



WHY I VOLUNTEER

I found out about The Vine before it opened when volunteers were helping to decorate each room. I didn't know then what a blessing that first look at The Vine was going to be in my life. Shortly after The Vine opened, I joined the Ladies Guild and have been involved ever since.

I have so many memories; the first resident who earned her GED while at The Vine, then went on to college. The precious baby boy born with a cleft pallet. God's grace as He found a home for this baby with a Christian doctor who just happened to be a surgeon specializing in cleft pallet cases. What an awesome God we serve!

I will always remember the father of one of our residents giving his testimony at one of our banquets. I still get tears in my eyes as I remember him saying,

"We will always have baby Hope in our hearts." I remember his poised, self confident daughter coming back to our banquet a few years later and singing in her clear beautiful voice.

I still feel the knots in my back from the many garage sales, lifting, moving and arranging the merchandise. I remember the prayers we would have before each garage sale, praying that we would make enough money to pay that month's rent. And the relief we all felt when the first **Blessingdales Thrift Store** opened and we realized that we would not have to have another huge garage sale.

I remember the birthday parties we had for our young residents and how one young girl cried because that was the first birthday cake she had ever been given. I feel such

happiness when I see these young ladies open their Christmas presents knowing that they are safe and happy in our arms. I especially remember the one Christmas season when baby **J e s u s** kept disappearing. One of the residents said we just couldn't put him in the manger until Christmas Day. He had not been born yet!

I am humbled that God has allowed me to be a part of this ministry for so long, in the Guild and on our Board.

The question is not, "**Why do I volunteer**" but "**How could I not volunteer?**" Call today and start making your memories with The Vine.

The Ladies Guild meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 at The Vine. Feel free to contact me, **Charlene Nelson**, at 231-0930 or 667-0481 or by email at CBNelsonSr@aol.com.

The Living Vine Christian Maternity Home

Impacting two generations by allowing the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to shine hope into the lives of women experiencing crisis pregnancies.

A place to grow,
A place to change,
A place to prepare
To love, live & succeed.

SAVE THE DATE

FIRST ANNUAL DAY OF BLESSING FOR THE LIVING VINE

February 19, 2011
Isle of Hope United
Methodist Church
Savannah, GA.

Silent Auction, Lunch
and Fashion Show
10:00am to 2:00pm

Special Music and
Speaker

Proceeds to Benefit
The Living Vine
Christian Maternity
Home

Tickets \$30.00

Limited seating:
Call for your ticket
today!

The Living Vine
912-352-9998



From the Heart of The Vine...

Whenever a new year begins, it is a time to reflect. This year is an especially nostalgic look back for me. **The Living Vine turns fifteen this year.** Fifteen! How can that be? Looking back at some of our very first newsletters, I see how excited we were and how nervous we were. Girls' lives were being changed, babies were being brought into the world and God was providing in miraculous ways. In that respect, things really haven't changes at all. Girls lives are still being changed, babies are still being brought into the world and God is still miraculously providing.

Oh, but things do change in fifteen years. Some of our staff have been here from the very beginning. Others have been here 8, 10, 12 years. We are all older and, hopefully, wiser. The girls we have in the home now have more deeply rooted problems and less family support. Our whole nation is in a more troubled state. Economically things are upside down. Ministries everywhere are hurting. But I truly believe as things get darker spiritually, God provides more grace. It is an exciting time for us to say to the unbelieving world, 'We trust in God at all times.' Each girl snatched from the grip of a generational curse is a huge victory. Each baby saved is a defeat for Satan. Life is beautiful, and I am so thankful to be a part of a life-giving ministry.

As you start your new year, we want you to give your tithe to your church, of course. Then consider what God would have you do in ministry. There are many worthy overseas ministries, deserving of every dollar. But there is something to be said for starting in your own backyard! These are our girls. These are our babies. This is our community. One day we will all stand before the Lord and give an account of our life and how we used our resources. An investment in The Living Vine is an investment in God's Kingdom. We are so thankful to those who have been there for us since the beginning. We are thankful for those who came along side for a particular season. Please pray and consider now what you will do in this "New Year of LIFE."

