THE AVERAGE PERSON SPENDS 365 HOURS A MONTH AT HOME -

Imagine...

WHAT IT’S LIKE NOT TO HAVE ONE.
Sister Says . . .

The revitalized Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has been signed into law. This is a victory for all women, particularly those who have been victims of domestic violence, and it speaks loudly of our country’s efforts toward true equality. We are a better nation for it.

However, there are many kinds of violence and many degrees of abuse that quietly fall outside a sweeping law like VAWA. There is a subtle, painful violence waged against a particularly vulnerable group of women—Homeless women—and their children. National statistics on abuse within the homeless community are staggering and local statistics are no less appalling. 92% of Homeless women have been severely assaulted (physically or sexually) at some point in their lives, and 43% of these women were sexually molested as children. 66% of Homeless women were abused by a caretaker or other adult in their household before reaching age 18, and 63% have been violently abused by an intimate partner.

And the children of the women? Homeless children suffer from emotional and behavioral problems that affect learning at almost three times the rate of other children. 62% of Homeless children have been exposed to violence and for children over 12 years, the rate climbs to 83%. Homeless children struggle with high rates of mental health problems: 47% of them, compared to 18% of other school-age children.

The crisis of homelessness is both debilitating and overwhelming. Those struggling with this crisis are often forced to do so while experiencing the pain and scars of the many forms of violence imposed by our society. Bethany House stands with these women and children and offers them a safe haven and the security and comfort they so sorely need. We cannot do everything, but we can all do something to end this vicious cycle of violence against the most vulnerable of our society—Homeless women and their children. To borrow a commonly-used phrase: If you see something, say something.

Sister Aimée

What’s in a Word: Imagine

Imagine: to create within our mind, to conceive an idea; the first step in the process of transforming a thought or a dream into a reality.

Sometimes we stop this process at imagining... often when we realize that the reality would be too painful to call into being. But sometimes we need to force ourselves to walk through the process and experience the impending pain.

The average person spends 365 hours a month at home—imagine what it’s like not to have one. This thought usually stops at the imagining stage for us—we have been so blessed! But for thousands of New Yorkers, thousands of Long Islanders, it is now a stark reality: Sandy has changed their lives profoundly, and the pain is deep and real.

Those who were rendered homeless by Sandy have now begun, like the homeless of Bethany, to rebuild their lives, quiet their fears, and restore their dignity as they slowly move back into their former level of comfort and familiar security. We need to be there for them during these times and we need to help them imagine again, without fear, the wonders of this, our world.

And so, let us imagine an ever better world for tomorrow: a world where everyone has a place at the table and everyone has a place to call home. And, let us decide to transform this thought into a reality for all as together we Imagine.

Random Acts of Kindness

During Lent last year, Caroline Karolewicz and her husband, Stan, attended a Soup and Bread Supper at their parish. Featured speakers were Sister Aimée who spoke about Bethany House and Juanita, a former resident, who talked about her experience of homelessness, her time at Bethany, and the success she has had since that time.

Juanita asked the audience to take out their house key, look at it and realize how lucky and blessed they were to be connected to a home. She revealed it took her 2 to 3 years to transition into a job, get a key to her own house, and reunite with all her children.

Caroline, a real estate agent in Plainview, said there was not a dry eye in the audience and that everyone that evening signed up to help Bethany in some way.

Caroline immediately offered to do secretarial work, but the Bethany staff asked if she would be willing to provide a dish for their Italian Night at Bethany South. So every Wednesday evening since then, Caroline comes with a delicious pan of vegetable lasagna or penne or meatballs for the families that reside at the Prospect Street house in Baldwin. She stays and talks with the mothers and offers some support. “You hear stories that could break your heart,” she says.

Caroline’s whole family believes in helping others. Stan, her husband of 20 years, drives The Hope Mobile at their church, transporting those parishioners (mostly elderly) who are unable to find other means to attend church on Sundays. And their 16 year old son, Adam, volunteers at Mercy Medical Center as well as a local EMS center.

