



A Baby's Breath

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Join the Angel Club at www.ababysbreath.org

Dear Pro-Life Friend,

A Baby's Breath is an all volunteer, tax free, non-profit 501(c)3 organization. We are dedicated to assisting mothers with crisis pregnancies get information and counseling in their time of need. Our organization provides free pregnancy counseling, GED tutoring, prenatal classes, pregnancy testing, parenting classes, and assistance in setting goals.

This year a new *A Baby's Breath* center has opened in St. David's, PA. Please help *A Baby's Breath* continue to grow and help build the Culture of Life in St. David's as well as Collegeville and Jeffersonville! Together we can save babies and help heal moms who have been devastated by abortion. You can help us do this life-saving work by joining The Angel Club.

Please review and prayerfully consider the support levels shown on our website. Our Angel Club is for those who wish to participate in our ministry on a monthly basis. But a one time donation in any amount is also deeply appreciated—and needed! You may be assured that your investment is helping to save the 'least among us' who cannot speak for themselves—our little angels—the unborn!

Go to the website and sign-up today.

Your donation is tax deductible.

Thank you for your support!

*Please help
A Baby's Breath
grow and help
build the
Culture
of Life*



A Newsletter from A Baby's Breath

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Thanksgiving

by Karen Patota

A Baby's Breath celebrates its seventh Christmas with another center opening this past August 15. The Collegeville center continues to thrive and serve mothers and families in need and the Jeffersonville center has survived a flood and has moved to the 2nd floor to continue its mission to help a mother to see her child take his/her first breath.

Our mission could not continue without the generous donations of many supporters and without the generous donation of time by our volunteers. One of our volunteers stepping down after five years is **Vince Arena**. He said yes when many others said no. He and his family gave generously of their time and treasure. *A Baby's Breath* thanks him and his family for their support over the years.

Margaret Malloy, our Director and Parenting Class Coordinator at Jeffersonville gave birth to **Thomas Malloy** on September 14. We were left for a short time in September with no directors at Jeffersonville. That was when I met **Dannine Carpentier**. She had come to our organization over the summer. As I was mostly at the St. David's center this past summer—opening a center, I hadn't had a chance to meet her. Then, in the mad scramble of trying to find a replacement director, I met Dannine. When she heard of the monumental tasks assigned to our

directors, she graciously and humbly said that she wanted to be considered for the position. She's a beautiful person inside and out and will be a great resource for mothers, fathers, and families in a crisis pregnancy.

We have received our first client already at our St. David's center.

The Our new co-director,

Maria Colflesh

provided her with

the support she

needed to have

the choice of

life affirmed.

Jen Volpe, St.

David's other co-

director is out on

maternity leave.

She gave birth to

another little girl,

Amelia, on October

19. The parenting classes

are scheduled to begin in

St. David's in January.

Collegeville is also preparing to

begin parenting classes in January.

We have a new director in

Collegeville—**Maryann McDonnell**.

She is from St. Eleanor's parish and

is called to serve at *A Baby's Breath*

by a love for children.

The love for children is the primary

motivation for many of the

volunteers at *A Baby's Breath*. We

hug our children and love them

because they are here. We are

thankful that God gave us the

resources to give mothers, fathers

and families the truth about their

pregnancies and to help give the

choice of life real hope. ■

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*A Baby's
Breath*

The “Silent Auction”: A View From the Podium

By John J. Giorgis

It’s called a Silent Auction. And on a lovely fall Friday night in mid-November about 150 or so, not-so-silent Champions of Life, gathered together at The Plymouth Country Club in Plymouth Meeting, PA to laugh, talk, share, eat, drink, cheer, applaud, cry, party, make merry, raise a ruckus and celebrate at *A Baby’s Breath* Fifth Annual Silent Auction. The purpose of the Silent Auction event may have been to raise money for the life (baby) saving work of the three centers operated by *A Baby’s Breath* but what broke out that night was a Pro-Life Festival Celebration of Life!