Claire Hodges, Founder

*We are making changes to our newsletter.
We hope you will like our new format.*

Vine's Needs List:

House hold items:

4-8 yellow gold throw pillows
Indoor/outdoor entrance rugs
Nonskid bathroom rugs
Large rug for dining room
Lamps & decorative pillows
(2) Vacuums, computers
VCR with TV Guardian
HE laundry detergent
Index cards, reams of paper
mechanical pencils, pens
Stamps, permanent markers
Pantry Staples: soups, healthy cereals, crackers, fruit juices
Baking supplies, snacks
Coffee: regular & decaf

Large Vine Projects:

New carpeting
New flooring: Kitchen & dining room
Large dining room table & chairs
Front door & threshold replacement
Sofas
Motion Sensors Lights replaced
Reglazing/replacing tubs & tiles

Gift Certificates:

Wal-mart/Sam's, Home Depot,
Office Max, Kroger, Lifeway
Barnetts School Supply Store

School Supplies:

Notebook paper --college rule
Spiral Notebooks--college rule
ANY educational videos--(Science & History)
Used computers able to do word processing
THIS IS A SHOUT OUT TO ALL HOMESCHOOL MOMS. ANY used textbooks as old as year 2000 & ANY level. Particular need for economics text and 10th/11th grade American History.

What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us,
who can be against us? Romans 8:31

“Our services are offered free of charge in the name of Jesus Christ to demonstrate His love.”

THANK YOU to the following:

Coastal Steel Buildings

The Stewart Huston Charitable Trust

Goodrich Automotive

Pizza Hut

Fresh Market

“To God Be Thanks” Fund

RISK FACTORS FOR TEENAGE PREGNANCY

- Family situations with regular conflict between members
- Violence and sexual abuse in childhood
- Unstable housing arrangements
- Poor school performance
- Poor school attendance
- Low socioeconomic background
- Family history of teenage pregnancies
- Low maternal education
- Father’s absence

The Vine Stats (current as of 12/1/2010)

Total Residents Served in 15 years of service: 286

Racial Background

African American	43%
Caucasian	51.5%
Other	5.5%

Demographics

Teenagers	62%
Twenty’s	34%
Thirty’s	3%

Age Breakdown

10-14	25
15-19	151
20-24	74
25-29	23
30-34	6
35-39	3

Of those completing program:

Miscarried/Stillborn	2%
Placed for adoption	28%
Parented	70%

Please Pray About How You Can Get Involved

Volunteer Support:

We have volunteer opportunities to meet your schedule. If you or someone you know has a specialized skill, examples: tile work, painting, carpentry, electrical, repairing sheetrock, plumbing, vehicle repairs, PR, etc, we would love your contact information. At different times, new projects come up and we would be so blessed to know who is interested in helping with those specific needs.

Maintenance:

Our 1950’s home has unique maintenance needs. We are looking for groups or individuals willing to help keep our home in good working order!

- 1) Electrical Projects: installing ceiling fans, repairing outlets, changing light fixtures, checking/replacing lights around perimeter.
- 2) Repairs: vacuum cleaners, lawn mowers, weed eaters
- 3) Snaking slow drains.
- 4) Ceiling repairs: repairing where light fixtures have been moved, repairing moisture damaged areas, repainting ceilings.
- 5) Reglazing tubs & showers.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION
A special THANK YOU to all of The Living Vine and the Blessingdales Volunteers.
We pray you keep doing what you are doing.

A 16 year old resident's letter to her Mother.

printed with permission from author

Dear Mom,

Since I have been at the Vine, I have learned about taking responsibility for my actions and the consequences my actions have caused. I have also learned about humility and laying down my pride. Yes, mom, I have been selfish and prideful. I have not cared about how anyone else felt, but me. I have made 100,000 excuses and blamed everybody for what I have done. I have not taken responsibility for what I have done to hurt you, upset you, and disappoint you.

I know I have not been the daughter you hoped and dreamed for me to be. But I am not going to give up on myself, especially now that I have a son. I have decided that I will no longer let the things of the world consume me and then spit me out. I was one like the prodigal son, just wanting, wanting, and wanting until I ran out, but I'm running back and coming to the senses that God gave me. Running

back to your arms, wanting to serve, respect and love you.

A big lesson that I have learned is about submitting to authority, about being humble and obedient. Willingness is in my attitude and obedience is in my actions. These teachings have been hitting home in my heart because I need them. I want to train my child up in the way that he should go - better than the way I went. I am glad I am here, so I can humble myself and get Jesus fully back into my life. I still need a lot of work, but I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Mom, you know I love you and our whole family. Y'all are my world, and what you have had to deal with from me has to come to an end. Maturity has slapped me in the face. Mom, I want you to know what God has for you is greater than anything else. You are a strong, smart, beautiful woman. I have noticed the changes in you when we talk on the phone. You don't

curse any more, not that I have heard. But I have heard something heart-breaking. I heard (your boyfriend) put his hands on you. Ma, I don't want you hurt by me or by men. I have learned a lot about self respect at The Vine. I am not trying to tell you what to do; I am concerned about you, and I don't want you thinking that is what God has for you. I know in my heart that He has better for us.

