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info@womensafe.net
 www.womensafe.net

Language interpretation services available.

Deaf callers please use telephone relay.

A Good Bye...
 Naomi Smith Retires from WomenSafe

By Naomi Smith, *Outgoing Executive Director*

As I reflect upon my retirement from WomenSafe I think about how far we have come in this movement to stop domestic and sexual violence against women. When talking to women who are seeking safety for themselves and their children, it can sometimes seem that we haven't made much progress at all. This is because it is still happening and because there are never enough resources to meet all of the needs women and children have. With all of the bumps and potholes, it is not an easy road for victims and survivors to navigate.

But, in fact, we have all made much progress through our work with sister programs, the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, the U.S. Dept of Justice Office of Violence Against Women, our local State's Attorney's Office, DV Solutions (the batterers' intervention program), Economic Services, DCF-FS, Housing Solutions, CVOEO, and HOPE, among others. In addition, there are a myriad of ways that our community members support the families we serve. For example, each year 15-20 new volunteers are trained to help staff our hotline, listen to survivors' stories, and support them through the many stops along their way to safety. Our community is always there, working beside us to provide the extra mittens and scarves that kids need for cold and snowy winter days, helping us to find the needed items for a particular family, and offering their monetary support.

In addition, perpetrators are being held more accountable than ever before due to the advocacy by many of us for stronger responses to perpetrator violence and more safety nets in place to support victims and their children. The police are arresting, prosecutors are prosecuting, batterers' intervention programs are intervening. Not only in Addison County, Vermont, but perpetrators who are public figures, mega stars and those who cover it up are also being held accountable. These are all big steps because, as WomenSafe believes, when women and children are safe, the community will also be safe.

The work continues. The WomenSafe staff remains dedicated to supporting safe communities, and Kerri will lead the organization through its next phase with lots of energy, ideas and collaborative efforts for Addison County and the Town of Rochester.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with all of you for the past 15+ years and for the gains we all have made to make our community safer for all of its citizens. I know great things will happen in this the next stage of WomenSafe, its staff, board and the greater community. Peace.

Join us in celebrating Naomi's 15+ years at WomenSafe & her commitment to the community on Thursday, Oct. 30 from 4:30-6:30pm at 51 Main Street in Middlebury. Light refreshments provided.

Hello... A Message from the New Director

By Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, *Incoming Executive Director*

I am excited to officially become the Executive Director of WomenSafe November 1st. I have been honored to be a part of the work WomenSafe does for the community over the past 12 years. In this time, I have appreciated the support and work of the larger community in the effort to make Addison County and Rochester a safe and healthy place for all of its residents.

Over the next few years, one of my main areas of focus will be to increase the stability of funding for domestic and sexual violence prevention and response work in the county. WomenSafe has been fortunate to receive a number of large federal grants over

the past seven years. These major grants have enabled us to grow, and to support this work at the State's Attorney's Office (through an investigator and prosecutor position there), at DV Solutions (to support their work in providing programming to convicted offenders), through our community-supported Transitional Housing Program, and to support larger collaborative work in the county. These funds have been enormously helpful, and have enabled us to continue forward momentum in the work of addressing and ending domestic and sexual violence. The economic downturn in 2008 dramatically impacted small non-

profits like WomenSafe. We were able to weather this storm through both community support and the support of these competitive Federal grants. It is now time for us to engage our community in more ways and create a more sustainable and less volatile funding stream than these grants. In addition, WomenSafe is engaged in many community and statewide initiatives that work to end domestic and sexual violence from local classrooms, to Montpelier and beyond. Your voice, energy and engagement are invaluable in this work. I am excited for this challenge and interested in your thoughts about how to make this happen.



BOOK
REVIEW

Return to Sender

By Zora, *Community Member, Age 10*

Return to Sender written by Julia Alvarez is about two families. A Vermont family hires Mexican farm workers because they don't have enough capable workers on their farm after two tragedies. The Mexican family they hire consists of three men and three little girls. The mother of the three little girls was left to take care of her mother who was dying, and then went missing. As they work on the farm they are constantly worried that ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) could arrest and deport them.

I learned about the dangers that migrant worker families face while trying to find a better life. Dairy farmers in Vermont are struggling and, to save their farms, some of them seek help from migrant workers. The main characters are the son of the dairy farmer (Tyler), and the oldest daughter of the Mexican farm workers (Mari). One day, Mari finds Tyler in his special place stargazing, and he starts teaching Mari about the stars. They become friends. Class bullies, and Tyler's

struggles with his ethics and the importance of following the law, make their friendship hard to manage.

