BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVORS SPEAKER-BUREAU.

OCTOBER/NOV/DEC

barrier free living SPEAKING MATTER'S

Blessings For Christmas

May this auspicious Christmas, bring in loads of joy and success in your life. I wish you a very happy journey of life. May you get all you desire. Merry Christmas.

With faith, courage and hope, every dream is achievable. If you dream, dream to succeed. May this Christmas, God bless you with determination, honesty and happiness. I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Table of contents 'mission vision values Theresa Antoinette BFLsurvivor's Speakerbureau in the news **Mayor Bloomberg and** Commissioner victor, at the ADA celebration our survivors: a bringing to you hope love and perseverance and turning mess into a message **TANYA Story. Featuring Irma, artwork** Featuring artwork from Barbara. **Teresa's blog** What year pictures and events. domestic violence victims in my walkie faces eviction for nuisance calling the police. **Emergency preparedness nobody** that behind. **ist shelter in New York accepting** pets

END OF YEAR NEWSLETTER

It's That Time Again:! It happens every year, as reliably as Turkey Day and Christmas and Tax Day. It's been A very exciting year, Barrier free living speakers Bureau is in its 2nd pilot year November 12th launching our 1st bflsurvivors deaf clients speakers Bureau (our hands give us a voice.) so look for updates on these incredible women, and thank you for supporting the newsletter from your

Mission



Barrier Free Living

empowers individuals with disabilities to live independent, dignified lives free of abuse.

Vision

Barrier Free Living is our vision. We strive for a world free from abuse and bias, where people with disabilities live in a supportive physical environment. In this world, society values all its members and individuals with disabilities are free of any internal barriers barring them from reaching their fullest potential.

Values

- 1 The power to change lies within the individual.
- 2 Taking personal responsibility enhances an individual's self esteem.
- 3 An individual's strengths are the building blocks to achieving life's goals.
- 4 People who understand and build the skills and the mind set to become independent are less likely to accept abuse or be abusive.
- 5 Failure is an integral part of growth, which can lead to progress and success.
- 6 Parents who value themselves provide a solid foundation for their children's growth.
- 7 Healthy families place a value on children's voices.
- 8 Information is empowerment. Sharing knowledge helps everyone.
- 9 Trusting relationships are built on a foundation of confidentiality.
- 10 A holistic perspective embraces the individual's self-determination, culture, religion and values.
- 11 The goals of staff and consumers are best achieved through teamwork.

BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVORS SPEAKER'S BUREAU



BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVOR'S SPEAKER BUREAU

Barrier Free Living. Inc. Speakers Bureau was founded in May 2012 by Theresa A.H. Macintosh. Ms.

Macintosh, a survivor of Domestic Violence and an amputee, is a Mayoral Appointee of the Mayor.sOffice on

Domestic Violence and is a Trustee on the Board of Barrier Free Living.s Freedom House.

Ms. Macintosh is also a member of the Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Hotline Advisory Committee,

Voices of Women Organizing Project (VOW) and the Best Practices Committee of the New York Coalition of

Domestic Violence Residential Service Providers.

She is a passionate participant in many other programs all of which represent and champion of women.

Theresa is a tireless advocate of issues that intersect the disabled community and domestic violence issues.

To this end, the Speakers Bureau provides training and encouragement to Disabled Survivors of Domestic

Violence. Women with disabilities are among the more vulnerable and marginalized groups. Often these

individuals and their needs are invisible and unmet. The SpeakersBureau promotes awareness and

education with workshops, trainings and creating community events where by survivors can give voice to

their struggles and successes through sharing their stories.

Barrier Free Living is proud to endorse and participate with the Speaker Bureau as, together, we seek to

remove those barriers which obstruct the achieving of personal independence.

TOPICS:

.Domestic violence workshops,

Accessing healthcare and the barriers that people with disabilities face

.Physical and programmatic accessibility to the services for the disabled.

.Developing distribution resource material.

. Housing



BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVORS SPEAKER BUREAU



Living Non- Antoinette Calabretta, case manager at Barrier Free residential Domestic Violence program

for over ten years. Antoinette's came from Italy in 1966. She obtained a Baccalaureate Degree in Psychology with a minor in Italian Literature from Brooklyn college and a Master Degree in Liberal Arts with concentration in English Literature also from Brooklyn College.