My heart has been broken by boys and fathers. I am learning how it is supposed to be. It hurts to hear that my mother, the person I have hurt, is being hurt by a man. According to the Bible, he is supposed to love you as he loves himself. I've never trusted a man after seeing what they did to you. I just expected for all men to be like that, but now I know otherwise. Maybe my God has something better for me. I am not trying to sound all bossy; I wanted to say what God has put on my heart to say. I love you, Mom.

Love, Terri

UPDATE from the PAST:

My name is Marla and I spent my 1st pregnancy staying at The Vine. Back in 2002, life was real confusing for me. Just two years earlier, I had buried my mother who had lost her battle with leukemia. Two years went by in a blur, and I found myself 19, pregnant and alone, but something wonderful happened to me. I found myself at The Living Vine, a loving warm place, that I could call home for awhile. Being in a new and strange place can be very confusing for some, but there I found love, hope and peace. The staff was always there for me, it was like our own little family just with a lot of hormonal, pregnant young women.

I know for sure that I was a handful at times, but no matter what, the staff was always there. I remember the first time I met Ms. Joanie. In walked this woman with such a glow about her. She welcomed me with opened arms and an open heart. Eventually throughout my pregnancy, she helped me find what I had been searching for, for so long. That was me. I had no self-esteem or self respect. Through prayer and the help of the Living Vine, I found myself again.

I had a daughter in August of 2002, and she was truly a gift from God, but I knew that I was

just not capable of giving her all that she deserved. I could give her all the love in the world. But love doesn't keep food in her belly or clothes on her back. So, I was able to give that gift, to a wonderful, God-fearing couple, who would love her and give her all the things she deserved. It was the hardest thing I have ever done in my life, but I knew in the end that I was making the best choice for her, and God give me the peace of knowing that daily. I'm happy to say that I get pictures yearly from the adoptive parents, and just seeing the joy and happiness on my daughter's face lets me know that I made the right choice.

I thank God daily for sending me to The Living Vine, because it was there that I truly found my way.

I went from being a very stubborn, wild teenager, to a loving, God-fearing woman. Life is too precious and you should thank God daily for it. He is always there, and He will always listen.

So, to the staff at The Living Vine, thank you for being a light during a very dark time in my life.

To the young women who have that same gift inside them, let your light shine through, and keep your faith in

Christ. Know that maybe one day The Living Vine can be a blessing to you as it was to me.

I later got a job, and soon after met a man whom I married and we have two beautiful children.

God Bless,

Marla

JOIN US

The Living Vine's annual budget is raised through private contributions from individuals, churches, civic organizations, and grants. If you are making a will or changing your will, please remember The Living Vine. As we walk in faith to care for these women in need, please come along side of us.

Our tax ID number is :
58-2088326 under IRS

The U.S. has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the industrialized world- twice as high as in England and Canada.

Teenage pregnancy is usually a crisis for the pregnant girl and her family. Common reactions include anger, guilt and denial. If the father is young and involved, similar reactions can occur in his family.



The Living Vine, Inc.

535 East 54th Street
Savannah, GA 31405

Phone: 912.352.9998
Fax: 912.352.1011
thelivingvine@hotmail.com
Visit us on-line: thelivingvine.org

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 1332
SAVANNAH, GA

Address Service Requested

**A LITTLE change can
make a BIG difference!**

**So far, our baby bottle
fundraiser has raised over
\$55,000!**

**Please join the baby bottle
campaign. Baby bottles are
available at The Living Vine**

BOARD of DIRECTORS

Fred Blackburn

Dr. Allan Bosson

Ann Bryant

Eddie DeLoach

Don Hodges, Co-founder

Claire Hodges, Co-founder

Jack Marvin

Tom Nash

Charlene Nelson

Gil Nellis

Joanie Perry

Linda Sapp

Carrie Murray-Nellis

Glynda Smith

***Blessingdales
Thrift Stores***

**2118 Bona Bella
Savannah**

#912.355.4339
M,T,Th,F: 10-5 Sat: 10-3

**309 East Main Street
Garden City**

#912.966.2242
T,W, Th, F: 10-5 Sat: 10-3

**305 W Collins Street
Pooler #912.330.0220**
M,T,W,F: 10-5 Sat: 10-3

**134 Houston St
Savannah #912.236.2034**
M,T,W,F: 10-5 Sat: 10-3

Donations Appreciated



DIVINE DESIGN

Don't forget your sweetheart on Valentine's. Check out our jewelry at the Bona Bella and Houston Street store locations of our **Blessingdales Thrift Stores.**