



Growing Branches

Update from *New Beginnings - A Home for Mothers*

Denver, Colorado | Summer 2011

A Unique Mother's Day

By Liz Seelow, Assistant Home Manager

Mother's Day is a special time at *New Beginnings*. It is a time for the women to truly reflect on the amazing gifts given to them by God – especially the ability to carry a human life inside of them. This year as the official holiday passes, we have a unique situation at the home. At this time, these ladies are taking varying paths of “motherhood”: two of our residents are mothering, three are pregnant and planning on mothering, and one is pregnant and planning an adoption. What a great opportunity to see firsthand the various joys that motherhood brings!

The young women of *New Beginnings* also face the challenge of deciding whether they want to pursue adoption or parenthood for their child. Both options pose a difficult decision for the residents, and the aftermath of either choice can prove more trying than what they initially expected. Thankfully, we have a God who is so supportive and comforting. He tells us, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19). He also gives the girls the encouragement – that while both decisions may be hard to handle in different ways – He will never give them more than they can handle (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Not only are the women able to recognize the various options before them as expectant mothers, they are

also given the opportunity to thank God for His many blessings. The first blessing is the ability to carry a baby. The women come to realize that while their pregnancy might have been unexpected, it is still an undeniable blessing. They realize that even if their pregnancy wasn't planned, their option to choose life proved to be the right and God-pleasing one for herself and her baby. God is indeed good! A blessing that follows this is the time, patience and means to support the child through parenting. Or through the adoption option, they can bless another family with a child! Again, God is good!

We cannot thank God enough for sending his Son Jesus to a mother – much like many of the residents at *New Beginnings*. Mary, as a single mother, trusted her Lord that He had greater plans for her through an unplanned pregnancy! During this Mother's Day, we see God's plan in every woman here at *New Beginnings*. 

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Letters From Home

When I first came to New Beginnings, I had my mind made up about giving up my daughter for adoption. As the months went on however, I began to waver on my decision. By my seventh month, I was completely torn and did not know what to do. The staff and girls at New Beginnings never pressured me in any way or forced their opinions on me. They have been such a huge loving support in my life. I was offered counseling and was able to talk and process my options with people who genuinely seemed to care about me. New Beginnings has been such a huge blessing to me during such a difficult time in my life. I have grown emotionally and spiritually since coming here, and have learned so much. I have come full circle in my decision to give my daughter a better life than I can provide at this point. I have come to this peaceful point as a result of the love and prayer that can be found at New Beginnings, and for that I will be forever grateful.



Maggie

New Additions

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Heidi Olson as *New Beginnings'* Home Manager effective July 1. She succeeds Ms. Elizabeth (Liz) Seelow in this management position. We welcome you, Heidi!

I was born in Phoenix, Arizona and have been on the go ever since. Although I have lived everywhere from Sacramento, California to Seoul, South Korea, I consider Jacksonville, Florida home. I attended the University of Florida where I received a degree in criminal justice and a lifelong appreciation for all things "Gator." During my sophomore year, I joined Pi Beta Phi sorority and served as the Vice President my senior year. It was truly a rewarding experience and a wonderful way to make lasting friendships. I graduated with a Masters in criminal justice from the University of North Florida three years

later while working for General Growth Properties as the Assistant Mall Manager at Regency Square Mall. In June of 2002, I was promoted to General Manager of Greenwood Mall in Bowling Green, Kentucky. In my free time, I enjoy singing, going to the movies, exercising and participating in or watching sports including volleyball, football, basketball, tennis and dodgeball. God willing, I will have a family of my own one day but have my hands full at the moment with my two adorably-curious cats – Pips and Lucky. I have been graciously blessed to be a WELS Lutheran my entire life – and Rock of Ages Lutheran Church in Bowling Green, Kentucky, served as my home church until my move to Colorado. I am truly looking forward to the blessings and challenges that becoming the Home Manager at *New Beginnings* will entail and am excited about embarking on this new adventure!