Antoinette also completed a four-year of Helix Counseling Training Program: a program geared towards the work of personal transformation using multidisciplinary methods of psychology, religion, philosophy and healing practice. She is New York City register minister. Antoinette is also a Reiki II practitioner, a Japanese method of "laying on hands" to awaken "life force energy" for stress reduction and relaxation

Antoinette Co facilitates the BFL's survivor Speaker Bureau with Theresa Macintosh, who is the founder and the leader of this wonderful mission.

Antoinette Calabretta Case Manager

Secret Garden, Barrier Free Living Non-Residential Domestic Violence Program

P.O. Box 20799 New York, NY 10009 212 533 4358 antoinettec@bflnyc.org





BFL's Speaker's Bureau Part of Ground Breaking Even



Theresa MacIntosh, founder of <u>BFL's Survivor's Speaker's</u> <u>Bureau</u>, participated in artist Suzanne Lacy's Between the Door and the Street, a political performance that brought together close to 400 women in Brooklyn.

"It was an absolutely awesome experience and the first time our Speaker's Bureau participants were able to speak. They made me so proud," said MacIntosh, pictured at center with her group.

Barrier Free Living. Inc. *Speakers Bureau* was founded in May 2012 by Macintosh. Ms. Macintosh, a survivor of Domestic Violence and an amputee, is a Mayoral Appointee of the Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence and is a Trustee on the Board of Barrier Free Living's *Freedom House*. The Speakers Bureau provides training and encouragement to disabled Survivors of Domestic Violence.

poverty, violence and immigration.



BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVORS SPEAKER BUREAU Mayor Bloomberg And Commissioner Calise Host Reception In Honor

Of 23rd Anniversary Of The Americans With Disabilities Act

August 5, 2013ADA Sapolin Awards - in Honor of Late Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities Commissioner Sapolin - Presented to New York Organizations Dedicated to Helping People with DisabilitiesMayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) Commissioner Victor Calise today hosted a reception at Gracie Mansion in honor of the 23rd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Signed in 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act has fostered independence, empowerment and inclusion for millions of Americans. Each year, the Mayor and MOPD present four ADA Sapolin Awards recognizing individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to increasing accessibility for people with disabilities under the titles of the Americans with Disabilities Act and an Advocacy Award to an individual or entity that has demonstrated a commitment to advocate on behalf of people with disabilities. The ADA Sapolin Awards are named after late MOPD Commissioner Matthew Sapolin, who passed away on November 29, 2011, and the Advocacy Award is named in honor of the late Frieda Zames. Joining the Mayor and Commissioner Calise at the reception were Deputy Mayor of Legal Affairs Carol Robles-Román; John Cavaliero, Managing Director, Local/State Government Practice, Accenture; Sara Marinello, Executive Director, Government & Community Affairs, Wildlife Conservation Society; Lance Pinn, Co-Founder & President, Brooklyn Boulders; Kareemah Batts, Founder, NYC Adaptive Climbing; Tom Touchet, CEO and President, City 24/7; and who are leading us closer to that ultimate goal by doing extraordinary work for both New Yorkers and visitors to our city living with disabilities. Tonight, we recognize those who champion the spirit of the ADA and enable New Yorkers with disabilities to participate in and enjoy all that our great city has to offer."









Survivors: corner







LAKISHA'S FIRST SPEAKING Event MEMBER OF BFLSURVIVORS SPEAKER BUREAU.



THE MARIA PROJECT LAUNCHING IT SURVIVORS BOOK OF STORIES.









My Story for Speaker Bureau

I was born right after the World War II in a small town called Riposto in Sicily, Italy, right at the feet of Mount Etna. I grew up with my maternal grandparents till I was nine years old. I had my share of physical, verbal and emotional abusive treatments from family, relatives, and elementary teacher who loved pulling my hair and pinching and punching my arms. I was surrounded by many restrictions. I was not pretty as the definition of the social expectation was at the time. I was forced to say "yes" when I wanted to say "no"; to stay home when I wanted to go to beach with my friends during the summer time. I was looked at as if I would not be good for anything; often I was compared with my cousins, who were considered to be much more beautiful than I was and who also appeared to be smarter than I was. I felt the ugly duck and trouble maker of the family.

Suddenly at the age of 15, I lost the vision of my right eye. The pain in the eye was excruciating; I had to stay locked in a dark room for days because the minimum light coming from the window would hurt my eyes like a sharp knife. Simultaneously, the left eye developed uveitis, a form of chronic inflammation, causing pain and loss of vision.