The story becomes more complex as one of the farm workers, Tío Felipe (Mari's uncle), gets arrested and put in jail for being in a car that was pulled over for speeding, and running away. He stays in jail for months because he is not in the United States legally. At the same time, mysterious calls keep coming on Tyler's family's phone. The Mexican family starts suspecting the calls are from Maria's mother, and she may be in trouble.

Return to Sender sheds light on both sides of the debate over immigration laws. This story is touching and I recommend it.

We give our thanks and congratulations to Julia Alvarez, a fabulous Middlebury author who was recently awarded the 2013 National Medal of the Arts by President Obama.

Outreach to Migrant Workers

By Foresta Castañeda, *Outreach Advocate*

For the past eight years, WomenSafe has worked to increase the visibility and accessibility of our services to Spanish speaking migrant workers in our service area. Approximately 2500 migrant workers are employed on Vermont farms and about 500 of these workers reside in Addison County. These workers are often extremely isolated due to geography, language barriers, lack of transportation, fear of deportation and lack of information (and misinformation) about their rights, and other barriers. Women migrant workers are a minority within this minority and are often the only women on their farms. This increased isolation can make it particularly challenging for migrant women who are experiencing domestic or sexual violence to reach out for support, seek information about rights, or be able to flee an unsafe situation. In order to reduce barriers and meet a growing need, WomenSafe has worked to increase its capacity to provide services to these survivors.

Through a partnership with Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services and the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, WomenSafe (and all network

programs) have access to Language Line Interpreting service, which provides over the phone interpretation and translation in over 170 languages. This has been an invaluable resource in responding to hotline calls from survivors with limited English proficiency (LEP).

WomenSafe has also worked to identify local, trained and confidential in-person interpreters; created an organizational protocol on access to interpreters; worked to educate staff and volunteers on how to access interpreters; provided staff and volunteer education on issues specific to immigrant survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and best practices for working with immigrant and LEP survivors. With the support of Spanish speaking volunteers and student interns, the Outreach Advocate created Spanish language palm cards with information about domestic and sexual violence and WomenSafe’s services, and has created a Spanish language display for use at outreach events.

At the community level, WomenSafe has participated as a member of the Addison County Farmworkers’ Coalition to support the needs and rights of migrant workers, and provide

information, awareness building and education about domestic and sexual violence and WomenSafe’s services. WomenSafe has assisted the coalition in sponsoring events such as Spanish mass, parent child playgroups, cultural celebrations, annual visits by the Mexican consulate, worker and immigration rights events, and other events and programs that support migrant workers to safely gather as a community to socialize, break isolation, and gain information about rights and community resources.

This work has helped to build relationships with allies including immigration lawyers, social justice organizations and statewide organizations that can also help to support migrant workers who experience domestic and sexual violence. Our direct work with survivors has helped us to learn and understand the barriers which exist to accessing our services and the services of other community organizations and systems. WomenSafe has and will continue to work at all levels, to reduce barriers and advocate for the needs and rights of all survivors, regardless of their immigration status.

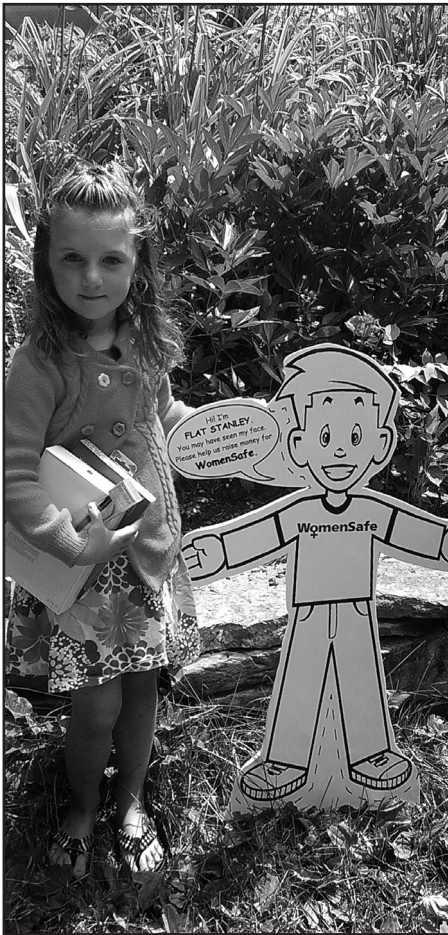


HELP US BY GOING PAPERLESS

WOMENSAFE works hard to conserve our environment. Please help us by signing up to receive *The Advocate* via email. Your participation means that not only would we save more trees and use less petroleum products in the production and distribution of this newsletter, but you would also be helping us to continue to raise awareness and con-

