



## Newsletter - January-March 2008

# Choices

Step by Step signed a contract with Pre-Trial Diversion to offer our workshops twice a week to women in their program. These are women who are waiting to go to trial or be sentenced or released. Women in limbo.

One of the issues is that the turnover is very rapid so our eight week workshops were not appropriate, even when offered twice a week. Another issue is that the women are mandated into the workshops so they have what you might call attitude.

Things did not go well for several weeks, so I wrote a new manual for Pre-Trial called Choices in which the emphasis is on what choices do you have when you don't have any choice. There are twelve sessions and each one stands alone so having new people in the group is not a problem. Then we sent Margy in with the facilitators so they could learn how to work with resistant groups. In three weeks, we went from 1 or 2 women in a group to 8 to 12 women.

What makes Step by Step different is that we didn't just write the women off as unworkable, but adjusted our program to better meet their needs, without ever lowering our standards. That's what makes Step by Step unique.

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*We have a special request that you not drop off any more donations, especially clothes, magazines and calendars. We appreciate your generosity but we have run out of storage room.*

# 15th Anniversary Celebration:

Since this is Step by Step's 15th year, we decided to celebrate this in 15 ways! Some big and some small. The first ten items are:

1. **Our first annual report\***
2. **A new logo\***
3. **Redesigned brochure\***
4. **Redesigned website**
5. **Open House on May 14th**
6. **Guest Speaker at Open House\***
7. **OpEd piece for D&C**
8. **TV news items**
9. **Volunteer Appreciation**
10. **Staff Appreciation Lunch\*** (Liz Schnucker put on a wonderful luncheon in February at the Step by Step 'Grand Ballroom' complete with flowers, tablecloths and a gift for each staff person. The food was wonderful and we are glad because there was enough to feed us for the next several days! Except for the desserts which we polished off in two days. Thank you, Liz. It was very sweet.)

The other five will be later in the year and we will keep you informed as they develop. There are many exciting ideas being tossed around: garden parties, art shows, books, etc. Stay tuned. (If you want to help develop some of these ideas, call Margy at 224-0763 x202.) Bill Watson is leading this effort and we are thankful for the energy and enthusiasm he is bringing to the table.

\*already accomplished.

**Staff News:** As we reported in our last newsletter, Jo-Z retired in order to take a less stressful job (I can relate so I have applied at Burger King) and at the same time, Crystal left to take a higher paying job (I can relate so I have applied at Burger King). We have two new employees: **Lelia Jackson** and **Karen Lee**, who are rapidly assuming their job responsibilities and lightening the load for the rest of the staff. We are very pleased to welcome both of them to Step by Step.



Please welcome Karen Lee who is facilitating workshops at Pre-Trial and providing case management at MCF.

Karen graduated from Keuka College and has worked in various social service agencies in the city. She is a great addition to our staff and keeps us laughing.



Lelia Jackson comes to us from the Urban League. She is the new Family Empowerment Coordinator at the Susan B. Anthony Transitional Housing program on Central Park. She is offering workshops at Restart and fascinates us with her various hairstyles. She too can make us laugh.

**Intern:** Anne Abrahams is our intern this semester.

*My name is Anne Abraham. I am a BSW student from Nazareth College. In this, my last semester, I am spending 32 hours a week at Step By Step hoping to learn from both the staff and the clients how to better serve marginalized women. I am planning to go on to either the University of Rochester for an MPH or to the University of Buffalo for an MSW.*

The month of February was spent writing a National Institute of Justice research grant in partnership with the UR. Anne was a life saver because she wrote the literature review for the grant and did an excellent job of it. Made the rest of it almost easy! She has also joined Katie and me in meetings at the Department of Public Health to explore developing a SAMHSA grant for working with women in prostitution. Welcome, Anne!

**New Logo:** Part of the work of the PR committee was to redesign our logo and write a new brochure. We used the new logo on our annual report. Since we have a lot of letterhead and envelopes with our old logo on it, we are holding back on using the new logo and brochure for a few months. We are very grateful to **Michelle Cardella** who designed the logo and the brochure and was **very** patient with us as we made change after change after change ad infinitum.