At the age of twenty years old I came to the United States where my visual impairment Odyssey continued. The severity of the right eye was so that at one point it had to be removed and replaced with a prosthetic one. Twenty years of my youth was spent between hospitals, five operations, and blindness, along with the risk of losing the only eye I was able to see when the inflammation cleared out.

When I came in the United States I worked in a stuffed toys factory while I went to school at night to learn English. Once I was able to put English sentence together, I left the factory and started to work for American Paper Institute as statistical clerk; I continued education at Brooklyn College to get my degree in Psychology and in Literature.

Literature was and still is my passion. Not being able to read with own eyes was something I could not accept. I could not accept the idea that someone would have to read fro or takes notes during the college years. My eye doctor kept telling me to apply for the eye-see dog. But I could not do it.

Finally, after years of blindness, the last operation in my left eye gave my sight back. I don't have twenty-twenty vision from this eye, but I have enough sight to make me independent; to ready books with my own eyes, my own sight. I got my baccalaureate degree in Psychology and Italian literature from Brooklyn College. Subsequently I got a Master's Degree in Liberal Art with concentration in Literature. Few years later I published a collection of Italian poetry. Another collection of poetry is in the process of being published.

In year of 2000 I was introduced to the four-year Helix Counseling Training Program geared towards re multiple disciplines of psychology, religion philosophy and major healing modalities from East and West traditions.

I am currently working as a case manager at Barrier Free Living's Non-residential Domestic Violence Program for People with disability. I love the work I do. I am grateful to Barrier Free Living for giving a sense of community and belonging to the people we serve.



August 29, 2013

TTTLE: LOVE OF SELF August 29, 2013

Good wishes to everyone!

As I write in the page of this newsletter, I would like to be known as the flower lady. I love flowers because it brightens a room and bring colors to the dark, difficult, and devastating world of domestic violence. I am not a psychologist, a counselor, nor a social worker: not an MD, PHD, or any other Ds that come after a specialized provider. However, I am a domestic violence survivor and here I speak my truth, experiences, and lessons I learned.

It is hard to believe that the Barrier Free Living Speaker's Bureau is past its year mark. Since its inception, we had opportunities to put into practice and further develop the training, skills, and confidence necessary to openly speak our minds and the scars of our hearts.

SILENCE, deafening silence is the biggest facilitator of domestic violence and abuse. Yet even when we start talking about it, it still does not get us out of the situation. It is only until we recognize deep inside ourselves that we do not deserve what we are experiencing and that it violates who we are as a person, a member of this society, as a human being.

What I have learned, stemming from countless hours, years of counseling and therapy, from the very competent, compassionate, caring counselors of Barrier Free Living that all these abuses came from what I had deemed and accepted as normal way of life. My experiences as a child and teenager allowed my abuser to lead me to a place of doubt, dependence, and most of all incompetence. My belief in the skills, education I was so sure I had. was slowly stripped away from me. I doubted my abilities, needed validation and approval for every big decisions, common sense became not so common but worse of all. my energy for life was sucked out dry. I adopted the role I was very familiar with, a trusting, selfless caretaker, hoping that it will be given back to me as my family did. Unfortunately, 20 years was not enough for my abuser to learn how to give back. As he became successful he became more selfish, more demanding, and more abusive. I realized there was no amount of caring and loving I could give for he does not know what love and sacrifice is. What I had given him, he did not receive for did he not know what it was. So for all of you out there looking for love; just realize love does not come from somebody. It does not come in beautifully wrapped packages; it comes from knowing you have love for yourself, that your love of self is more than enough to understand that people do not have the right to disrespect and abuse you and the same goes for you. What you give is what you get back.

So together let's make this world a better place by giving respect and love to everyone and when they do not receive it, let alone recognize it, let us walk away, no matter how good the situation is. One step in front of the other and before you know it, you will find the place you always dreamed of....your DESTINATION.

Good wishes to everyone!

BARRIER FREE LIVING-SURVIVORS SPEAKER'S BUREAU

CELEBRATING THE SURVIVOR IN ME

IAM

a proud survivor of domestic violence and abuse.

First, I thank BFL for doing everything to help us, survivors and for the continued efforts to celebrate our victories every step of the way. This celebration made me look back at the night when I finally said to my abuser

----- ENOUGH....ENOUGH...ENOUGH

I was not as powerful as I would liked to have said it but all my actions that night although weak, hesitant, and fearful, pointed to one decision we all should always chose

- the decision to VALUE OURSELVES.

