

Alternatives

www.abwrochester.org

Winter 2008

Laws Intended to Reduce Crime End Up Harming Victims Victims of Domestic Violence Often Victims of Housing Discrimination as Well

MANY FEAR REPORTING ABUSE WILL RESULT IN THEIR EVICTION

When a resident of East Rochester called police for help recently, this victim of domestic violence got a nasty surprise—her plea for assistance enabled her landlord to begin eviction proceedings, not just against her batterer, but *against her as well.*

East Rochester's "three strikes and you're out" municipal code allows a landlord to evict tenants when police have been called to a property three or more times. In this case, the person calling for help was victimized yet again, not just by her abuser, but by an unfair housing code as well.

Unfortunately, this is not an isolated incident.

According to a study done by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), over 50% of homeless women are homeless because they have fled an abusive situation.

Victims of domestic violence face enormous housing challenges when they attempt to break free of an abuser. For many

women who are abused, domestic violence and homeless shelters offer a crucial source of safe housing. However, such programs are crisis-oriented and offer victims only a temporary, short-term solution to their housing needs. Shortages of available bed space may render even emergency shelter unavailable to some victims in need. Women who live in some rural communities may be forced to travel to another town or even county to find shelter.

The combination of emergency shelter shortages, lengthy waiting lists for public housing and limited vouchers for housing subsidies conspire to make it increasingly difficult for victims to locate and maintain safe and permanent housing, thus placing abused women and their children at serious risk of homelessness. A recent survey conducted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors documented this problem, finding that



homelessness is often a direct result of domestic violence.

As a result of various discriminatory practices, women who have found safety in a domestic violence program often face the greatest discrimination when they take the next step and begin the search for safe, permanent and affordable housing that will allow them to leave the shelter and successfully re-enter the community. They regularly face eviction based upon

What Can You Do To Help?

- ▶ Thank your Monroe County Legislator for supporting legislation just passed, outlawing such discrimination in Monroe County
- ▶ Speak up when you see abuse—*silence enables violence*
- ▶ **Keep supporting ABW with your financial donations**—*with your help, we can continue fighting this problem, and the many problems victims of domestic violence continue to face!*

Continued on page 2.

Services to the Community



a Knight to Remember

SAVE THE DATE for
 Alternatives for Battered Women's
 annual fundraiser!

This year's theme:

A Knight to Remember

May 8, 2008

The Roger Robach Community Center
 (a.k.a. the Beach House), Beach Avenue, Charlotte

5:30 - 6:00 p.m. (patron reception)

\$75/patron ticket

6:00 - 8:00 p.m. (main event)

\$50/guest ticket

- ☞ Our famous **Silent Auction**
- ☞ Gift basket raffle
- ☞ 50/50 raffle
- ☞ **period-authentic cuisine**

- ☞ strolling **entertainers** in
 Medieval costume, including
 a licensed falconer and her
 pet hawk

- ☞ a chance to **raise money for
 a good cause while having
 a fun night out!**

Victims of Housing Discrimination, continued from page 1.

violent and criminal acts perpetrated by their abusers or because they seek assistance and protection from law enforcement or the courts.

Current or potential landlords and individuals selling or leasing property will often discriminate against these women and their children when they learn of their personal circumstances. In some cases, victims have been told by their landlords that if they do not divorce their abuser, they will be evicted. Practices such as these blame and punish the victim for the violent acts of an abuser. Such discriminatory actions cause women to fear that calling the police for help or taking other measures to protect themselves and their children will result in an eviction or an inability to secure safe, stable housing for their family.

Legislation was just passed in December in Monroe County to outlaw this discriminatory behavior, but informal instances of such discrimination could still occur. Actively educating everyone that domestic violence is *not* the fault of the victim is part of the larger solution to this insidious, and often hidden, problem.



Honor/Memorial Gifts

**Gifts made between May 23, 2007 and
 November 2, 2007**

IN MEMORY

- Violet Foreman
 Ms. Patricia Marcus
- Bernice K. Isaacson
 Bernard Isaacson, DDS
- Marie Rentsch
 Lorain and Midford Broadwell

- Ernest R. Thomas
 Ms. Eileen Kitzel
- Glenn Wadsworth's
 Anniversary
 Ms. Doris M. Roosevelt
- Barbara Wheeler
 Mr. and Mrs. Michael P. Morley
- Michael Zamiarski's 40th
 birthday
 Ms. June M. Castellano and
 Mr. Brian Kane

IN HONOR

- Mr. and Mrs. Dick Spero's 60th
 Wedding Anniversary
 Felice and Leonard Harris

Wish List: Space limits prevent us from printing our list here—but if you want a copy of our current Wish List, please consult our website, or call us: www.abwrochester.org, 585-232-5200, ext. 265

- 24-Hour Hotline • Bi-Lingual Services • Children's Programs • Court Advocacy
- Domestic Violence Prevention and Education • Emergency Shelter
- Individual Counseling and Support Groups • Professional and Community Education

So Much to Celebrate These Past Few Months!

When you deal with a subject as daunting as domestic violence, it's nice to have a positive, upbeat occasion once in a while!

Volunteer Recognition Reception

Last April 18, over 50 volunteers, staff, and donors gathered to celebrate the wonderful volunteers who help ABW promote its mission of helping women and children in our community. Winners of third annual Annette Itkin Volunteer of the Year award were Beach Party co-chairs **Joyce Ellis** and **Peggy Kitz** (indirect service award) and shelter volunteers



Edmond Gayton and **Donna Taylor** (direct service award).

