When Sister Joan brought Fallon into the parenting room, Fallon was absolutely delighted to see me. She came running into my arms crying: 'Mommy, Mommy!' A visit with my child which seemed totally impossible had come true. Sister Joan promised that she would bring Fallon up a month later. At which time she did. We were able to talk and get to know one another better. At the end of the visit Sister Joan took my hand and said: 'Ruth, I promise you that I will be here once a month and you will see your child.'

Sister Joan has brought Fallon up every month for the last year. She is always on time. She even bought a car seat. She has played a very important role in both my life and Fallon's. Visits were very difficult at first. Fallon had a hard time parting with me when it was time to go home at the end of the visit. Sister Joan was always understanding and patient with her. It really hurt me to see Fallon leave crying hysterically and not being able to go to her and comfort her. Sister Joan was loving and comforting to her during those very difficult times. She has gone to Fallon's nursery school to check on how Fallon has adjusted and if everything was going alright.

With the help of the AIM program and my AIM volunteer, Sister Joan, I have maintained a close mother-daugther relationship with Fallon. They have helped me to have a positive outlook on life and encouraged me to change my life so I can become a good mother and eventually return home to Fallon. I have never heard of a program like AIM before. They really are unique and extraordinary. I have to honestly say that I truly believe that this is one powerful program if they can keep families together from all different states.

The 'Tree of Hope' means alot to all the mothers here. Every light that is placed on the tree will go towards visits between mothers and children. We do appreciate all the support from the community. On behalf of AIM, I would like to say that it has been a great honor to speak to you tonight. I would like to thank each and everyone of you for supporting our 'Tree of Hope'."

Tree of Hope

The "Tree of Hope," our holiday fundraiser, is a great success story. After permission was granted to have the tree on the prison grounds, staff volunteers, Advisory Board members and mothers and their families quickly got busy and sent out an appeal to friends all over the state and country. We asked them to help light the "Tree of Hope" by making a contribution towards the Volunteer and Transportation Program. Continued on page 3.

The Town of Framingham donated the 20 foot blue spruce which was cut and transported to the prison by Framingham tree warden Bill Tupper and his staff. The maintenance people at MCI under the direction of Mr. Kirby erected the beautiful tree at the front entrance, in view of the visiting room.

As donations began to come in, plans were made for a special lighting ceremony. On December 18th, a bitterly cold evening, the AIM family of mothers, children, volunteers, Board, staff and friends gathered to share the holiday spirit. Those present enjoyed the singing of the Voices of Deliverence and joined in the caroling. Everyone was thrilled to see Kate Rushin and hear her poetry once again. Ruth Goldberg and Lorraine Crump, AIM mothers, and Sister Jeannette Normandin, Aim Advisory Board member, shared their thoughts and experiences with AIM.

As everyone gathered at the windows, the enormous tree was lighted, suddenly twinkling with over 1000 lights. Thanks were offered to all who had contributed to the success of the event: the Town of Framingham, Supt. Murphy, Martha Rice and Jane Jamison from the Dept. of Corrections, the many businesses that contributed lights, the AIM volunteers who had brought the children that evening and throughout the year from New Hampshire, Rhode Island and all over Massachusetts, and volunteers Jinny and Joanne who had braved the bitter cold that afternoon to decorate the tree. Jill Heine, Mistress of Ceremonies, thanked all who had supported AIM over the past year. We were so pleased to have Gloria Oldsman representing Hyams Trust, in attendance. Hyams Trust has been a major supporter of AIM for many years.

Finally thanks was extended to all of the donors to the "Tree of Hope" including the large donors: Zayre Corporation and General Motors; the group efforts: the men and women at MCI Lancaster, the staff of the Pine Street Inn, the junior fellowship of the Wellesley Hills Congregational Church, and the Episcopal Churchwomen to name a few; and the many, many men, women and children who sent in contributions of all sizes. After all the thanks were given, it was time for refreshments!

Framingham Tree Department ready to transport the 20 ft. "tree of hope."

By mid-January the "Tree of Hope" had raised $6,000.00 for the Volunteer and Transportation Program. Besides raising money, the tree generated great media coverage as the lighting ceremony was covered by Channels 4,5 and 7, articles appeared in the Middlesex News, the Shrewsbury Voice, the Wellesley Townsman, the Worcester Telegraph and the Springfield Daily News, and substantial air time was given by WKOX in Framingham and WRBB at Northeastern University. As a result of this news coverage new donors and volunteers came forward.

On January 6th, the AIM Mothers group met and together with AIM staff wrote thank yous to over 250 generous folks. Once again, thanks to all for your tremendous response.