That night was the night, this woman said, the uncertainty out there was more promising than the life with a heartless, selfish, calculating, manipulating man.

This woman finally decided to take a chance on herself.

How many of us survivors ever thought of our escape from the suffocating choke hold of our abusers this way.

How many of us have looked at it at the point of view of power and strength

or are we still looking at it at the point of anger, self pity, and blame.

BFL is giving us this moment, this sacred moment. this opportunity, and this support to reevaluate our story.

So I ask.... Are we going to look at our journey in a position of power or are we going to look at it at a position of self pity.

Today my dear friends, we get to chose and maybe next year, you can come up here and tell us the difference.

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BARRIER FREE LIVINGSURVIVORSSPEAKER'S BUREAU.



Tanya's Story



POLICE SIRENS SCREAMED LOUDLY, AS MY CHILDREN AND I WERE ESCORTED HOME TO COLLECT OUR BELONGINGS. WE WERE BEING PLACED IN A WITNESS PROTECTION PROGRAM IN ORDER TO ESCAPE THE PHYSICAL, MENTAL, FINANCIAL, AND SOCIAL ABUSE INFLICTED BY MY EX-HUSBAND. HE MURDERED OUR PET DOG AND SHOWED SIGNS OF FOLLOWING THROUGH WITH HIS THREAT TO END MY LIFE.

I MADE A VOW TO TURN MY PAIN INTO POWER AS I BEGAN MY FIGHT FOR JUSTICE. I JOINED THE VOICES OF WOMEN ORGANIZING PROJECT KNOWN AS (VOW), THAT BRINGS TOGETHER SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TO IMPROVE THE SYSTEMS ABUSED WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN TURN TO FOR SAFTEY AND JUSTICE. VOW TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND STOP THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN. THANK YOU.

IRMA'S WORK,

BARRIER FREE LIVING-SURVIVORS SPEAKER-BUREAU.

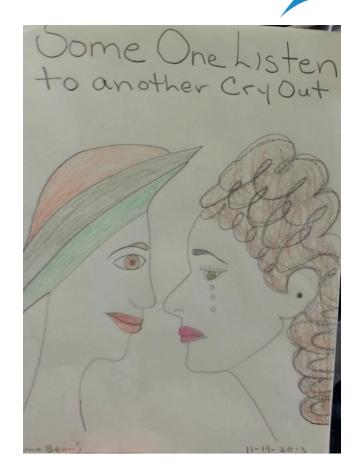
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Domestic violence

I am a survivor I am no longer a victim of domestic violence I was an innocent just a child, living in 4 walls of hell, we don't know the fair thefear until. I can't say I had a long journey, which had no ending it was very hard for me to change my past, painfully memories, inside of me as a child calling for help, one day I felt my world was pouring down I was ashamed of my body, no one cares about us until the doors are really open, no matter, what screaming crying is not going to help you. we are left behind walls my wounds are open, and I felt like salt burning and melting my skin away, I wish I wasn't born if only the beginning of my life wasting here I should've died inside my mother's womb. My past is like a rush that goes through my brain, gone it hurts no more listening, no more healing, I felt like I was against 4 walls of hell

domestic violence of all shapes and colors around the world.

that extends around the world us sisters of domestic violence there is no melody inside of every woman who was in a domestic violence the pain and all the hell reaching out poor health we carry broken hearts and open wounds we did . wishing we had to be silent we have fears and pains inside friends of different flours many shapes around the world now we have people raise we have, we are innocent and at home the grave of someone that never left us .because so sisters of all shapes and colors around the world now we belong to an organization that is called Barrier Free Living .







BARBARAS WORK SHOW CASE BARRIER FREE LIVING-SURVIVORS SPEAKER-BUREAU.





This was made for all the people who are in Domestic Violence. It will take Time



I AM HARD OF HEARING.



Barbara is one of hard of hearing survivors speakers Bureau as our sessions continued on Barbara amazed me with the ideas of how to take care of as well and what best help to serve deaf and hard of hearing survivors of domestic violence. in our many discussions Barbara often spoke of the problems she faced when out in our world, going to the doctor's office was a great challenge often and she was overlooked and have to rebooks appointment, because she missed her name being called. She didn't hear so through the discussions we looked at solutions that doctors offices' should know their patients ,and instead treat them as invisible, Barbara has put in place,(seen on the left a card)when she can approach the receptionist at the office and show she's hard of hearing, I was so proud that each of our women with different disabilities advocate to improve their systems, good job Barbara I'm pleased to know you and we look forward in brainstorming other groundbreaking policies that will help's deaf women and hard of hearing to be able to educate and bring awareness again thank you for your input you are a valuable member

barrier free living BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVORS SPEAKER'S-BUREAU