Photography donated by Geoffrey Dylan Pawlaczuk of Renowned Photography.

Walk a Mile In Her Shoes

The great folks at WPXY held a fundraiser in October that netted over \$7,000 for us!

Walk A Mile In Her Shoes® is a nationwide event that invites supporters to participate in a one-mile walk to raise awareness around issues of rape, sexual assault, and gender violence. The march empowers men to join in the efforts of making the world a safer place, and provides an opportunity for the community to talk about these important issues.

It was quite a sight to see close to 100 participants strolling, tottering and teetering towards the finish line. The sight of all those hairy, manly legs in stilettos, pumps and clogs was... well, let's just say—memorable! WPXY hopes to make this an annual event, and we can't wait to see what fashionable footwear the guys come up with next time!



Annual Meeting

ABW held its annual meeting on Wednesday, November 14, at the Rochester Club Ballroom. Over 75 people attended, enjoying fine food, moving stories of triumph and survival, and the lovely music of **Walter Marquardt**, who donated his talents again this year. Winners of ABW's annual awards included **Laura Villanti**, who won the **Special Friend Award** for her efforts to raise funds for us via her annual Holiday Bazaar at Oak Hill Country Club; the **Stand-Up Guys**, a local group that encourages men to take responsibility for ending violence against women and girls, who won the **Stop the Hurt Award**; and **Carly Wise**, a member of SAFER (survivors advocating for effective reform) and former ABW client, who was honored with the **Restore the Hope Award**, for her tireless efforts in working to gain the recognition and support that survivors deserve.



Our Community Partners Come Through For Us Once *Again!*

It's been a busy Fall season here at ABW. National Domestic Violence Awareness Month kept us all active, from our Annual Press Conference, held on October 3 at Excellus/BlueCross BlueShield headquarters to the many events held on our behalf in the community.

The following community groups, foundations, and organizations have supported ABW with recent events and gifts:



- An **anonymous donor** gave us \$3,000 in September for our emergency travel fund—the same donor who has given over \$17,000 for this purpose over the past few years. This fund helps pay for such essentials as bus tokens and passes, taxi fares, and other travel expenses.
- The **Cornell/Weinstein Family Foundation**, gave us a grant of over \$4,000, which will, among other things, help us buy new furniture, toys, books, and other equipment for the waiting room in our Court Advocacy Program, housed in the Hall of Justice.
- The **Downtown Fitness Club** held a fundraiser for us in September, and presented us with a much-welcome check for \$1,000 as a result.
- The **Excellus BlueCross BlueShield** Broker Golf Tournament, held in May 2007, raised over \$8,000 for us. They hope to make this an annual event—we hope so, too! Many thanks to new ABW Board member **Joyce Ellis** for making this possible!
- The Women's Skippers Invitational, hosted by the **Genesee Yacht Club** in July, brought in over \$500 for the agency. Twenty-one boats participated in the race, held on Lake Ontario on a lovely, sunny July Saturday.

- The **Genetaska Club** of Greece, NY donated funding for an "Interpretype" machine that will help us better communicate with hearing impaired as well as Spanish-speaking clients. Better still, this machine was invented, and is manufactured, right here in Rochester!
- **Kraft Foods** in nearby Avon is supporting the food service program in our shelter once again with a grant of over \$5,000. This is the ninth year in a row they have helped us out so generously. Their continued support is as sweet as a big dollop of Cool Whip on top of a nice, warm piece of homemade pie! (did you know that their Avon plant is the only place in the world that manufactures Cool Whip? Be sure to dazzle everyone at your next dinner party with that fact as dessert is being devoured!)
- The "Shop for a Cause" fundraiser at area **Macy's stores** in mid-October brought in over \$700 for ABW. Many thanks to board president **Teresa Anderson** and board member **Sharon Rivais** for selling so many tickets to this event to their friends and colleagues!
- The **Penfield High School Annual Faculty-Student Basketball game** held last spring raised \$1,350—the third year in a row that

they have named us as the beneficiary of this fun event!

- The kind-hearted, community-minded folks at the **Strathallan Hotel** hosted a Celebrity Bartender "Sip 'n' Tip" event for us in October. The event also ended up being a birthday celebration for one of our favorite volunteers, **Nancy Rice!** Many thanks to celebrity bartender **Josh Nichols**, weather forecaster for Channel 10, whose talents and enthusiasm helped make the event quite a success, ultimately raising more than \$500 that evening.
- Our fine friends at the **Marie and Joseph C. Wilson Foundation** have given us a grant of \$15,000 for our Transition Support Services (non-residential) program. This is triple the amount they gave us last year for TSS, and is most appreciated, as this program serves over 1,000 women and their children each year, easily as many as our shelter programs serve.
- And don't miss the story on **WPXY's "Walk a Mile In Her Shoes" fundraiser** (see p. 3)—the sight of all those hairy, manly legs encased in stiletto's and fashionable pumps was as dazzling as the autumn sunshine we were blessed with on the day of the event!

Are you receiving duplicate mailings from Alternatives for Battered Women? Have you moved or changed your name? Do you know someone who would like to be added to the mailing list? Please call Pamela at (585) 232-5200, ext. 265 and she will be happy to talk with you.

ALTERNATIVES is a publication of Alternatives for Battered Women, Inc.

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|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
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Does your partner ever act in ways that make you feel afraid?

Call Alternatives for Battered Women's Hotline

(585) 232-7353
TTY (585) 232-1741

CONFIDENTIAL
HELP
24 HOURS A DAY