Thank you, Caroline, for giving us your time, your wonderful homemade Italian dinners, and your warm words of encouragement to our young mothers and their children at Bethany South. We most sincerely appreciate your faithful and loving RANDOM ACTS of KINDNESS!
**Kids Who Care** is a six-week program designed to raise awareness of hunger and homelessness here on Long Island as well as to generate funds for Bethany House. This program was created by Bethany staff and was very popular during the 1990s. We have revived it now to assist us in raising needed funds that have been lost due to the severe cutbacks that have placed our work in such great jeopardy. The program consists of activities geared to children whereby they can become more involved with the needs of others in their communities. We will also have a speaker go to a group to talk about Bethany House and homelessness and to ask the group for their help. [A script will be provided for speakers, and we welcome volunteers to help with this part.]

The age group for the **Kids Who Care Program** is 6–11 years old. Possible Groups who might implement this program are: Grade school children, Brownie or Girl Scout Troops, Cub Scout or Boy Scout Troops, and Religious Education classes from various churches. **If you know any groups that might be interested, please call Georgia at [516] 546-7970.**

Participants will receive a tee-shirt with our special logo and, at the end of program a pencil case with some useful items, all with logo. They will also receive a cardboard bank shaped like a house with the logo and other Bethany House info. These banks will be used to collect funds for our homeless children, and at end of the six-week program, they will be collected and there will be a special prize for the child who collected the most money.

The **Kids Who Care** also receive a list of activities from which they can choose. These activities provide a variety of projects to help raise their awareness as well as offer opportunities to raise funds for Bethany. A few samples of the activities are:

1. Collect deposit cans and bottles. Turn them in for the deposit and put the money in your bank. (You could ask neighbors to give you their empty cans and bottles, also.)
2. Ask your family to go without dessert for one night and put the money saved into your bank.
3. Arrange to do some extra chores around the house to earn some extra money for homeless and hungry kids.
4. Keep your bank in a place where everyone who comes to visit your house will see it. Explain why it is there and ask your friends and relatives to help you with your efforts to feed hungry kids and provide them with safe, warm shelter.

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**Thank you, Jessie!**

Some people pass through our lives unnoticed; others leave a deep impression. **Jessie Fentnor** is one of the special and unique “others.” For the past seven years, Jessie has been the editor and moving force behind our newsletter, and has brought **Turning Point** to a new level so that it serves as a source of information for all of us as well as a vehicle of advocacy for our homeless families, especially our children.

Jessie has retired now saying, “I want to do something different in my 80th year.” We most certainly will miss her insights, her thought-provoking articles, and her unique, rich writing style. **Jane McCabe**, who has been a professional editor for many years, has offered to take on the editorship of **Turning Point** for us. We welcome Jane and thank her for her willingness to fill the shoes of a true giant!

We thank you, Jessie, and want you to know that your help and support during these last seven years have meant much more than words can adequately express.

We hope that you now can enjoy reading **Turning Point** as much as we have enjoyed your writing it!
Bethany House
requests your help in assisting the homeless
women and children of Long Island.

The average person spends 365 hours a month at home -

Imagine what it’s like not to have one.

Today, homelessness is a harsh reality for tens of thousands of
Long Islanders - and more than half of them are children.

Join Bethany House in our efforts to change this reality -

A $10 donation will provide after School Snacks for little children.
A $15 donation will provide coloring books for weekend activities.
A $20 donation will provide school lunch for homeless children.
A $25 donation will provide a new warm sweater for Mom.
A $50 donation will provide blankets for a needy family.
A $100 donation will provide dinner for all our guests at one of Bethany’s houses!

Yes! I want to help Bethany House to provide for the needs of homeless children and their Moms. Enclosed is my Donation for: $ ________________ (you can also donate through our website: www.bhny.org)

First Name: ___________________________ Last Name: ___________________________
Address: _____________________________ City: _______________ State: _____ Zip: ________
Phone: _____________________________ Email: ______________________________________

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to BETHANY HOUSE and mail it in the enclosed envelope. Thank You so much!