## Speaking Engagements:

**Previous:**

Greece Baptist Church	Jan. 27
Christ the King Church	Feb. 1
Asbury First Methodist	Feb. 10
Greece United Methodist	March 9
St. John Fisher College	March 11
Retired Professionals Society	March 12

**Future:**

Bethany Presbyterian	April 8
PEO	April 11

# Annual Report

We have gotten a lot of positive feedback on our first annual report. The committee consisted of **Peter Shaw** (who is very demanding in a very quiet way – it is fascinating to watch how he gets things done!), **Rita Metras**, **Pattie McCarthy**, **Brad Cottier** and **Pat Merle**, all of whom worked long and hard to put this together. We were greatly assisted by **Donna Jackel** who interviewed women and wrote their stories and **Mary McCarthy** who took the photos. We are indebted to **Brad Amedeo** at Minute Man Press who donated the services of his graphic designer, **Becky Jones** and then worked all weekend to get the report printed.

If you read the report and said, “But I gave \$5,000 and it’s not even listed!”, please understand that being our first report it took us several months to get it out. The report only covers our Fiscal Year 2007 which ended September 30th of 2007. So if you sent in your \$5,000 in October it will be duly noted in our NEXT report that hopefully we will get out before Christmas this year, now that we have some practice in putting a report together. (PLEASE do not take the amount mentioned above as a directive or even a hint. We do accept donations of less than \$5,000.)

The other part of the report that we want to clarify is that space issues made us unable to name every single volunteer, even though Step by Step is so dependent on your work, so we made the difficult decision to list volunteers who helped at our fundraisers as a group rather than individually.

## Financial Support

- **Computers:** Last month we received \$5,000 from the **Davenport-Hatch Foundation** to upgrade our computer system, a sorely needed priority. **Rich Mathner** was a faithful IT volunteer for many years and helped us do our work with old, outmoded equipment, for which we have always been very appreciative. The Board decided that we have grown to the point where we need to do some serious renovations of our IT system and that would mean paying for it (a new experience for us!). The first task was to choose an IT company. Because I belong to COAE (Council of Agency Executives) I emailed them for advice and got at least 10 recommendations. I interviewed three which I decided is like interviewing brain surgeons to decide who would be best to remove my tumor. What are the criteria I should use? But even I could figure out that if they are all highly recommended and offering similar proposals, the one charging \$60 an hour will win out over the one charging \$100 an hour, so we contracted with CIS from the AI Sigl Center. Their main focus has been security issues so they’ve done a lot with our server and back ups and other things that of course none of us care about until something goes wrong. We have two new computers and have added memory to the others. Next they are going to set up our permissions on the server so that we can exchange files etc. It’s a relief to have IT support just a phone call away all day long.
- We have received \$10,000 from the **Rochester Area Community Foundation** to support our Mothering from Prison program at Albion. We are very grateful to the Foundation for supporting us so generously over our 15 years of existence. They have been an integral part of our success by their faith in us.
- We got a check from **Zonta** for \$1,000 to support our Goals and Transition workshop.
- We were informed that we will be receiving \$1500 from **SEFA** in the next year (United Way for state employees). This is a big jump from last year.

## Contact Information

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The mission of Step by Step is to assist women who are, have been or are at risk of being incarcerated to claim their gifts and strengths as the foundation on which to rebuild their lives.

# *Mark your calendar!*

## **Open House to celebrate 15 years of growth**

**When:** Wednesday, May 14th  
**Where:** Step by Step offices  
**Time:** 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Elaine Spaul will speak on "One Woman at a Time" at 5:45 pm. Elaine is the Executive Director of Center for Youth Services, City Councilwoman for the 23rd District, teaches at the U. of Buffalo Law School and was a lawyer at Nixon Peabody.



*Raffle:  
15 (of course!) baskets of various themes:  
wine, chocolate, etc.*

*Appetizers, desserts and beverages.*

Come tour our offices, meet staff and volunteers, hear Elaine speak, bid on a basket, and have some finger food and a cup of punch, tea or coffee.