

Friendship Home

Safe shelter and so much more

Biding Her Time

Allison hadn't expected to wait. She'd spent nine long years waiting in her miserable marriage; waiting for Brian to actually make good on his promises to change. She was tired of waiting. But Michell, the Case Manager at Friendship Home, said they were full, but they would put her on the "waiting list."

Then Michell told her that there was a lot they could do while she was waiting. She asked Allison to call in to the shelter, every day if it was safe, to let them know how she was doing. Michell talked to her about a safety plan. Each time Allison called, the Advocate at the shelter would talk to her about what she was experiencing and they would update the plan, depending on what was happening. They also talked about what she needed and how Friendship Home could help her while she waited.

Brian had always isolated her from everyone, since their very first date. Allison wanted to go bowling with a group of friends, but Brian insisted they have a romantic dinner alone. "I want to focus on you," he'd said. She'd found it flattering at the time. Now it just made her angry.

After they were married, the isolation increased and Brian started taking more liberties; calling her names, taking her paycheck, demanding she do this or that, wear this or that. But it wasn't until just a couple of years ago that she became really scared. Her sister was in town and she was heading to her parent's to visit, something Brian didn't allow very often. She was excited to see her family. The excitement didn't last long. Brian changed his mind. Said he needed her to stay and make him dinner. When she refused, he hit her for the first time and locked her in the basement.

Friendship Home's pre-shelter program allows Case Managers and Advocates to monitor of the safety of women waiting to

Looking back, Allison realizes that the "waiting list" wasn't so much about waiting as it was about planning for her future.

come in. It also allows women more time to thoughtfully plan their next moves so they are safe ones.

On one call to the shelter, Michell and Allison set up a meeting. It was when they met face to face that Allison told Michell what she hoped to accomplish; save money, move into her own apartment, be free of Brian's control. They talked about what Allison could do before she came into shelter.

(continued on page 8)



From the Executive Director

Amy Evans



In my planner, tucked back behind the calendars and meeting agendas, is a creased and dog-eared letter. I've been carrying it around with me for several months now. It's from Suzanne, a survivor of domestic violence, who wrote to tell us that her former husband and batterer had died.

Good looking, athletic, and absolutely charming to outsiders. He had everyone fooled to his dying day.

His obituary was four inches long. It was a list of the accolades, achievements and honors he had received. Isn't it sad that his rage, violence, and victims weren't also listed in his obituary?

Suzanne writes that her batterer remarried shortly after their divorce. Suzanne eventually became friends with his second wife, after she, too, escaped from his abuse. They talked about the abuse that they each suffered at his hand.

The one thing that I think about over and over was her query, "Why didn't you tell me?" My reply was "Would you have believed me?" She said, "No. No Way."

Suzanne's experiences were many years ago, yet her story still resonates. She writes of the lingering pain of being battered by the one person who had vowed to love and protect her. She writes of the importance of safe shelter:

I wish that Friendship Home had been around then. I fled to my parents, who did not believe me and were reluctant to give me sanctuary. He even had them fooled. It was a horrible situation. How I ever made it through, I don't know. I didn't have a job, no money and no support.

Her parents did not believe her. The second wife would not have believed her. Why?

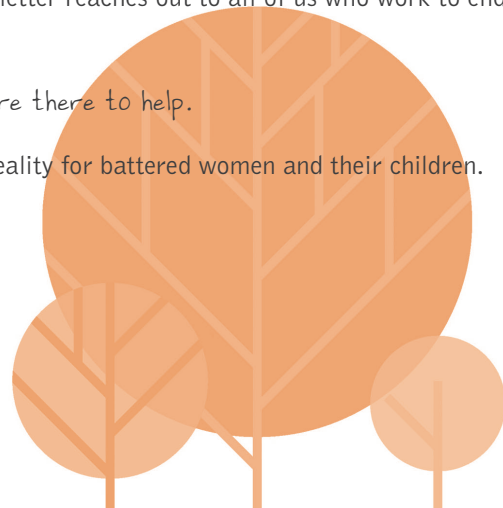
Suzanne and her batterer simply did not fit our culture's preconceptions about who is a batterer and who is a victim. This holds true today. We still carry strong stereotypes about batterers and their victims, thinking it unlikely that they exist on the upper ends of the economic ladder. They do.

In fact, Suzanne could be any woman. When you support safe shelter at Friendship Home, you support services that enable all battered women to find safety. I like to think that Suzanne's letter reaches out to all of us who work to end domestic violence:

Those who need you now are so fortunate that you are there to help.