Now you might think that it happened spontaneously (and there was a bit of that!) but to my way of looking at things you have to give credit to the dedicated Silent Auction Committee for arranging everything for this party to be properly born. (Hmmm, just like the work that’s done at *A Baby’s Breath*!) If you were there, you know they spent months preparing for it. Co-Chairpersons **Judi Arena-Ondik** and **Vincent Arena** were assisted by the S.A. Committee members **Bill Buchanan, Barbara Fritz, Emily Rebalsky, Marie Raquet, Dave & Betsy Russo, Patty Sosnader, Bud & Dorothy Swedkowski** and a small army of auction night volunteers. Collectively they spent untold days and hours in meetings, site preparation, planning, and also cajoling auction items and donations for the event. The dedicated committee and volunteers collected items and donations from 76 individual donors and 123 businesses for the event. As a result the ten auction tables held over 130 auction items not including the 24 items raffled off live that night or



Vincent Arena &
Judi Arena-Ondik

the 25 different certificates and items everyone got who purchased a red rose or the ten items that were auctioned off live!!!

I’m exhausted just thinking about it. Of course they also created and operated the tracking system for all these items, made and printed the Auction guide, secured numerous ‘last minute’ donations, captured the winning bids and made sure they got those items to the correct winning bidder, printed and sold the event tickets, advertised and promoted it too, made and coordinated the facility arrangements with the good people at Plymouth Country Club and did all that while throwing a really terrific party for over 150 people!

[I am willing to bet right now that they hope a few more of you will volunteer to help at next year’s Silent Auction! (Call now!)]

It was a great party. The event got underway at 8:00 p.m. with many folks enjoying the libations at the cash bars while the rest feasted on the outstanding food at the buffet. And yes it was impossible to stay away from the pasta bar so we know

everyone blew their diets—but we understand, so not to worry!

At about 8:20 I went to the podium to open things up for the night officially. What a difference from last year! You might say this was a ‘promotion’ for me since last year was my first visit to the Silent Auction ever as a new Board Member. However I have “MC’d” (Master of Ceremonies) events before for my church, and several corporate events. Also I had “auctioneered” at an art auction at church a couple of times, so for some reason based on this “vast” reservoir of experience I had accumulated, Vince felt I should (and could) take his position at the podium this year. After I discovered what he had been doing as Chairman of the Silent Auction, I understood why!

I’d like to say that from there on it was smooth sailing. I’d like to, but the sound system made sure I couldn’t. Three microphones, two jacks and a reset podium later we managed to communicate at a somewhat tolerable level with the audience. **Fr. Sweeny**, Pastor of St. Eleanor’s Parish and spiritual advisor to *ABB* was able to get through the opening prayer and our guest speaker **Karen Barnes** gave a moving talk on how *ABB* had blessed her and her family who were with her. It was a magical moment when she introduced her beautiful daughter **Ashley** to the audience!

From there the rest of the evening was a whirling blur of announcements, appeals, answering questions, raffles, roses, the incredible live auction, HEAT—it was very warm up there at the podium—quick gulps of water, more announcements and suddenly—it

*I saw a
celebration of Life
by those present
and a commitment
to take Life and
live it to the
fullest*

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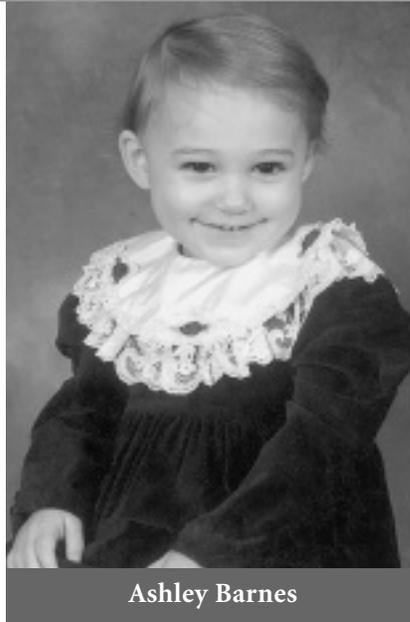
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My A Baby's Breath Experience

by Karen Barnes

The first time I came to *A Baby's Breath* in October 2004, I was a scared parent with little direction. I met **Maryann** who with a warm smile invited me in to the office. I sat down and my daughter **Ashley** played with the toys. Maryann and I spent over an hour talking to me and listening to my struggles. I wasn't sure how to be the best parent I could be and I didn't know how I was going to provide the basic necessities a child needs. Maryann suggested that I attend the parenting classes for support and to my surprise—this organization



Ashley Barnes

had a baby store. I was given 10 points to spend on diapers, wipes and clothing—the formula and baby food was free. I knew I had come to the right place. I was looking forward to my next meeting with Maryann. I had finally found a safe place to talk. This organization didn't judge me. They showed me compassion and understanding. For the first time in many months, I didn't feel alone. When I arrived at the parenting class, I had the opportunity to meet many other parents from different backgrounds. We were all here for the same reasons—to be the best parents we could be, improve on our life situation, and enjoy our children playing together.