“Unless someone like YOU cares a whole, awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” ~Dr. Seuss
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It seems that Rob Pollifrone has been involved with Bethany House since he was a teen. A good friend of Brian Koonmen, who works at Bethany House, Rob would join Brian in doing odd jobs for the houses such as painting and installing fences. “Sister Aimee took care of us,” he said, and would reward them for their help with a little money for the movies. When Bethany House needed a tile installation, Sister Aimee contracted with Rob’s father who at that time needed the work. “You don’t forget when people help you,” said Rob.

Now, as in the past, Rob has been a strong supporter of Bethany House. At both his popular seafood restaurants, Buoy One in Riverhead and Westhampton, signage tells the patrons about Bethany: on the menus, on table tents, and at the hostess station, there are donation promotions asking customers to contribute a few dollars to help Bethany’s homeless families. Children’s coloring books also speak of Bethany House. A steady stream is collected for Bethany House every month.

But Rob doesn’t stop there. Each year he donates a catered clambake for 10 for the Live Auction at Bethany’s Golf Outing which he also attends and enjoys. For the last two years, Rob’s Westhampton restaurant, Buoy One, has sponsored a dinner theatre production of The Vagina Monologues. This event supports Bethany’s work in violence against women, and Rob enlisted another close friend, Kimberly Sguazzin, to volunteer to organize the event and act in the play.

While Bethany House is surely Rob’s charity of choice, he is also very active within his restaurants’ local communities. Rob is inundated daily with requests for support from various charities and his generosity is boundless: restaurant gift certificates, platters of food and other donations are consistently given away. He also supports a local 5K Cancer Run and takes special care of local Fire Departments, among many other charities and organizations.

Rob is well known for his generosity in his local communities, and this goodness is often rewarded. A few years back when his first restaurant, the Riverhead Buoy One, caught on fire, the Fire Department responded so quickly that minimal damage happened to the building. The Fire Chief coordinated the officials of the health department, electric and gas companies to quickly inspect the restaurant so that the eatery was able to re-open within two days. Rob is still grateful to them for this hometown support.

Rob and his family started their career in the restaurant business in 2003, and this year they are celebrating their 10th anniversary. Rob’s sister, Lorraine, is co-owner and helps on the business side while her husband David Girard is the executive chef. Rob refers to David as the best chef in the world, who has shown his skills in training their 80 employees to prepare and serve quality food at reasonable prices. Rob’s new wife, Ina, while not involved directly in the restaurant, can be found bartending and serving tables when a shift needs to be covered. Within weeks, Rob and his family will be opening the third Buoy One restaurant in Huntington (Another brother-in-law is helping build), and this restaurant will also feature the donation promotion for Bethany House.

But running restaurants is not an easy or secure business. Other restaurateurs warned him a restaurant would not succeed in Riverhead: Buoy One not only thrives but is one of the most popular in the area. Even though it is built in an old body shop garage, is drafty in the winter and has no a/c in the summer, people come for the food and the warm, friendly atmosphere. The restaurant guide book, Zagat gave Buoy One high marks in food and staff.

A few years ago, Rob tells us, the restaurants were facing severe financial obstacles. Out of the blue, huge fund raisers and corporate catering jobs came in, making it possible to pay the bills and sustain these wonderful landmark restaurants. “Sister Aimee prays for me,” Rob said, “and I believe that is why we have succeeded. God gave me gifts and I’m going with it. When we were in a rough spot God opened doors for me, and I will always give back to those still struggling.”

Rob strongly believes that Bethany House is helping people by doing it the right way. “People will struggle, but with encouragement they will find their way. If you treat people like they are disadvantaged, they will remain disadvantaged – we need to give one another a way up, a way out. I believe that it all starts with family and that is why Bethany House works: Bethany welcomes struggling mothers and children and places them in a family setting where they feel safe, secure, and understood in a clean, warm house. Bethany House will help them to change their situation and they will succeed.”

Rob Pollifrone feels very strongly about taking care of people, helping them to get on their way, and seeing them succeed. We are so appreciative of all Rob’s efforts to help Bethany be an even better home for our families. Thank you for caring a whole, awful lot for all of us!