sciousness of the issues faced by families, friends and neighbors who are being victimized by their partners or other people in their lives—but in a cost-effective manner.

Thank you to our **107 e-readers** who already receive the newsletter via email! If you would like to “Go Paperless,” let us know at info@womensafe.net. In order to avoid gaps in delivery, please inform us of any email address changes by calling Carol at 388-9180.



Flat Stanley Act of Kindness Fundraiser

By Willow Wheelock, *Training & Education Coordinator*

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*“Through random acts of kindness,
a safer community is made.”*

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Earlier this year, WomenSafe sponsored the Flat Stanley Act of Kindness Fundraiser. This fundraiser encouraged residents of Addison County and Rochester to decorate a Flat Stanley cutout, photograph themselves doing their kind deed with their Flat Stanley and submit their entry along with an optional donation to WomenSafe for a chance to win prizes. The grand prize was an iPad. Together, through many acts of kindness, this fundraiser supported a healthier community for everyone and WomenSafe is excited to announce that Nilah Fitzgerald was the grand prize winner! For her entry submission, Nilah’s photo showed her cleaning out the garden at her school as her act of kindness.

In addition to all the people who participated and submitted entries and the business/places that offered up space to display Flat Stanley, WomenSafe would like to recognize and thank the local businesses who contributed to the success of this fundraiser through their donations: Maple Landmark, Middlebury Parks and Recreation Department, Middlebury Sweets, Otter Creek Yoga, Rochester Café and Country Store, Sandy’s Books and Bakery, Vermont State Parks Department and Whirlie’s World.

One Billion Rising 2015

By Foresta Castañeda, *Outreach Advocate*

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For the past two years, WomenSafe has organized successful local community awareness events as a part of the global One Billion Rising campaign, held on VDAY, Feb. 14th. Started by activist (and Middlebury College Alum) Eve Ensler on the 15th Anniversary of VDAY—a global activist movement to end violence against women and girls, One Billion Rising is a call to action which acknowledges the United Nations statistic that 1 in 3 women, or about one billion women worldwide,

will be abused in their lifetime. One Billion Rising calls for one billion people worldwide, to rise up, strike, dance, demand justice for survivors, and call for an end to violence against women and girls. One billion women abused is an atrocity—one billion rising is a revolution! WomenSafe is again planning to organize a local event as a part of this global action. WomenSafe welcomes anyone who would like to be involved in the creation and planning of this year’s event to contact Foresta at 388-9180.



Community members **RISE** in Middlebury as part of the **ONE BILLION RISING** event on February 14, 2014.

For more information on V-Day’s **ONE BILLION RISING** events **WORLDWIDE**
www.onebillionrising.org



IN FOND MEMORY OF Mary Leyerle (Morse) Stevenson

By Foresta Castañeda, *Outreach Advocate*

WomenSafe was saddened to learn of the passing of Mary Leyerle (Morse) Stevenson at the age of 92, at her home in Medford, MA on July 14th, 2014. Mary was a lifelong activist for women's rights, equal rights for gay and lesbians, the environment, and peace and justice. A former resident of Middlebury, VT, Mary and her husband Bill Stevenson moved to Middlebury in 1984. At the time that they were arriving in Vermont, a campaign to pass an equal rights amendment to Vermont's constitution was just getting underway, following the failure of a similar legislation at the federal level in 1983. Mary, acting on her passion to advance women's and human rights, joined a state committee of activists working to pass the amendment. As a part of her work with the committee, Mary organized a local Addison County Committee and also participated in the Addison County Democratic Committee and worked to build connections with other county committees, community members, farmers' wives, and others to gain support for passing the Equal Rights Act. Mary founded the Otter Creek chapter of the National Organization on Women and despite facing opposition from the statewide committee, worked to bring then National

Organization on Women (NOW) president Eleanor Smeal, to speak at various venues across Vermont to raise awareness and support for the passage of the equal rights amendment.

