

Recent Probation & Parole Closing

By Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, Advocacy Program Coordinator

Recent economic events, both nationally and globally, have impacted each of us in one way or another. As we all tighten our belts, it is natural for us to ask our government to examine its spending as well. Simultaneously, many folks are accessing services who never have before. When they do, we need those services to be as comprehensive and supportive as possible, so that this economic slump is something we each can learn and grow from, rather than be crippled by. For this reason, we need the cuts that our government makes to be well-reasoned, responsible, and sustainable in the long term.

The regionalization of the Middlebury Probation and Parole (P & P) office is an example of the need for careful consideration of the costs and benefits of governmental "belt tightening." With projected savings of \$100,000-\$125,000 per year, the closure of the Middlebury P&P office will mean that Middlebury probationers will no longer have supervising officers based in their community. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the cost of housing a prisoner in Vermont in 2001 was an average of \$25,178. At that rate, only four people on probation would need to reoffend to negate any savings. With a case load of over 300 people, it is not difficult to imagine that this change in supervisory facilities could well net out to little savings, if not increased costs in the long term.

The Middlebury P&P office has been a model for a successful relationship

between probation officers and batterers' intervention programs. With the change, the local DAEP coordinator will no longer have close and easy access to probation officers, to the potential detriment of the success of program members. This represents a clear risk to the community.

Everyone acknowledges that our government must use its resources efficiently. Involving communities in these policy discussions is paramount to making well-reasoned decisions. Recently, the community hosted a meeting with the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections, Andy Palitto. As a result of this meeting, efforts are underway to review options for retaining a P&P presence in Middlebury. For information, or to assist in these efforts, please contact WomenSafe or your local legislators.



A WORLD VIEW

Advocacy Services in Croatia

By Rayna Rogowsky, Advocate

Domestic violence services in Vermont first formed in the mid-1970s, on the heels of the women's liberation movement, when women across the United States were beginning to become advocates in their own communities. By 1984, each county in Vermont had programs that addressed domestic violence. These organizations had various beginnings; for example, WomenSafe grew out of a need identified at the Addison County Parent/Child Center and an inter-agency collaboration that secured its first funding and resources. When I studied in Croatia last spring, I spent one month investigating the development of domestic violence services in two regions of this country, far away from Middlebury, where domestic violence advocates were also working hard to end violence against women in their communities.

I conducted ten interviews in Zagreb, the capital city, and six in Eastern Slavonia, a rural region that borders Serbia that was significantly devastated by the region's war in the mid-1990s. In Zagreb, women started forming consciousness-raising

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Advocacy Services in Croatia *continued*

groups in the late 1980s before the war started. A hotline for domestic violence victims was their first action. The European feminist community sponsored their continental “sisters” even though their cause was not supported domestically. In Slavonia, the first organization to address women’s issues began in 1994 in response to the basic human needs of refugee women during the foreign military’s occupation. Care International sponsored these women’s humanitarian efforts in 1998. Around that same time, Zagreb feminists began to collaborate with the women in Slavonia, who had been isolated from the rest of the country because of the war. The women in Zagreb “wanted to

ing, international aid and support from private foundations. At each NGO I visited, someone in the office was working on a grant application. One woman I met left a feminist NGO to take a position at the government-funded shelter because she wanted the experience of working at an agency that did not have to worry so much about running out of money and could focus on its mission. The organizations in Eastern Slavonia continue to adapt to the needs of its communities as they have since their beginnings as human rights organizations. Though the organizations grew to address women’s issues and never had original feminist politics, they remain political in their communities for demanding that local authorities and citizens increase their awareness of the situation of domestic violence.

mentioned the presence of more and different kinds of weapons as men after the war had hand grenades and explosives in addition to the knives and axes they used before the war. They also agreed that after the war, the government sympathized with veterans and were inclined to give them amnesty for domestic violence because “they are heroes and cannot be touched.” In this regard, a young respondent from the feminist organization continued, “The position of women is far harder than it was before.” Most of the individuals from Slavonia half-joked that 98% of the men in their community are PTSD victims. One advocate, a psychologist, though, blames the government for accepting many false PTSD diagnoses for men to live off pensions for their service. She knows that PTSD is “generally

Domestic violence advocates in Zagreb and Eastern Slavonia are currently working to impact change on a national level and effectively use international standards to hold their government and society responsible for promoting women’s human rights.

support the women being active in their communities,” though the Slavonian organizations did not necessarily share their feminist orientation.