WE love stories about people about surviving against odds ,right, I mean what's not to love about that for example every day there are people who persevere, in incredible ways and approach life with positivity focus and passion to go out and accomplish their dreams we see that every day, but when I notice what we don't acknowledge is a needless barriers that keep some people with disabilities, regarding of the attitudeskills or the ability, if the building isn't wheelchair accessible it doesn't matter how positive you may be, if you can't accessible a building in a wheelchair I can not independently get to my destination, it doesn't make any difference I can't get in Barrier number 1. I noticed a difference in how I've been treated as a person with a disability, navigating stairs is even more difficult or bathroom stalls are not accessible when you're dying to go to the bathroom, or I know when I travel I can't have that extra cup of coffee because i have to know were my bathroom stops may be. The airport would have accessibility, when you get on the airplane you can't even get into the bathroom so I have to watch what I drink until I land and find accessibility, bathroom, that's not right! some people overlook what a disabled individual has to go through it unfortunately, the problem is too many people don't see it that way these types of people and not bad folks in fact most of the time they don't even realize that their mindset is discriminate to for them they think it's good human service to help a person with a disability by lifting their chat up some stairs or by bringing them the microphone when the stairs blocked the podium, human kindness is great, but they can permanently putting a person 1st with a disability in the position where they always require systems it's okay after all that always someone who can help and it's really not a big deal right for me as a wheelchair user I really want to explore my independence and when people are constantly treating you as if you're sick and can't think for yourself that becomes a problem I normally can navigate most situations until going to places where I feel vulnerable I really want to society that when that building buildings to always remember we need accessibility in the front of the building instead of going through a basement darkened with rats and roaches or to access and organization, underground were danger lurks in every corner but because I have to be there sometimes I'm willing to take that extra risk, though they may have cameras at the elevators the long hallways do not I'm always looking ways to improve the system and into improve my life thanks for stoping by, see you next year THERESA.

newswire

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MY BEST FRIEND CAN ECAPE WITH ME.

NYC Gets First Domestic Violence Shelter That Allows Pets

The is the first non-profit in New York City to let domestic violence survivors bring their pets into shelter with them. Not wanting to leave a pet behind in a dangerous situation can be one of the reasons people don't leave abusive relationships — so this is a big deal.

:

Today, national data show that more than 40% of domestic violence victims stay in abusive situations out of fear of what would happen if they left their pets behind. Plus, more than 70% of pet owners who enter shelter report that the abuser has threatened, injured or killed family pets.(*) Yet in New York City—the largest provider of domestic violence services in the country with more than 50 shelters—not one shelter currently allows pets in residence, until now.

Well, those are some intense and heartbreaking statistics.

Although there are already that allow pets, this is NYC's first. The program kicked off on June 1st with ten apartments where small animals such as cats, hamsters, and fish are allowed. In six months, they plan to expand to three more shelters, and to allow dogs. First, they want to build dog runs so women who don't feel safe going into the public have a way to exercise their pooches.

"Sometimes victims of domestic violence when they come into shelter, women don't feel like they want to go out immediately so if they have a pet we want to have options available to be able to walk the pet within the shelter environment," said URI President, Nathaniel Fields.



Domestic violence victims in Milwaukee faced eviction for calling police, study finds

Law has since changed, but some problems persist, victim advocates say

By <u>John Diedrich</u> of the Journal Sentinel Aug. 18, 2013

The city's says that if police receive three or more calls in a month, the property may be declared a nuisance and the landlord could be charged for police service. At the prodding of police, landlords most often have resorted to evictions in such situations, To ward off having their property branded a nuisance, landlords have discouraged domestic violence victims from calling police, posting signs and even suggesting extreme measures, according to the study.

"She has been beaten by her 'man' who kicks in doors and goes to jail for one or two days," one unnamed landlord wrote in a letter to police, cited in the study. "We suggested she obtain a gun and kill him in self-defense but evidently she hasn't. Therefore we are evicting her."

Local victim advocates and the study's author applauded the change but said the problem of domestic violence victims losing housing because of the actions of their abusers persists.

