

# BETHANY



# HOUSE



CHRISTMAS EDITION 2004

PROVIDING A LOVING HOME AND SERVICES FOR SINGLE PREGNANT YOUNG WOMEN



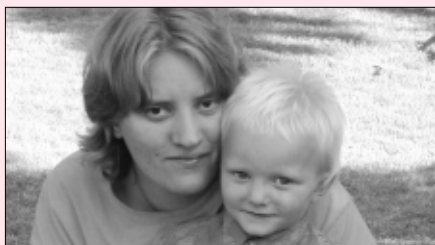
## Introducing Sharon Ernst, Our Interim House Mother

When I was a little girl and thought of what I wanted to be when I grew up all I wanted was to be a mom. As do most kids that come from a stable home. I thought my mom was the best in the world and I wanted to grow up to be just like her. I don't know that I am just like her, but I know she passed on a wonderful example by her loving, caring, and giving ways. As a young mother, when I was swamped in the daily bog of dirty dishes, diapers, heaps of laundry and gooey little fingers, I questioned

the significance of the often mundane job of being a full time stay at home mom. At that stage of the game, I wondered how much impact my job had when looking at the big scheme of things. Not only did the daily routine of motherhood have few rewards, but the message of the day was, stay at home moms were somehow unimportant, unintelligent, boring creatures that had little to share, and certainly nothing to talk about in social settings.

The greatest blessing in my life is my 4 children and 2 grandchildren. They are

some of the finest people I have ever had the privilege of knowing and I am so proud of each one of them. Who they are is what has made all the dirty diapers and plain hard work all more than worth it. Now I am blessed with getting to know the young women who have made some courageous decisions in regards to their unborn child. I hope to share with them and for the others who come along while I'm here what God has done in my life and pass along whatever I can that might make their road a little easier. -Sharon



# Victoria's Update

I grew up in a very unhealthy family where there was a lot of drinking and drugs. My father died before I was born. I was taken out of my mother's home when I was 9 and was moved from one home to another. I was molested and abused for many years and became a very depressed child. I was returned to my mother when I was 13 and my life just got worse. She was drinking heavily and coming home with men I didn't know. When I couldn't stand it anymore I ran to the streets and did drugs and drank alcohol in order to forget my problems or so I thought. I was getting into street fights, doing acid and had thoughts of suicide, just trying to abandon my life in any way possible. At age 17 I got off the streets and found out that I was 2 months pregnant. I told the father of the baby and he asked me to get an abortion. I said no and shortly after that I landed in the hospital with an asthma attack. A case-worker was brought in from OHSU and gave me some advice about my options. One of the options was Bethany House and after hearing about the home I knew right away I wanted to have an interview. When I walked into Bethany House, to my amazement, the house was clean, organized, roomy and feminine. I was accepted into the program and the day I entered my room there was a vase of flowers and a balloon that said, "I love you", and "we understand". My biggest surprise was how kind everyone was, in an unconditional way. It was family, something I had never had. I had a very low trust factor with people but the staff and other girls living in the home understood this, because they had experienced it themselves. My first days at Bethany House I was very insecure and spent my time hiding in a hole and acting like someone I was not. Bethany House showed me that life isn't as "screwed up" as my past had taught me it was. They also taught me that a mother is someone who really cares and will go so far as to give her child a better chance at life through adoption.

Everyone at Bethany House showed me I could have a life that involved God and a loving family. They showed me that I can change my life around 180 degrees, if I just believed and that is what I have done!!

After being off the streets for about a year I met my future hus-



band through friends. He heard me giggle and was hooked. After knowing each other for 2+ years we were married on Sept 25<sup>th</sup> in the backyard of his grandparent's home. The first call I made was to my family at Bethany House and Beth, the Director, took my wedding pictures. Even after this long they are still my biggest supporters. Thank you all for supporting this home. You saved my life!  
-Victoria



Dear Faithful Friend,

Many of you have already received this letter and we thank you so much for the support and prayers you have provided for the ministry of Bethany House! Without you, many young women would have been without hope in a crucial time of their lives and many beautiful children would have come into this world unwanted and unloved. It is entirely possible that some may not have come into this world at all, a casualty of the war for this generation. May God continue to richly bless you and your family for the generosity you have shown in reaching out to others in need.