Mary's enthusiasm and leadership caught the eye of the director of ACWIC (Addison County Women in Crisis, now WomenSafe), who invited her to join the board of directors in 1988. At the time Addison County Women in Crisis was a very small organization which was not well known

"Mary was a lifelong activist for women's rights, equal rights for gay and lesbians, the environment, and peace and justice."

or widely supported by the community. Mary saw the grave impact that domestic and sexual violence was having on the women of her community and believed strongly that Addison County Women in Crisis needed to have a lasting presence in the community. To this end, Mary worked diligently to increase the financial stability of the organization and was instrumental in moving the organization to a bigger and more centrally located space in Middlebury, the county seat, so that it could serve a broader, more diverse range of women and children from all socio economic backgrounds. Mary understood the need for the organization to have wider community support and partnerships and worked to build relationships with law enforcement, courts and other community organizations at a time when there was little community support. She also worked to expand the organizations' capacity to provide direct service, outreach

and education in schools, training for volunteers, and safe houses for women and children in the community.

In 1992, Mary became the chairwoman of the board. She continued to serve until stepping down in June of 1994, after a total of 6 years on the board. During this time, Mary also supported volunteered with Mary Johnson Children Center, supported the ACLU, advocated for women's reproductive rights, participated in marches in Washington and hosted refugees from Central America as a volunteer for Vermont Refugee Assistance. In 1995, she was the first recipient of the Women Who Change the World Award, honoring her work on ACWIC's board and her commitment to improving the lives of women, children and youth in Addison County and beyond.

A memorial service for Mary was held on Saturday July 26th at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Medford, MA. At her request, a collection was taken up for WomenSafe. While the current staff did not have the honor of knowing Mary, we are deeply grateful for her vision, hard work and dedication to ensure that women and children experiencing domestic and sexual violence will always have a safe place to go in our community. We offer our deepest condolences to Mary's family and friends and to everyone whose lives she touched.

Those wishing to honor Mary may send a donation in her memory to: WomenSafe, P.O. Box 67, Middlebury, VT 05753.

We would like to give special thanks to Mary's husband, Bill Stevenson, and her friend and former board member, Joan Stevens, for sharing with us their fond memories of Mary's life and work.

Violence Against Women Recognized as a World-Wide Health Epidemic

By Willow Wheelock, *Training & Education Coordinator*

In 2013, the World Health Organization released a report that represented the first-ever systematic study of global data on the prevalence of violence against women, by both partners and non-partners.

The report highlights

- that violence against women is very common,
- there is an urgent need to invest in prevention that addresses the underlying social and cultural factors and causes of violence against women that creates widespread tolerance and
- women who experience violence need better support (systems).

It found that 35% of all women will experience either intimate partner or non-partner violence with intimate partner violence being the most common type of violence against women, affecting 30% of women worldwide.

Experiencing violence greatly increases women's vulnerability to both short and long term health problems. Some of the resonating health impacts of violence against women include:

- **Death and injury:** 38% of all women murdered around the globe are murdered by intimate partners. Many more women experience physical injuries as a result of physical or sexual violence perpetrated upon them.
- **Depression and/or alcohol use:** women who have experienced violence are almost twice as likely to experience depression and/or alcohol use problems compared to women who have not experienced violence.
- **Sexually transmitted infections (STI):** Women who have experienced violence are 1.5 times more likely to acquire STI's (including Chlamydia, gonorrhea and HIV) than women who have not.
- **Unwanted pregnancy:** partner and non-partner facilitated sexual violence against women results in unwanted pregnancies and women who experience violence are twice as likely to have an abortion as women who haven't experienced violence.
- **Low birth weight babies:** babies born to women who experience partner violence have a 16%

greater chance of being low birth weight than babies born to women who haven't experienced partner violence.

The report recognized the important role health providers play in addressing violence against women including taking violence against women seriously, having skills for recognizing when women are at risk for partner violence, being able to appropriately respond to women who have experienced violence and making referrals to related services in the community. These are improvements for every sector in society to embrace, as a community will never be fully safe until all the women and children in the community are safe.

This first-of-its-kind report highlights how violence against women is a global health problem of epidemic proportions with far-reaching and devastating effects for women and whole communities.