Words cannot express how much this organization has done for me and my daughter.

Over the course of the next year, Mary Ann and I worked on my goals, building up my self-esteem, and working toward a better future for me and my child. We worked on

to stay focused on my dream of being a teacher and to be able to help my daughter.

Ashley had many health obstacles; she had some hearing loss, speech issues, developmental delays and asthma. Marty and **Jean** were there for me by phone when I needed to talk and lots of hugs and loving words. I have weathered some of the storm with the help of Marty and Jean. For the first time in years, I see the light at the end of the tunnel. Words cannot express how much this organization has done for me and my daughter. We have developed many wonderful relations with several of the other parents from the parenting class. The individual counseling which helped build my self-esteem and the baby store which provided Ashley with a much needed winter coat, socks for her small feet and shoes. Most importantly, when I didn't have any money for formula, baby food or diapers, this wonderful store made it possible.

The amount of support my daughter Ashley and I have received is overwhelming. I thank everyone for helping to make my life and my daughter's life a success. I am a better person because of the opportunities and support from this wonderful organization. I want to say special thanks to all the volunteers who take time out of their lives to help and contribute to the community.

God bless you! ■

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Dannine Carpentier— Jeffersonville’s New Director

by *Dannine Carpentier*

The first day that I walked into *A Baby’s Breath*, I knew I had found a second home. The people who volunteered were all so very special with the biggest hearts available to any scared girl in crisis. I met a fantastic boss, whose love and compassion for this work was not only empowering, but through the grace of God, just spilled over in every aspect.

I started out as a scared girl myself, but I had the blessings that some girls however do not, I had



family and a supportive family who loved me unconditionally at that. I met a wonderful man and we have grown up together in love and faith. By never giving up hope, we just got stronger and the love and compassion and these grace filled moments were what I wanted to share with someone in need.

With that love and compassion, I became a part of *A Baby’s Breath*. Becoming the Director was not only a honor, but a way of always giving back blessings, like they were given to me.

Being pro-life is not only a choice to me; it is a way of life. When I got pregnant with my daughter, I knew it was a blessing, not a burden. Some women get scared and think that they do not have any choices, either by their baby’s father or their parents pressuring them to make wrong decisions that would affect them the rest of their lives. At *A Baby’s Breath*, we give them the love and support they need lovingly and unconditionally. We help them get on their feet and help guide them to be able to be good mothers to their tiny blessings.

Giving of myself, is not only a lesson in compassion and patience, but seeing these girls through their most difficult times has been the most rewarding endeavor that I have accomplished so far.

Thank you! ■

Collegeville’s New Director

by *Maryann McDonnell*

Sometimes it is hard to find the right words to express a feeling but in the case of abortion I feel very strongly that there is “no justification for taking an innocent life”

Many different scenarios are presented to us today by those who feel that every woman should have the right to choose abortion and many of them at first glance seem to offer no alternative. *A Baby’s Breath* is just the answer

to those crisis pregnancies. Here there are volunteers who will help a woman to see her baby take his first breath. The philosophy of this organization is caring for the woman and her child and recognizing that each situation is unique. This faith-based organization supported by prayer and the donations of so many people in our community can and does indeed offer hope, help and

*This
organization
offers hope, help
and love to those
experiencing
a difficult
time*

love to those who find themselves, for whatever reason, at a difficult time. This is, for me, the way to do something more personal to express my belief in the sanctity of these innocent lives. I want to be a part of this caring and practical company of volunteers who show those mothers and fathers who find themselves in a crisis pregnancy that they are not alone and they can CHOOSE LIFE ■

Silent Auction
CONTINUED from page 2

was time for the closing Invocation from **Fr. Wilson** from Our Lady of Grace Parish in Pennel. And the Fifth Annual Silent Auction to benefit *A Baby’s Breath* was over at 11:30 p.m., a half hour over schedule. I attribute that to all the fun everyone was having! And at last I got a chance to catch my breath! And I still had a voice left too!

As I prepared to leave I couldn’t help but reflect for a moment on what I had seen from my unique perch at the podium. What I observed from the podium was a great deal of fun and joy, laughter and fellowship, camaraderie and cheerfulness. I saw a celebration of Life by those present and a commitment by those present to take Life and live it to the fullest—fully appreciating the Gift of Life they have. I saw a People of Life

dedicated to sharing Life for those most vulnerable to losing it—and convinced that God was with them and who knew that if He was with them, the victory was already theirs. They also knew that *A Baby’s Breath* was a part of God’s plan to win that victory! And they were overjoyed to be a part of it!