Domestic violence advocates in Zagreb and Eastern Slavonia are currently working to impact change on a national level and effectively use international standards to hold their government and society responsible for promoting women’s human rights. The feminist organizations in Zagreb are struggling to maintain their politics as their city is now offering its own response to the issue (In 2007, a government-funded shelter opened in Zagreb). They are trying to negotiate their feminist politics and desire to impact the “mainstream” services. The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in both regions fight on a daily basis to stay open because they rely on scarce government fund-

In addition to talking about the development of their organizations, advocates discussed what issues they faced that might be particular to Croatia. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was a topic that all advocates raised. It was impossible for them to know what role PTSD played in the increased reports of domestic violence throughout Croatia from the time the war ended. Many commented that Croatia was a violent society before the war. One woman explained, “Men who were not violent before the war went into total self-destruction, but those who were violent got worse and worse.” With regards to this, in Zagreb, respondents from a feminist NGO and the government-run shelter both mentioned a recent trend in society that they link to PTSD, which is that more men are killing their families and then themselves. They both

connected to soldiers,” but that women and children living in Eastern Slavonia who were not directly involved in war had to cope with their refugee status and living in a war zone, but hardly got support from the government.

It was an incredible experience to be so welcomed by the domestic violence advocates I met in Croatia. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to share with you some of the unique developments and struggles of the domestic violence services in Croatia. For more stories or information about my experience, please feel free to contact me at: rrogowski@gmail.com. *Hvala* (Thank you).



Children's Programming

By Willow Wheelock, Coordinator of Children & Youth Services

As part of the rural grant funding recently awarded to Addison County, WomenSafe is excited to be able to provide programming for children Pre-K through 6th grade in addition to the educational programming already happening in junior and senior high schools. Among the new offerings are one time, ½ hour visits to classrooms designed to teach children basic information about making positive choices, alternatives to violence and safety planning around

violent encounters. Children join in the creation of a visual display that expresses their hands are helping, safe hands. There are also groups designed for lunch/recess time for kids in 5th and 6th grade. These groups will support children to identify feelings, healthy relationship qualities, personal strengths, and how hurtful or bullying behaviors can affect people; they will also offer the children skills to resolve conflicts in non-violent ways. After school groups for children ages 7-9 are also available; these groups are designed to build children's self-esteem, model consistency and boundary setting along with learning and practicing healthy conflict resolution skills. These skills will be achieved through a variety of fun-

filled art projects, group activities and interactions with the other children and facilitators of the group.

In addition to groups for children, workshops are also available for childcare providers, teachers and support staff who work with children. These workshops include Understanding Domestic Violence, The Effects of Domestic Violence on Children, Fostering Resiliency in Children or other related topics of interest. All groups are facilitated by an advocate who specializes in serving children and youth and their grown-up support people. Call Willow at 388-9180 for more information or to request a presentation or program for your school/childcare!

Weathering the Storm

By Naomi Smith, Executive Director

We thought you'd like to know that WomenSafe is weathering the storm of the current economic crisis thus far, because of our diversified funding, by cutting costs, and by being responsive to environmental needs.

So far this year, we have seen a decrease in community support donations and have experienced a cut of grant funding. In light of these cuts, we have spent some time as a staff looking at our services and how we provide them. We have looked for ways to work more efficiently during a time of increased need while still providing the quality of services victims and survivors deserve and expect from WomenSafe. As a result of this work, we have chosen to temporarily use part-time per diem staff to cover a vacant full-time position; we have cut out the after-hours stipend for staff on-call and some staff benefits. Our goal is to maintain the quality of our services for those in need by maintaining our valuable, skilled and knowledgeable staff members. To do this we may need to cut back on some of the hours we all work to save funds to get us through these difficult economic times. In addition, a Transitional Housing Grant has been applied for through the United States Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women that we hope will fill in some of the gaps for women and their children who are fleeing domestic or sexual violence and stalking by providing supports and resources to help them to be safe in safe, affordable housing.

As I noted in a prior newsletter we are doing all that we can to support our environment. An extra benefit of these changes is the costs that we have been able to cut as a result of our work. For instance, we no longer need to pay anyone to care for our lawn, as we have replaced 90% of the grass with sustainable bushes, flowers, herbs, ground cover and trees. In addition our paperless system has significantly decreased our reliance on paper and the use of our copier among other things. All of these initiatives are saving money as well as the environment.



Robert Jensen gives a presentation to the public titled, "The Pornification of Pop Culture" at Ilsley Library on February 28, 2009 sponsored by the Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence."

8th Annual Mother's Day Event and Fundraiser

WomenSafe is honored to announce that the artist for the 2009 WomenSafe Local Women Artist Mother's Day Card Series is Beth Diamond. Beth says she started drawing, painting, and using scissors early in life. She was designing paper dolls' clothes and cutting them out by the time she was seven. After a long hiatus, during which time she raised a child, helped raise three local grandchildren, worked full time, and did much volunteer work, she is happy to be getting back into her art and hopes to improve, like wine, with age. Beth

comes from a family of amateur artists on her father's side. Her mother was an artist who often used fruit and vegetables as the subject of her artwork.

Beth has designed a special mixed media artwork *Three Blessings* especially for the WomenSafe 2009 Mother's Day Card. We hope that you will pay tribute to Beth's work by attending a reception in her honor at the Middlebury United Methodist Church 5:00pm - 6:30pm on Wednesday, April 15, 2009. The original artwork will be displayed and offered for sale at the event.