For more information, the full report can be found at <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564625/en/>

Looking for Nominations!

WomenSafe is accepting nominations for the 2015 **Kimberly Krans Women Who Change the World Award**. If you know a local woman whose work or volunteer efforts have had positive impacts on the women and/or children in our community, please submit an essay in 500 words or less that describes her, her efforts and the reasons you believe she should be the recipient of the 2015 Kimberly Krans Women Who Change the World Award. Please email your nomination to info@womensafe.net or mail it to the Nomination Committee, PO Box 67, Middlebury, VT 05753 no later than December 31, 2014.

Improving Access to Services for the LGBTQQ Community

By Willow Wheelock, *Training & Education Coordinator*

1 in 4: This is the number of women in heterosexual relationships who will experience violence by an intimate partner. For people in same-sex relationships, this number remains the same.

People who experience or perpetrate intimate partner violence (IPV) come from all walks of life: race, social or economic class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, educational level, occupation, and/or political stripe are never an indicator of who may or may not perpetrate or experience IPV. Similarly, for people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQQ) someone's size, weight, 'masculinity', 'femininity' or any other physical attribute or role is not a good indicator of whether they will experience or perpetrate IPV. Intimate partner violence is about a person's

misguided belief that they have a right to control someone who is their partner and some of the tools used to do this are: economic abuse, emotional, sexual or physical violence, verbal abuse, and social isolation.

There are (sometimes significant) barriers to breaking free from someone who perpetrates IPV such as societal silence/misperceptions about IPV, internalized guilt and shame, threats by the abuser, disbelief or non-support from friends/family, and lack of resources/supports. For people who identify as LGBTQQ, these barriers and additional ones exist in a society that remains hetero-normative, cis-gendered and is still partially-to-largely homo/trans-phobic.

WomenSafe recognizes that men's violence (violence against women) is a worldwide health

epidemic (WHO, 2013) AND that IPV is experienced by people who identify as LGBTQQ. WomenSafe works toward a "both/and" approach to this work by challenging the way gender is constructed that results in toxic and inaccurate stereotypes, increasing our LGBTQQ competency and improving our intentionality of being inclusive. While 90% of IPV is men who perpetrate violence against women, 25% of people in same-sex relationships also experience IPV and anyone who experiences the emotional, sexual, economic, physical and isolating abuse by an intimate partner deserves equal access to services, supports and resources. By providing a "both/and" approach to ending intimate partner violence, WomenSafe is improving and expanding safety for more people in our community.



Donate Your Old Cell Phone to WomenSafe

Please consider donating your old/broken cell phones or Smartphones.

We can use them in several ways:

STALKING KITS: We include working cell phones in stalking kits for people experiencing sexual violence, domestic violence or stalking.

REPLACING BROKEN CELL PHONES: It is common for a phone to get broken during an incident or intentionally broken by a controlling partner. A cell phone may seem

like a luxury to many; however, for someone experiencing domestic or sexual violence it is a lifeline to support and safety.

RECYCLING THROUGH "REUSE" AND "REFINING" programs that accept donated cell phones, Smartphones, iPods and iPads and give money back to WomenSafe. During a 2 year period, WomenSafe received nearly \$240 for donated cell phones from Shelter Alliance.

For more information about donating cell phones, please call us at 388-9180.

The Advocate

Newsletter of WomenSafe

WomenSafe Provides:

Advocacy Services ■

(Free and Confidential)

24-hour Hotline

Information & Referrals

Emotional Support

Medical Advocacy

Legal Advocacy

Transitional Housing
Support & Advocacy

Systems Advocacy

Support Groups

Community Outreach ■ and Education

Supervised Visitation ■ & Monitored Exchange

WOMENSAFE T-SHIRTS

Available for \$18.

They are available in black and cream; sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL (sizes tend to run small); and in curvy & box style-cuts. Call us to place your order!



WomenSafe Belief Statement: WomenSafe believes a community can only be safe when the women and children in the community are safe.

WomenSafe does not necessarily share the opinions expressed by the writers and reserves the right to edit and determine the content of **The Advocate**.

The Advocate

WomenSafe

Fall 2014: Volume 20 • Issue 2

Editor: Christina Grier

Graphic Designer: Valerie Costello

Printed at Reprographics



Non-Profit Organization
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Middlebury, VT 05753
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Committed to ending domestic and sexual violence

WomenSafe