My thanks to all of you are there to help make safe shelter a reality for battered women and their children.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy".





My return to the “work-a-day” world at Friendship Home, after six years raising four young boys, has been a near perfect fit. My job is doing what I love most and do best—talking to people...about a cause I am passionate about.

As Major Gifts Coordinator, it is my privilege to meet with our generous donors, let them know how their contributions make a difference in the lives of women and children, and learn why Friendship Home is special to them. I also get to share why it is special to me.

Before I stepped away from the traditional workforce, I’d worked at Gallup as Director of Business Development. Gallup is a strengths-based organization, a philosophy mirrored at Friendship Home. It was at Gallup that I was first introduced to the Clifton Strengthsfinder. 1. Woo 2. Activator 3. Achiever 4. Connectedness 5. Developer. These are my strengths. And working at Friendship Home, I’m allowed to use them. In fact, they expect me to.

I absolutely love meeting new people. And this is what I get to do for Friendship Home every single day. At Friendship Home, all staff members are encouraged to use their strengths as part of the team. Working together, using our inherent strengths, to support those who need help. Each of my colleagues is appreciated and valued for the unique set of strengths they bring to

the organization.

And it doesn’t stop with the Staff. Women and their kids who come to stay at the shelter are given the chance to discover their own strengths through the Clifton StrengthsFinder and StrengthsExplorer. Women, who have rarely, if ever, been told they are good at something, are appreciated for who they are and what they are truly capable of. Children, who are used to put-downs, are instead lifted up and shown how they are uniquely gifted.

It is inspiring to me to be a part of such a great team; not only sheltering those who are scared and feel alone, but helping them see how powerful and resilient they are and what good things are in store.



Feinstein helps Friendship Home

Alan Shawn Feinstein will once again donate \$1 million through The Feinstein Foundation to help feed the hungry across the United States. Based on food and cash donations received by Friendship Home between March 1st and April 30th, 2011, Feinstein will share part of his million with women and children seeking safety. The more donations Friendship Home receives from the community, the more Feinstein will share with our shelters. Donations by check can be sent to Friendship Home, Feinstein Challenge, P.O. Box 85358, Lincoln, NE 68501-5358 or call 402-434-0163 to contribute by credit card. Donations of non-perishable food items can be taken to Eastridge Presbyterian Church at 1135 Eastridge Drive.

Friendship Home welcomes new 2011 Board Members!

Diana Buchanan works at State Farm Insurance as their Ad Services Supervisor. **Doug McDaniel** is the Vice President of Human Resources at BryanLGH. **Steve McKelvey** is the Executive Vice-President of the Nebraska Banker's Association and a member of the Nebraska Bankers Insurance Company. **Emily Noordhoek** is a police officer with the Lincoln Police Department. **Alice Skultety** is an Attorney in the Trust Office at Union Bank. **Jill Miller** is the VP of Human Resources at Wells Fargo Bank. **Perry Haralson** is Vice President of Lending and Finance at Cornhusker Bank.

Thank you for your generous service to the women and children at Friendship Home.



New 2011 Board Members: Doug McDaniel, Steve McKelvey and Emily Noordehoek



New 2011 Board Members: Perry Haralson, Diana Buchanan, Jill Miller, and Alice Skultety

Honor someone special in your life this Mother's Day

What better way to honor an extraordinary person in your life than by helping to change someone else's? Send a gift to Friendship Home by May 1st in honor of your significant person and we will send your honoree a card letting them know of this special contribution. Your gift will give a woman escaping domestic violence safe shelter and support she needs to live free of violence.

Please send donations to Friendship Home Mother's Day Gift, P.O. Box 85358, Lincoln, NE 68501-5358. Be sure to include the name and address of the person you are honoring.





Partners in Friendship

Happy holidays they were at Friendship Home. The women and children at shelter were pampered from Thanksgiving to New Year's by all of these wonderful donors. Thank you to all who made their season one about giving.

Thanksgiving dinner was delicious and bountiful thanks to **Lazlos Brewery & Grill and Fireworks** and **Campbell's Nurseries and Garden Centers** who provided meals for our Transitional and Emergency Shelter residents.

The following businesses and individuals provided gifts for families. A 'store' was set up at the shelter where women and children selected presents to give to one another. For families who weren't able to come choose items, gifts were wrapped up per their wish lists and taken in time for the holiday.