Jane McCabe
On a brisk September morning in 1978, Lucille walked into the Human Resources Center at Queen of the Most Holy Rosary Church and into my life. Lucille was our first volunteer in the newly-opened parish outreach program and, from that very first day, she was a great asset. Lucille had wonderful secretarial skills – a Katharine Gibbs graduate. She was also a whiz with numbers and could compose beautiful letters to thank our donors for their generosity. But far more, Lucille had a unique skill with people: she was strong but gentle, engaging but not intrusive, effective but not overbearing. Lucille loved people, and this special quality endeared her to all of us in the Human Resources Center.

In January of 1982, Lucille was hired at Bethany House to work with Linda Wilkonski as our House Managers. This began a thirty-year career of dedicated professional care of homeless women and their dependent children. Lucille was fondly referred to by our guests as Miss Lucille with both respect and admiration. And – her husband jokingly called her “Sister Lu” since she spent so much time with the Sisters at Bethany!

Some of our fondest memories of Lucille center on her love of cooking. As our resident Julia Child, Lucille created Bethany’s famous Coleslaw and all of us now prepare her great pot roast recipe at home. Every Sunday for so many years, Lucille prepared Bethany’s traditional Sunday dinners and all of our guests were sure to be home on time for this lovely meal because Lucille not only nourished the body but she fed the soul with her joy and warmth. Often she cooked for twenty-five or more of our guests and we never had any leftovers!

Another special memory for all of us at Bethany is our annual Tree Trimming Parties. Lucille never missed even one of the thirty-four we have celebrated, and they were made particularly memorable because every year Lucille would prepare her strawberry and lemon sherbet punch which she served in her magnificent punch bowl that was an A’Hearn family heirloom. She was so classy!

Lucille also handled all the details and problems associated with billing for reimbursement from the Department of Social Services. This was a monumental task which she performed with such patience and accuracy that we can proudly say that there was never a mistake made on our billing during the many years that Lucille was in charge.

And beyond Bethany House Lucille had a rich and full life with her dear husband Michael and their four wonderful children: Marcy, Patrick, Jimmy and Michelle. After their family was raised, Lucille and Michael enjoyed traveling and spending quality time together. In many ways they were the perfect couple, living out Browning’s phrase, “Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be . . .”

On January 3, 2013, Lucille celebrated her seventy-ninth birthday and joyfully began her eightieth year of a wonder-full and grace-filled life. The next morning, Lucille gently and gracefully went home to God. We know she is bringing joy to so many who have gone before us, but we miss her dearly. Lucille’s life will forever live on in us as we continue her legacy of love and laughter here at Bethany. Be at peace, dear friend. - Sister Aimee
Bethany House has always been able to provide our much needed services with the assistance of the generosity of the public and private sector. Due to recent Federal, State, and County budget cuts, Bethany House, now more than ever, is constantly seeking and relying on these financial gifts to fulfill our mission.

This year Bethany House has been fortunate to receive support from The Nassau Bar Association (WE CARE FUND), BJ’s Charitable Foundation, The Anthony Robbins Foundation, Newsday Charities-a McCormick Foundation Fund, among others.

These grants have allowed Bethany House to continue providing our guests with several successful programs such as: The Emergency Assistance to Families Fund, Healthy Mother Healthy Children Project, Solutions and Strategies (Computer Training), as well as supplementing revenue for the general support for daily operations.

Jose Aponte

For more info on upcoming events visit us online at | bethanyhouseny.com/events
Good to be with you again, my friends! Did you notice that I made the front page this time? Hailey and I posed for the picture together – she’s one of my best friends at Bethany. Every time she comes to visit, I get a great belly rub and usually a few treats.

I have some great news for you: I am no longer the only dog at Bethany because we now have a mascot named MacBeth. He’s a Dalmatian puppy and a really nice buddy for me except he’s not real like I am because he’s a mascot. [Actually, I’m a bit relieved because I wouldn’t want any competition for my “Top Dog” title.] MacBeth will be part of our Development team and represent Bethany House at different events. His first show is the Rockville Centre St. Patrick’s Day Parade on March 23rd, and then he’ll be heading over to Boxtown at Molloy College on April 11th.

MacBeth is looking forward to meeting all of you so be sure to watch for him. And – don’t forget to stop by and visit me, too. I miss you all!

Love to all, Shadrach xxoo