

# DOVETAIL

A PUBLICATION OF PEACEFUL LIVING VOLUME 4 ISSUE 9

**Peaceful Living Mission:** Creating Belonging for Persons with Disabilities Within a Faith Community

## *Future Group Home Donated to Peaceful Living*

By Joe Landis  
Peaceful Living Director

In the late 1980's and early 1990's I was involved in securing investors to purchase and or build homes that could be used for group homes. As you would imagine, there were not a lot of people who would be willing to invest in a property that would house 5-8 persons with developmental disabilities, whose funding was only guaranteed one year at a time. At the time of the purchase, the investor informed me he would donate the house to the cause when the time was right. I thought at the time, what a generous offer from a generous soul.

Earlier this year I was informed the house was going to be donated to Peaceful Living and this summer Peace-

ful Living was the recipient of the house. It is because of generous individuals like this donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, who have a heart of compassion for individuals with disabilities, that our community can be as caring and compassionate as it is.

As Peaceful Living tries to respond to the need, we are looking for a house for a Mennonite Voluntary Service Unit to be a home for 6-8 volunteers in the Souder-ton-Telford area. If you have interest in donating or renting a house for this purpose, please contact Joe Landis.



## *Seminary Student Completes Internship*

By Rich Lindberg  
DoveTail Editor

"It's not just going in and helping. It's building relationships," said Joanne Hoffman at her kitchen table. She is talking about her work with Peaceful Living, and her experience with the families she works with. "I've learned patience, listening, which is important for a

counselor. Give and take," she continued.

From October 2006 to August 2007, Joanne has volunteered at Peaceful Living as an intern through Hatfield Biblical Seminary. She was a student in the Masters in Counseling Program, from which she graduated in June of this year. Part of the program calls for 700 hours of experience in a job situation such (page 2)

## *Coordinator for Friendship Connection Chosen*



Joe Landis, Sarah Immerman, and Loretta Moyer after a presentation at Horsham Rotary Photo by Joe Landis

By Rich Lindberg  
DoveTail Editor

"To make them feel cared for and loved. Accepting people where they are at, and for who they are. Loving them unconditionally." This is Loretta Moyer's *modus operandi* when it comes to working with others. Loretta is Peaceful Living's Friendship Connection Coordinator, and she has already begun her job recruiting people for this work.

Loretta has been married to Larry Moyer, pastor at Rockhill Mennonite Church, for 39 years. Before taking

a break for knee surgery this summer, Loretta worked at Peaceful Living for almost 2 years. Now, she has accepted the position of Friendship Connection Coordinator.

Managing the family business "taught me about leadership, and taught me how to deal with all sorts of personalities, skills, and values," said Loretta. She also volunteered in the first Hilltop Sunday School class for persons with developmental disabilities that was begun at Salford Mennonite Church. This experience made her "aware of children with disabilities, and gave me compassion for them."

The work of Friendship Connection is very important to Loretta. She understands that "every human being needs friendships. Many times, persons with disabilities are limited in their opportunities to meet friends. Such persons need a friend like anyone else, so someone is needed to orchestrate it." Loretta sees this as her responsibility.

Friendship Connection should "educate volunteers about disabilities, [and] take away the fear that people have of persons with developmental disabilities," says Loretta. She is looking for "loving, caring people who can share of themselves, and are interested in expanding their own safe place. Volunteers are very important," she continued. "They have to be willing to stretch outside of their comfort zone".

Loretta looks forward to meeting with individuals and volunteers. "My aim is to be the connecting person between two persons, and help them become friends."

# German Exchange Student Joins Peaceful Living



By Rich Lindberg  
DoveTail Editor

Albert Hörsch, a 21 year-old gentleman from Germany, has joined Peaceful Living as a full time staff person. Albert comes from the town of Delmenhorst, outside of Bremen in the Lower Saxony state in Northern Germany.

Albert Hörsch.

Photo by Joe Landis  
Having arrived on August 25<sup>th</sup>, Albert is living with Larry and Loretta Moyer in Telford. He comes through Logos International, a Russian-German organization that sends

volunteers around the world to aid others, and for missionary work. "Ich bin stressig" (I am stressing), Albert said when asked how he was. Though he knows plenty of English, Albert felt it easier to be interviewed in German, and so Peaceful Living founder Joe Landis, who is fluent in German, interviewed him over the phone on August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Asked about his education background, Albert said that he is a high school graduate. He had been pursuing electrical engineering, but soon felt that it was more important to help others. "I saw it as a need, because I felt it was hard to find [workers] in the area of [mental health]," said Albert.

He is looking forward to learning more English, gaining independence, and working with mentally handicapped persons. Albert feels that he "likes to help people," and is "patient and a good listener." Albert will be with Peaceful Living for one year.

## Seminary Student Completes Internship

as the work that Peaceful Living offers. "We had a ministry fair at Biblical, and Elizabeth Howes (Peaceful Living Program Director), was a speaker. After praying about it, I felt God leading me there," Joanne recalled. "I liked the fact that they were a smaller, Christian organization."

While her education kept her quite busy with reading, papers, and other assignments, her clients taught Joanne about herself. "They help me to look at myself, an introspection of who I am in God's sight," she said. Joanne enrolled in the Counseling program at Biblical to gain training for counseling ministry at her church, Hope Community Church in Gilbertsville. This ministry believes that "true change can only come through heart change. We walk with people through their lives, we try to build relationships," Joanne said. For her, the most positive thing about working at Peaceful Living would be "building relationships."

Elizabeth Howes said that having Joanne at Peaceful Living has "definitely been a benefit. Her counseling courses prepared her to work with individuals and fami-



Kim Hunsberger with her friend, Joanne Hoffman (r).

Photo by Joe Landis

lies, and she understood basic principles of counseling, so it was easy to introduce her to families. The key to her success is that she genuinely cares about the people she's serving. She goes above and beyond."

Joanne lives in East Coventry Township with her husband and two teenaged children.

**Save the  
Date!**



**Peaceful Living**

Creating belonging for persons with disabilities within a faith community.

**Save the  
Date!**

**Sponsors**

A Conference for Congregational Leadership, Families and Caregivers

**Enhancing Outreach to & Inclusion  
of People with Disabilities and their Families**

**Saturday, September 13, 2008**

**Salford Mennonite Church**

480 Groff's Mill Road, Harleysville, PA 19438

Check our website for further information, updates and registration:

[www.peacefulliving.org](http://www.peacefulliving.org)

What attendees have said about our Conference Kick-off Brunch earlier this fall concerning Bill Gaventa, who will also be presenting at our conference in September 2008:

"Thanks for the invite today -- good meeting, resources and vision for our congregations..."

- Larry Moyer, Pastor, Rockhill Mennonite Church

"I read through my notes with (my wife) on Bill's talk. It was excellent in many ways. It isn't often when you get new ways of looking at something that you are familiar with."

-Paul Miller, Founder, [seeJesus.net](http://seeJesus.net) and parent of an adult with developmental disabilities



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