- Ameritas Life Insurance Corp.
- Ameritas Life Insurance Corp.- Accounting Department
- Associated Anesthesiologists, PC
- Black Hills Energy
- Body Overhaul
- Cabela's World's Foremost Bank
- Childrens' Castle Childcare
- Community of Christ Church
- Patty Doney
- Fingerprints Child Development Center
- First-Plymouth Congregational Church
- Harper Dining Services - UNL

Ameritas Volunteer Group



- Hope Lutheran Church
- Lincoln Federal Savings Bank
- Lincoln Lutheran High School
- Lincoln Surgical Hospital
- Members of First Lincoln Federal Credit Union
- Nebraska Service Center
- New Covenant Community Church
- Runza Restaurants
- Juanita Sainer
- Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center
- Southern Heights Presbyterian Church
- Val and Liz Stehlik and Friends
- Victoria's Secret - Southpointe Mall
- Jennifer Walsh
- Bertha Weitzel
- West Gate Bank

The basic needs for women and children seeking safety were provided by many generous donors. **First Lincoln Federal Credit Union** held a drive for cleaning products. **Diedra Starks** held a pajama drive at her church for shelter residents. Babies were warm and cozy thanks to **Sewing for Babies** who provided clothing, blankets, and crib sheets. The residents of **Elizabeth Stabler** and parents of children at **Stepping Stones Daycare** pulled together items to keep shelter residents clean and warm. **Thrivent Financial for Lutherans** made blankets and put together emergency kits for women and children.

Volunteers from Ameritas Law Department made over a living room at one of our shelters. It is now warm and welcome for families in crisis.

Many special fundraisers were held for Friendship Home over the past few



Western Pride 4-H Club

months. **Megan Kaup** and her friends were 'Swimsuit Santas,' trekking through downtown Lincoln in just their swimsuits and santa hats collecting for the shelters. **Alpha Chi Omega** held their annual 'Chip-n-Dip' fundraiser with great success. **Northeast United Church of Christ Women's Fellowship** held a brunch to benefit women and children. **Laurie McClain** filled the basement of **CGS Music** at her benefit concert for the shelter. Sweet treats were the focus at the **Sprague Bar and Grill's** annual Cake Auction. Proceeds from the auction were donated to Friendship Home. A percentage of profits from the **Lincoln Journal Star's Today's Deal** came to Friendship Home in January. **Hope Reformed Church** held a year long fundraiser, Cup of Hope, with proceeds benefitting Lincoln's specialized domestic violence shelter.

Megan Kaup & the Swimsuit Santas





Sincere Thanks to Our Donors

Friendship Home thanks its contributors for their generosity. The following list reflects contributions of \$100 or more between November 11, 2010 and January 31, 2011. All donations help provide safe shelter, support, advocacy and comprehensive services for battered women and their children. Contact the Development Office at 402.434.0163 or by email to taras@friendshiphome.org with any questions or concerns.

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stuff the bus



April 15, 16, and 17!

Stuff the Bus, Friendship Home's annual collaboration with StarTran, will be held April 15, 16, and 17 at all Lincoln Wal-Marts and Sam's Club. Come help us stuff four city buses with new items to be used by women and children who often come to Friendship Home with nothing but the clothes they are wearing. Items purchased at Stuff the Bus will help these families live safely. Friendship Home is looking for volunteers to help with the event. If you'd like to volunteer your time, contact Tracy at 434-0167 or tracyh@friendshiphome.org to sign up. Tune into the Stuff the Bus action at Three Eagle's Stations: 106.3 KFRX, KFOR 1240 AM, ESPN Radio 1480, 104.1 the Blaze, KX 96.9, and The Eagle 92.9.



Carol and Mick from
KX 96.9 help stuff the
Bus in 2010

Biding Her Time

(continued from cover)

They problem solved obstacles and what Allison needed to do to stay safe. Michell knew about all sorts of community resources Allison hadn't known existed.

After checking in almost daily with the shelter staff, one day Allison made a second call, she said Brian told her he'd bought a gun to protect them. Understanding the serious safety risk to Allison, the Advocate on the other end of the line made arrangements for immediate safe shelter with another domestic violence program outside of Lincoln, while arranging for her to come into Friendship Home within a few days.

Because Allison had met, or at least spoken with, so many staff members at Friendship Home, her stay in shelter was shorter and highly productive. She had already made connections with many of the resources she would need to accomplish her goals while waiting for space to open up. While in shelter she met and shared with other women who knew what she was experiencing. Allison was able to move out on her own in a few weeks time, freeing space for someone else who was waiting, planning, hoping for a new life.

Looking back, Allison realizes that the "waiting list" wasn't so much about waiting as it was about planning for her future. Talking with the staff almost daily reaffirmed her decision to leave. It helped her to be level-headed, make smart decisions, stay safe and eventually, be free.

