



Dear Friends of Birthright,

January 2006! How far we've come as an organization and as a presence in the Fredericksburg area! In 1976, a few good souls knew that to combat the "choice of abortion" another choice needed to be made available to women in our community facing an unplanned pregnancy. They simply asked, "How can we help you have your baby?" And so began the quiet, purposeful presence of Birthright of Fredericksburg!

Thirty years later, we have just completed a record year both in terms of donations, and in women served by Birthright. It's hard to imagine providing over 1,000 pregnancy tests in 2005 with a volunteer-only staff working 23 hours each week!

We also faced many very difficult situations — true pregnancy crises. Your very generous donations allowed BR to provide needed services to women seeking our assistance and so by serving mothers, we served their unborn babies. As a result, many women considering abortions did choose life.

In addition, the call for more volunteers was met!!! We are now blessed with many new, talented and enthusiastic volunteers — a new spark of energy as we look ahead to 2006.

Our 2006 goal is to increase networking with community resources through many of the faith-based and church organizations and with Rappahannock United Way (RUW) agencies, and to develop the gifts and talents of our volunteer staff to better serve our moms, one by one.

We're often asked how we measure our success. The following is one of my favorite stories from one of our founders, Irene Hagerty. It is BR in a nutshell:

Years ago, a mother came to BR with her pregnant teenage daughter. The mother wanted her daughter to have an abortion. The embarrassment, financial responsibilities, "what would her church members think" all added up to what felt like a hopeless situation. The young woman and BR counselor were able to convince the mother that abortion was not the answer. Years later Irene ran into the mother. The mother began crying as she thanked the BR counselor for taking the time to listen to her fears and talk her through a seemingly hopeless situation. But most of all, the tears flowed as she looked at the gift of her beautiful young grandchild, the joy of her life. This is how Birthright measures success.

Let us pray for each other, that we have the courage to continue this Pro-Life work in whatever capacity we have been blessed with — one mom and one baby at a time.

*Peace and Blessings!
Donna Hart, Director*



Birthright volunteers closed out the Christmas season on January 6 with a party at the home of Maria and Dave Cackett of Spotsylvania. Spouses, Birthright boosters, and other interested folks were included in the annual celebration.

Chapter's Donations Arrive from Loyal Friends and a Stranger

Thanks to our financial angels, Birthright remained on very solid ground in 2005. To be able to do our work with women in crisis pregnancies without the fear that the wolf is at the door is such a blessing for the director and the volunteers.

Donations from individuals and organizations arrive throughout the year in various ways. Some regularly write a monthly check just as if they were sending off a mortgage payment or a utility bill. Other individuals donate to us at the end of the year or to commemorate a special occasion. Recently we were happily surprised to receive \$1000 from a young family who admires our work in the area.

Another admirer, a Missouri woman who is a complete stranger, shocked us by sending a \$500 check after being so impressed by one of our volunteers' comments in an Internet chat room that was on the subject of pro-lifers. In the letter accompanying the check, she wrote:

"She [the volunteer] wrote so enthusiastically about the work that you are doing that I wanted to be a part of it. I so admire all of you for the good work that you are doing. If only one person rethought her position on abortion, your efforts would be worthwhile. I realize that you don't 'preach' to the women, but your very work must tell them something. Your love has to be seen in the good works that are being done."

Our volunteer actually tried to talk our Midwestern contact out

of donating to us in favor of giving to a pro-life charity in her own area, but our donor was insistent. We are most grateful to her and to our web-surfing volunteer!

Our thanks to these organizations and institutions that have supported us in the second half of 2005:

- Rappahannock United Way
- Wilderness Baptist Church
- Elizabeth Program of St. Matthew Church, Spotsylvania
- St. Mary Church, Fredericksburg
- King George Church of God
- St. William of York Church, Stafford
- Council 4034, Knights of Columbus, Fredericksburg
- Beta Sigma Phi
- Xi Gamma Phi
- USMC Chaplain Fund, Quantico
- New Generation Evangelical Episcopal Church
- St. Jude Church, Spotsylvania

BIRTHRIGHT OF FREDERICKSBURG, INC.

