

Domestic violence shelter will double in size, but more needed

By **CHRIS LUNDY**
Staff Writer

Dottie's House, the domestic violence shelter program, is doubling in size.

Executive Director Carol Wolfe says that fact is both a good thing and a bad thing.

The bad part is that the need is so great that the program is turning away women. The good part is that the units will grow from eight to 17 by the end of the year.

Dottie's House provides up to 24-month residences for families escaping domestic violence. While there, they are required to take part in parenting classes, education and training to learn independence.

There are currently six two-bedroom and two three-bed-

room units in Dottie's House, each its own standalone apartment. Four three-bedroom, four two-bedroom, and one one-bedroom units will be built.

"Even nine will not be enough," she said. The numbers of women seeking shelter are increasing, and the facility needs to increase to keep up with the demand.

"It's like a disease. It spreads from one generation to another," she said.

Each family has its own apartment in the building, which is supervised. There is security and house inspections. Women are required to attend weekly group sessions and private counseling.

There are programs and classes to help a woman become

independent. For example, someone will work with a woman while she pays bills, something she might not have been allowed to do previously.

The children go to their usual school, and the youngest ones take part in art and dance therapy.

Not everyone completes the program, she said. However, some successful women come back and tell the current residents their success stories.

The construction will cost about \$1.3 million, she said. Another \$300,000 in furnishing, landscaping, and an alarm system will also be necessary.

"We've raised about \$900,000," she said. There are also some grant applications out.

Saturday, the Family Fun 5K



Wolfe

Walk/Run raised \$16,000 for the cause.

The Bay Head Shores Women's Club will have an event Nov. 5 with a silent auction. There will also be a holiday gala Dec. 5 at the Lobster Shanty in Point Pleasant Beach. Those seeking information on Dottie's House services or fundraisers can call (732) 295-7380 or visit www.homes-now.org.