You may be aware that Bethany House, like many ministries, is solely dependent on partners, community and local church support. Also, like many ministries, we have seen a large decline in one time and monthly financial donors. The board of directors has decided not to be complacent as a result of this decline. Instead, the board is choosing to be obedient to the direction that Bethany House has been called. As a result, many changes have occurred. Some changes include the base of young women being reached, the preparation for future plans with an after care facility and sadly to say, the cancellation of this years banquet. As I am sure you realize, without the banquet and with a decline in donations, Bethany House is at a very critical point in time. The future looks promising as long as the funding is there. The current year of giving is down by over \$27,000. There is a lot of work going into expanding the financial options for the ministry. There has been substantial development in efforts to write and request grants. New board members and advisors have opened up options for new and exciting fundraising.

Speaking as a long term supporter and President of the Bethany House Board of Directors, we need your help. The board will be meeting again soon to decide the future of Bethany House. Though it is difficult to imagine, Bethany House cannot continue at the rate it is going. The financial deficit needs to be made up soon. The last resort would be to close the doors on the ministry, and consequently close the doors on those young women needing help. Rather than considering that an option, we are choosing to prayerfully send you this letter and ask for your help. Please consider sending a financial gift to Bethany House. We believe the Lord will open the floodgates to provide if all of us will pray, listen and obey. Together we can look forward to another 14 years of reaching the young women in our communities.

Please pray for the Bethany House ministry, for its Director Beth, for the Board of Directors and most of all for the young women who are at the house and who are yet to come. Thank you, in advance, for your prayers and gifts

Sincerely,



Brian Vroom, DC Board President



## MEET OUR NEWEST RESIDENTS

Sarah, comes to us from Port Angeles, WA where she was living with her mother in a very small trailer when she realized she would have to remove herself from that environment in order to make a home for her unborn child. She is due on November 20, so by the time you receive this newsletter there will be a new addition to the Bethany House family. Sarah is taking her GED classes and will resume after the birth of her child. She will continue to live at Bethany House for three months as she learns how to be a new mom.

Ilia, was living in a very stressful environment when the depression she already struggled with became worse. While staying with friends, she was trying to find a permanent home through the duration of her pregnancy. When she found Bethany House, her search was over. Ilia is taking college courses in Psychology and Math at Mt. Hood Community College. Her goal is to become a Certified Public Accountant and she is very determined to reach this goal. She is the head of her class with all A's and we are very proud of her. Thank you to Wood Village Baptist Church for their generosity in offering her a term of college.

Both of these young women, pictured on the front page, have made the hard choice to leave the birthfathers and not follow their lifestyles. These are hard choices but right ones.

Bethany House was invited along with the Mayor of Gresham on October 15<sup>th</sup> to cut the ribbon for the grand opening for the new Applebee's restaurant in Gresham. The event was hosted by Craig Eakins, General Manager & Dale Simonton Area Director and Jennifer Boutin Regional Marketing Manager. A donation of \$5.00 was requested at the door with proceeds benefiting Bethany House along with donation envelopes on each table, Applebee's presented Bethany House with a check for \$1,887.00. We thank the many members of the community and Applebee's for choosing Bethany House for the recipient of this fundraiser.

Dave Arthur from 104.1 the Fish, Georgene Rice from 93.7 KPDQ and past Blazer, Steve Johnson joined Weston Pontiac, a long time supporter of Bethany House. Many came to try their hand at shooting a basketball in the sunroof of a new car on the show room floor and walked away with an awesome prize donated by one of these many businesses in the community. Applebee's Fritz Engdall



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# A SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you so much for blessing us: Ernst Manufacturing donated a brand new computer, screen and printer for the office at Bethany House and the Boeing Employee Good Neighbor Fund donated \$2,000 for our new family room furniture. We also want to thank Camera Connection of Gresham for all the film and developing, which makes it possible to take all the pictures for our newsletters. We appreciate your generosity and wish you and your families a very Happy Holiday Season.



## Bethany House

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Change Service Required