DIRECTOR
Donna Hart

CO-PRESIDENTS
Maria Cackett • Mary Thorsted

TREASURER
Betsy Flanigan

RECORDING SECRETARY
Suzie Hayes Brown

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY
Mary Rau

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Kathleen Mahoney

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULING
Mary Thorsted

LAYETTE PREPARATION &
CLOTHES DONATIONS
*Carolyn Ayers • Linda Lee
Zoila Nulanx*

WEBMASTER
Lori Fowlkes

United Way Campaign No. 6451

Travel Tributes...

Far from home on Interstate 40 in Groom, Texas, a local volunteer spied this tribute to the unborn. The monument is part of a huge complex that features a 19 story cross, the tallest in the Western Hemisphere, which can be seen from 20 miles away.



Our Name Doesn't Tell It All

While our official title is Birthright of Fredericksburg, Inc., would you be surprised to know that our territory extends for hundreds of miles? We serve the residents of Planning District 16 which includes, in addition to the City of Fredericksburg, the counties of Stafford, Spotsylvania, King George, and Caroline. We also occasionally receive calls from the Northern Neck, Richmond, Orange, and Culpeper.

Birthright International in Atlanta operates a 24-hour phone service which provides a caring listener to anyone who calls for help with a crisis pregnancy. Callers are sometimes seeking general information about Birthright or are using the 800 Center when they find their local Birthright office closed for the day. As a result of these inquiries to the Atlanta hotline, local chapters like ours receive referrals by mail for follow up. At the end of 2005, we in Fredericksburg had closed out about 125 referrals from Atlanta.

Some callers, however, are in desperate situations, and then the 800 operator calls one of the local volunteers for immediate action. Such was a recent case involving a young woman, Norma*, from Lynchburg. Volunteer Maureen* [*both names are pseudonyms] received the alert and was informed that Norma, a college freshman, was a rape victim who turned out later to be pregnant.

Norma had tried to handle the rape all by herself and had told no one, including the police. She had attempted suicide but it was



unsuccessful. After a medical exam some weeks later, the college student found out about the pregnancy. Realizing she could not keep the rape and now the pregnancy to herself anymore, Norma called the Virginia Sexual Assault Hotline which in turn gave her the Birthright 800 number. And with their call to Maureen, our local involvement began.

Ordinarily, we would try to get our caller to come to the office for face to face counseling, but this was impossible because of the

distance of about 135 miles. In a series of phone calls, however, Maureen was able to establish a relationship as a friend, listener, and advisor. She made suggestions about informing Norma's parents, taking legal action, and continuing her education.

They also talked about the options of parenting or placing for adoption. When the young woman finally decided that she would keep her baby, our volunteer mailed her a box which included a handmade baby afghan and matching hat which Maureen had crocheted.

Our legal name, Birthright of Fredericksburg, Inc., conjures up an image of a laid-back, sleepy little office. Now you know the rest of the story and a lot more about the scope of our services.

Training Pays Off!

Our volunteer recruiting drive and training sessions were a huge success this past September. Among the new volunteers are (L to R) Celina Cook, Mary Bostain, and Xiomara Perez.



To Remember and Honor Those We Love

You can remember those you love with a tax-deductible donation to Birthright of Fredericksburg, Inc. We will mail a special note to the person you designate. Simply use this form to make this special donation:

Special Birthright Donation

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

Designate the person you would like a special note sent to here:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

We Need Your Support

Birthright is a non-profit, charitable organization supported by contributions. We are exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code, and all donations are tax deductible. We are independent, non-political, and non-sectarian. We're committed to help women in crisis, single or married, regardless of age, race or religion.

- I would like to train as a Birthright counselor. Call me!*
- I do not want to do counseling but can serve in some other capacity like office work, clothes sorting, fund raising, planning our 30th anniversary celebration.*
- I cannot volunteer at this time, but here's my donation for charitable works.*

Name _____ Phone _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____



**Donations
Received
In Memory of ...**

John & Mary Grogan
John Cunningham

Need a Speaker?

Birthright's Speakers Bureau will be happy to deliver a presentation for your school, church, or civic group. Call our office for more information or to schedule a speaker for your special event.



It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born.