The view I saw from the podium was Love.

It was a magnificent view. ■

A Baby's Breath— St. David's

by Maria Colflesh,
Co-Director

A wise person once said, "Life on life's terms is not easy or fair, but life on life's terms with the grace of God is a beautiful gift that we all must be thankful for". God has given me many blessings, one of them being the opportunity to volunteer my time to such a worthy cause. Hello, my name is Maria Colflesh, Co-Director of the St. David's *A Baby's Breath*. We opened on August 15, 2006 on the Assumption of Our Lady with a beautiful Mass said by **Father Hagen**. We have been building our resources, training volunteers, working with clients and even kicking off the fall season with A Run for Life—St. David's at the Wilson Farm Park.

The idea to have a St. David's Fall 2006 Run for Life was born mid- to late July. Plans and preparation for the fall fundraiser were in action prior to our Center's opening. To some, the idea may have been overwhelming. Not to the St.

David's volunteers!! Through the hard work and dedication of time and effort, race day arrived and went smoothly. However, nothing is ever perfect, not this ministry, not our fall fundraiser. But it is as God wants it. The imperfection of our ministry and all that it entails is what makes it so precious and beautiful.

St. David's *A Baby's Breath* will be starting their Parenting Classes in January. **Christa Gardner**, our Parenting Class Coordinator and I will be working on a new Parenting Class Registration Form, complete

with sample topics. This form will be soon available, you may want to look for it in the back of area Churches, or you can e-mail myself at mariacolflesh@yahoo.com for more information.

I thank everybody who has made *A Baby's Breath* what it is today. Without the kind souls that give of their time, donations and prayers, we would not be able to exist. As I have previously stated, God has given me many blessings and gifts, and for that I am extremely grateful.

God bless! ■

Father Shea, headmaster of Devon Prep, offers a blessing before the start of the 2006 Run for Life.



Pregnancy & Counseling Services

Advocates

St. David's:

Maria Colflesh, Jen Volpe,
Jo Ann Foley, Jeanine Peters,
Juliet Najdawi, Carol Grace,
Debbie McKenna

Collegeville:

Virginia Madsen,
Maryanne Gullick,
Maryann McDonnell

Jeffersonville:

Marti Cunningham, Jean Coates,
Maryanne Crowe,
Dannine Carpentier

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*Spare some time?
Get your game on!*



Bowl with A Baby's Breath!

**Join us at Limerick Bowl on
Saturday, January 20th, 2007
from 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**\$15.00 per Ticket Includes
Two Games and a Shoe Rental**

T-Shirts Available for the First 100 Registrants

Drawing for Family Fun Night • Raffles

**All proceeds benefit A Baby's Breath.
www.ababysbreath.org**

For further information, contact Dannine at 610-631-2279

Why I Came to Volunteer at A Baby's Breath

*by Dorothy Stipa,
General Manager of
St. David's Division*

About two months ago, I was reading the *Catholic Standard & Times* when I came across an article about *A Baby's Breath* (ABB) and its new center in St. David's. The article described its efforts to organize and what it was doing on behalf of a young girl who found herself pregnant. I remember thinking how impressed I was with the ABB founder, **Karen Patota**. Because of Karen's vision and willingness to reach out, that young girl had a place to go for life-affirming support and direction. The next day, I called Karen and offered to volunteer.

My decision to volunteer at ABB was based on the desire to be a part of an organization that is on the front lines in the battle to save lives. Over the past few years, I have been involved with various pro-life activities. But, ABB takes this involvement to a new, more personal level. Since becoming involved at St. David's, I have had the pleasure of meeting many special people who are committed to supporting young women and their babies. The first few weeks have been busy. The volunteers and I have worked to increase the community's awareness of our services. We have contacted local colleges and we have attended the "Fan the Flame" youth expo at Archbishop Carroll. We have also hosted our first "Run for Life" fundraiser and we are working on other ways to reach out to the community. In addition to spreading the word about ABB, I have been elected General Manager of the St. David's center. The other board members and I are committed to the success of the center. As part of that commitment, my responsibilities include ensuring operational efficiency and helping to plan fundraising activities. I look forward to working with the dedicated staff of ABB and I hope that I will be able to make a positive contribution to such a great organization. ■

A Baby's Breath ID#: 149191191

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