

Fall 2005

Dear Friend of Family Renewal Shelter,

What is your life? It is even "a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." (New American Standard Bible, James 4:14)

Recent events in our country and the rest of the world have reminded us of the fragility and unpredictability of life. In a moment lives and even countries can be forever changed. Many schools, businesses, and homes that took a lifetime to create were gone in a moment. Many lost loved ones who can never be replaced. The tragedy and loss brought by natural disaster or a terrorist attack bring out the worst and the best in our race. These fiery trials test us and if we are paying attention can make us better and stronger.

When confronting human suffering I've often asked God why He allows these things that are so hard to understand. I believe His reply is that without suffering and need we would never learn compassion. Often we are called to be strong to bear the burdens of the weak and not just please ourselves. When we practice compassion we learn what it really means, that it is better to give than to receive. Our hearts, wallets and time should be moved to help others at such a time as this when the needs are so great in so many places.

We know what it is to work with victims who have lost everything. When a family comes to our shelter, often the only thing that they have left is their lives, plus they have someone after them that wants to take that away. Thankfully with God's help and yours we have been able to meet the crisis and long term needs of many families looking for the life they want to live.

I also want to share some exciting news about a great new opportunity we have to dramatically increase our ministry's capacity to serve others.

We are currently in talks to acquire new housing units for our transitional housing program that will allow us to help more families on a much longer basis to become employed, obtain education, stabilize their children's lives and become productive and independent members of our community.

Coming out of danger and crisis is just the first step in creating a positive life plan in a pretty negative world. Those who succeed are usually those who have others walking beside them for a while until they are established. That's what we hope to accomplish in this new expansion. We are going to need a lot of support to achieve this new goal and frankly we need to ask you if you can please help us now. **It has been a very tough year financially and we are going into the holidays with a large budget deficit.** We won't be able to add the much needed staff and pay for our ongoing shelter expenses, let alone increase capacity by expanding without the generous support of those who believe in our mission of bringing healing hope to victims of domestic violence.

Will you please be one of those who will help us at this critical time? Will you please send the most generous donation possible? Will you please consider pledging a specific amount each month for 2006? Will you please pray that we will faithfully and wisely follow God's direction on how to do the best job possible to reach the most people possible? Will you consider making a difference as a volunteer?

Thanks so much for all you have done to bring us to this point and for what you will do to help us take the next steps forward. May God richly bless you with a wonderful Thanksgiving. May we all remember how much we have to be thankful for.

We are thankful for you!

With much gratitude,

Keith Galbraith
Executive Director, Family Renewal Shelter

It's Harvest Time!

Fall is upon us here at Family Renewal Shelter and this year especially "Harvest Time" is a fitting description. All summer long and into the fall, we have been enjoying the produce and bounty of the shelter's first garden! We broke ground in late spring, immediately set to work digging, measuring, plotting and planting rows of salad, squash, tomatoes, beets, carrots, cucumbers, cabbage, pumpkins and of course corn (which I have to say is delicious!)

It has been wonderfully therapeutic for the children and their mothers throughout this entire process and so rewarding for some of them to be able to enjoy going out to our big garden to harvest a basketful and then prepare and eat it for dinner! What a fresh blessing.

Children and adults alike here at the shelter have helped from planting to harvesting but this garden has been the project of one very special volunteer. Heartfelt thanks to Mrs. Becky Ratcliffe, WSU Master Gardener, for being here from the first shovelful of dirt to the first ripe tomato! You were so invaluable to this project and we appreciate you!

Next year we'll take over more ground.

Have a great Thanksgiving!

Juliana, House Manager

Congratulations to long time Family Renewal Shelter volunteer, Fifi Peterson, who was honored as a Hometown Hero at the Puyallup Fair in September. Fifi is one of our heroes who really deserves this honor!

To Family Renewal Shelter (Continued from outside)

My child was five months old when I entered the shelter. Thankfully, you had every possible accessory that was necessary for a child. It was like being at home. The workers felt like family. During this extremely difficult period of my life, you helped me to feel loved and safe. Which was something that I needed desperately at that time.

Your organization went above and beyond in tangible items also. You helped with food, clothes, toiletries, toys, and tickets for functions in the community. The program has many activities that were beneficial to the women and their children, including self-defense classes, counseling, one on one and group. I especially enjoyed Bible study. With your help I became enrolled in the Address Confidentiality Program. I also greatly appreciate the help you gave me with maintaining and repairing my car. You moved me into your transitional housing program and further helped me to get my own place. The staff of FRS gave me the education needed to get thru this stressful aspect of my life.

Everything you did was to help me and my child. I can't emphasize enough how thankful I am that you are here for families like myself. I wouldn't be where I am in life without your organization.

Thank you so much for everything you do. You are truly gifts from God.

Sincerely,

Stacy

Greetings!

The Family Renewal Shelter gave me the open door to a new beginning. I arrived in Washington from a southern state, 12:00 a.m. at Tacoma's bus station. I didn't have any more money and I had my four small children with me. I called the Family Renewal Shelter. We were provided transportation, by taxi, to a motel room. This was all done within an hour after the initial call. My family received comfortable shelter, food, and clothing. I communicated our needs and we were helped abundantly. The shelter even blessed us with a car! We have transitioned with great success. The children are doing great in school and I will soon begin an Associate degree program. Thanks to the Family Renewal Shelter.

Joanne



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Many Reasons to Give Thanks

To Family Renewal Shelter,

I am writing a letter of appreciation for your organization. Family Renewal Shelter has provided me, above and beyond, with services needed to keep my child and myself safe. If it weren't for your dedication to abused women and children, I would not be where I am in life today. Your shelter was the only place I could go. You provided me with a safe house to live in. Family Renewal Shelter was there for me when I couldn't get help from anyone. By the time I left the FBI was involved in my case. It is because of Family Renewal Shelter that I have my child and we are alive. (Continued inside on page 1)

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