Heidi Olson



New Additions cont...

We welcome Linda Olson, who begins June 1 as our Volunteer House Parent at *New Beginnings*. And, yes, she is Heidi's mother.

I was born and raised in Minnesota. Upon my graduation from college with a degree in nursing and only six months of marriage, my husband and I joined the Peace Corps. We lived in British Honduras which, at that time, was working to become the independent country of Belize. After completion of our two-year tour, my husband headed into the U.S. Air Force and became a pilot flying F-4s. We lived in many places, and I personally enjoyed the travel and adventure with our four children. Throughout our travels we remained

WELS members. I recall times when our children would present the entire Christmas Eve service for the congregation! Through the years I have worked as a registered nurse in many capacities. My most recent employment involved working at a community hospice, helping overweight teens at Wellspring Camp and teaching nursing students at Virginia College. It is a privilege to have been accepted to work at *New Beginnings* as the Volunteer House Parent. What an adventure the Lord has led me to begin! 📷



Linda Olson

Goodbye Letter

NOTE: Ray and Joanne Solofra returned home to Burlington, Wisconsin, in early May after having committed to serving a three-month stint as the *New Beginnings*' volunteer house parents that lasted three years! Even in their retirement Ray and Joanne have offered to provide presentations to congregations about the *New Beginnings*' ministry. If you wish such a presentation contact the national office of Christian Life Resources.

Ray and Joanne have our heartfelt appreciation for their service to this ministry. May God continue to bless them as they enjoy time with their family and in their lifelong commitment to faithful service to the Lord in all areas.

Dear Friends of *New Beginnings*:

As we pack our bags and prepare to leave *New Beginnings* after spending the better part of three years here, Ray and I count our blessings that we were each raised in Christian homes.

We have mixed feelings before our departure: sad feelings about leaving the girls but happy feelings that the Lord chose us to teach them about their Savior.

It's sad to think mothers do not teach their daughters to be Christian wives, mothers and homemakers anymore. Being a Christian wife, mother and homemaker is an honor bestowed on us by God.

Ray and I have been privileged to show these young women how a blessed marriage works and what a beautiful thing marriage can be – in our case, 54 years of wedded bliss! We were able to show the ladies all the blessings given to us by God because we made wise choices and followed His ways – not our ways.



Joanne and Ray Solofra

As we leave we realize it is nothing we did except to “go and share the Gospel.” The Holy Spirit has done the rest!

We would also encourage everyone to volunteer or support this ministry with your gifts of love. In our case, we were able to meet so many brothers and sisters in the faith when we shared the *New Beginnings*' ministry to other WELS churches in the Colorado area. We also took the girls to meet these wonderful Christian friends. It is our prayer that these faithful people and everyone reading this letter will help support these girls, as well as the ministry of *New Beginnings*.

My final request is this: please remember these girls and their babies in your prayers and support this great ministry.

Your brother and sister in Christ,

Ray and Joanne Solofra





New Beginnings

A Ministry Sponsored by Christian Life Resources

A Home for Mothers

3070 Helsan Drive
Richfield, WI 53076-9582

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Most Needed Items at New Beginnings

- Curtains (Full-length style with tabs in a neutral color if possible [tan]. Total of 36.)
 - Pack-N-Play Sheets
 - Plastic Cups
- High Chairs for Placement on Dining Room Chairs (6)

For a complete list, go to:
www.HomeforMothers.com/pdf/wish_list.pdf

New Beginnings - A Home for Mothers is a Christ-centered home for single mothers and their children. It is affiliated with Christian Life Resources. The home has been serving residents since 1993. It is supported entirely by the generous support and prayers of those who are committed to sharing Christ and reflecting His sacrificial love.

Contact: **Ms. Heidi Olson - Home Manager**
Ms. Liz Seelow - Assistant Home Manager
Ms. Linda Olson - Volunteer House Parent

Telephone: 1-303-364-0890
1-800-720-MOMS

E-mail: info@homeformothers.com

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