"A lot of clients don't know about the exemption and don't always feel at liberty to talk about it, and the cycle of violence continues," said Carmen Pitre, executive director of the "This is another layer of being held liable for what is happening in their relationship.", noted there are other calls to police that still cEvicting tenants is far from easy, lawyer who represents landlords in eviction actions and writes a He also said the landlord has to consider the risk to other tenants when abuse is happening.

"The landlord knows he has a volatile situation and needs to protect his other tenants, too. They are stuck," Pettit said. "Whether DV is in there or not, my clients have the same problem. Police just push it off on landlords and have us do police work, and we are not the police."

'Can we solve the problem?, enacted in 2001, a property could be declared a nuisance if police are called to an address more than three times in a month for calls that fall under the ordinance.

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All Hazards Stockpile Checklist 7-DAY SUPPLY OF NONPERISHABLE FOOD

Respecting people with disabilities and treating them with dignity must be part of the response.

This is a simple, easy-to-use tip sheet with information for assisting people with a wide range of disabilities. Originally developed by the University of Mexico's Center for Development and Disability.

This website from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities provides information for emergency managers, responders, and service and care providers.

People with Disabilities

Protecting yourself and your family when emergencies occur requires planning ahead. You are in the best position to plan for your own safety as you are best able to know your abilities and possible needs during and after an emergency or disaster. You can cope with emergencies by preparing and practicing in advance with your family and care attendants.

| Ready-to-eat canned items. |
|---|
| Protein and fruit bars. |
| Dry cereal and granola. |
| Peanut butter and jelly. |
| Dried fruit and nuts. |
| Crackers. |
| Canned or boxed juices. |
| Canned or jarred baby food/formula. |
| Canned or boxed milk or soy products. |
| Powdered milk. |
| Comfort foods such as cookies. |
| Fluids with electrolytes. |
| Sports drinks. |
| Instant coffee and tea. |
| Other boxed foods needing only water or milk. |
| Staples: Sugar, honey, salt, and flour. |
| Other (for restricted or special diets). |
| Pet food and litter. |

IN DISASTER ,THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY ARE ALWAYS FORGOTTEN.What we can do to help ourself. have a safety plan.

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BARRIER FREE LIVING SURVIVORS SPEAKER BUREAU NEWSLETTER.

Feuerstein President/CEO Barrier Free Living Family of **Companies** 270 East Second Street New York, NY 10009-7815 (212) 677-6668 ext. 123 Request a Speaker. To present to your business, organization, by calling 212-677-6668 ext 330. or - emailbflspeakerbureau@bflnyc.org Theresa Mc- Senior coordinator and Founder. **Barrier Free Living Survivors'** Speakers Bureau. 270 E. Second Street New York, NY 10009-7815 www.bflnyc.org www.facebook.com/ barrierfreelivingnyc-(she who attempts the ridiculous, achieve the impossible

Domestic Violence Program Barrier Free Living, Inc, P.O.Box 20799 NY, NY 10009-9991 Tel: 212-533-4358 Fax: 212-673-5167 e-mail: georgetted@bflnyc.org www.bflnyc.org



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BFLSURVIORS SPEAKER BUREAU. MY CHRISTMASS BLESSING TO ALL .

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THE biggest blessing of the Christmas season is the celebration of the birth of our Savior, the Prince of Peace and Light of the World! AND I had my daughter Sarah Theresa Macintosh. (CHRISTMAS DAY BABY) THE GIFT THAT JUST KEEPS ON GIVING, MONIQUE, THE BUSINESS LADY, MCHIAL. THe Entrepreneur THANK YOU FOR THIS GIFT.

Family and friends

Peace and goodwill

The beauty of the season

The blessing of giving freely

The warmth and love surrounding the holiday The music and nostalgia

Blessings are just like flowers. When they are fresh people prize them, when they wither, people

forget them. How often do we remember the blessings and the miracles that are showered on us from heaven above and how often do we crib about the misfortunes we are made to encounter throughout our lives. Undoubtedly the list of the latter would be far too prolonged than the former. A popular Christmas Fable goes like this-Once a man who had died and gone to heaven asked God, Why is it that during the good patches of his life he could see two pairs of footsteps on the sands of time but during the times of trial and misfortune only one pair of footprints were visible. God replied that, during his happy times God had stood by his side and hence the two pairs of footsteps and during the times of trial, God had picked him up and walked the distance for him, hence only one pair of footsteps were visible. These fables impart a moral for everyone to follow. God's blessings are always with us. We just require the eyes and the senses to feel his presence. FOR MY CHILDREN LOVE ALWAYS, MOMMY.

