided. Please call Bonnie at 218-728-6481 for more information.

Safe Haven Shelter also offers a 24-week closed group, designed to educate, build skills and assist you in your healing process. It is divided into three segments of eight weeks, and you are invited and encouraged to participate in all three segments. If you wish, however, you may choose to commit to only one eight-week segment at a time. The group is a closed group, meaning that no new people join until the end of an eight week segment. The closed group welcomes community women and former residents of Safe Haven Shelter or Dabinoos 'Igan Shelter who are currently dealing with domestic violence or are survivors of domestic violence and interested in working on healing. This group meets on Wednesday evenings at the Shelter from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Childcare, transportation (within city limits), and snacks are provided. Call Cathryn at 218-623-1000 for more information.

By joining these groups, you are choosing to undertake a healing process. Healing does not happen on a given timeline. No one can predict when your process will feel complete. It is not uncommon for total healing to take years, although it does get easier as you move through the process. We can't guarantee that it will not feel overwhelming and/or painful at times, but it will also provide perspective, valuable information, humor and lots of support. Attending one or both of these groups is a choice to take a great leap forward in your healing process.

### We welcome you to join us!!!

#### Got an Old Cell Phone?

Safe Haven Shelter reprograms used cell phones and gives them to victims of domestic violence in the Duluth community. Please drop off your old, working phone at Safe Haven Shelter or a local Super One store.



**We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.**  
-Winston Churchill



Safe Haven Shelter for  
Battered Women

Phone: 218-728-6481  
Fax: 218-728-5084  
E-mail: [sh@safehavenshelter.org](mailto:sh@safehavenshelter.org)  
Website: [www.safehavenshelter.org](http://www.safehavenshelter.org)



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## Chico's Annual Wishes for Women Holiday Program Makes Donating to Area Shelter Residents Easy and Fun



For ten years, Chico's stores have been selling pins to raise money for residents at battered women's shelters. According to Barb Zwak, Chico's Director of Store Development, the fundraiser started when customers expressed an interest in donating to a fundraiser where they knew exactly where and what their money was being used for. Chico's wasted no time setting up the Annual Wishes for Women Holiday Program. A new pin is selected each year and sold for 10 dollars plus tax. Money generated from the pins is split evenly among local battered women's shelters, including Safe Haven. Local shelters, in turn, use the money to let each woman staying with them choose a special gift for themselves.

Last year, Chico's was able to provide gifts for 305 women in 11 Minnesota shelters.

Not only does the contribution brighten women's holiday spirits, but for many women, this could be the first time in a very long time that they have been able to make a choice for themselves. Zwak says, "Our hearts are with all the women staying at shelters. We are thinking of them, and we are thankful we can do something to make their holiday season a little more comfortable and full of joy." Chico's generosity is especially welcome as women face the heightened stress of dealing with the effects of abuse and being away from their families during the holidays. Safe Haven Shelter would like to thank Chico's for helping grant a wish for each of our residents.

If you are interested in purchasing a "Wishes for Women" pin, you may do so at any Minnesota Chico's until December 15.

### The Inside Story

**Safe Haven Shelter for Battered Women is now offering a one-hour program and tour for community members to gain more knowledge and insight into the important work that we do. These programs are offered twice a month, and we invite anyone interested in attending to call Cathryn at 218-623-1005.**

#### Upcoming Program Schedule:

Friday, December 15th	10:00 am—11:00 am
Wednesday, January 17th	4:00 pm—5:00 pm
Thursday, January 25th	10:00 am—11:00 pm