The Mother's Day Card Series is an opportunity to honor your mother or other special person on Mother's Day by giving a donation to WomenSafe to help us support the safety of mothers in our community. We will acknowledge your

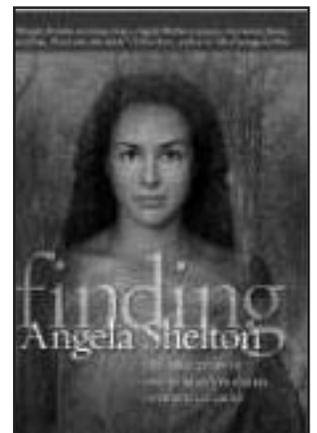
gift by sending this year's Mother's Day card with Beth's beautiful *Three Blessings* artwork to the person that you designate. For more information please call Carol at 388-9180.



Book Review of **Finding Angela Shelton**

By Foresta Castañeda, Outreach Advocate

Finding Angela Shelton is not just a story of survival but one of courage and discovery. The author, Angela Shelton, who also created the award winning documentary *Searching for Angela Shelton*, follows up the film with a memoir that uncovers both the making of the documentary and her own experiences as an adult survivor of child sexual abuse. As she works to overcome her own experiences, Angela decides that she would like to travel across the country and interview all of the other Angela Sheltons in America. As she describes in her book, it's not really about the name, but rather a means to survey women in America in hopes of gaining an understanding of how women in general are doing. Through this process of getting to know the women who share her name, she discovers that 70% of them are victims of rape, child sexual assault or domestic violence. *Finding Angela Shelton* weaves together the author's own experience of abuse with the stories of the other women. It provides readers with a window through which to witness the lives of women and the shared experiences of violence and abuse that connect them. *Finding Angela Shelton* is an emotional journey through which the author finds strength and purpose. In discovering the collective shared experiences of women in America, she finds the courage to confront her own past. For people who are looking to find connection to their own lives or for anyone who is interested in discovering the strength and resilience of women in America, this book is a must read.



OTHER NEWS

Going Paperless!

In light of the current economic crisis, WomenSafe would like this publication to go paperless. We would like to continue to raise awareness and consciousness of the issues faced by our family, friends and neighbors who are being victimized by their partners or other people in their lives - but in a cost-effective manner. Therefore, if you are able to receive this newsletter via email, please send your email address to info@womensafe.net. We will be saving money and trees! Thank you for supporting our efforts during these tough economic times.

New Shaw's Receipt Program!

Thanks to all of you who have been collecting Shaw's Receipts and sending them to us. In 2008 Shaw's contributed more than \$850 to WomenSafe based on the receipts totaling \$99,000! The new program, *Community Rewards*, is easier and completely paperless. No more register receipts or postage to pay. To enroll in the new program go to www.shaws.com and follow the prompts (WomenSafe ID# is 49001018323). If you have any problems with online registration, contact Shaw's customer service at 1-877-932-7948. Then shop on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday and Shaw's will contribute 1% of your eligible purchases to WomenSafe. If you have questions or problems, please call Carol at 388-9180.

WomenSafe Mission Statement

WomenSafe works toward the elimination of physical, sexual and emotional violence against women and their children through direct service, education and social change.

RSVP

Thank you to Faith, Sylvia, Gertrude, Joyce, Alice, Agnes, Phyllis, Helen and Lucille - the RSVP volunteers who spend many hours preparing over 2,000 newsletters for our mailing. We couldn't get this information out to our readers without their help. We appreciate all their hard work and dedication! A special thank you to Helen Ryan who coordinates the biannual mailing for WomenSafe.

Spring Cleaning is in the Air

If you are not in the mood for a tag sale and are wondering what to do with your gently used clothes and household items, you can donate them to Neat Repeats and designate WomenSafe as the recipient of the proceeds. For more information, call Carol at WomenSafe at 388-9180 or Neat Repeats at 388-4488.

Thanks to American Flatbread

Thank you to American Flatbread for hosting the annual Benefit Bake for WomenSafe on Saturday, March 7. More than \$400 was raised from all flatbread sold that night and it went directly to WomenSafe. We appreciate their ongoing support and dedication to our efforts in memory of our dear friend, colleague and supporter Kimberly Krans.

The **Advocate**

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
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WomenSafe Committed to ending domestic and sexual violence

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(The SVP): 388-6783





Jean Shappee receives WomenSafe's annual Kimberly Krans Women Who Change the World Award from Beth Diamond, last year's recipient, at the celebration held in her honor.

Council Update

By Anera Fôco

Greetings from the Addison County Council against Domestic and Sexual Violence or ACCDSV for short. My name is Anera Fôco and for the last year I have had the privilege to serve this valuable community resource as the Council Coordinator.

In response to the perils that domestic, dating and sexual violence impose on our community the Addison County Council against Domestic and Sexual

It is known that individuals affected by domestic, dating and sexual violence as well as those who perpetuate these forms of crimes come from every walk of life. To that end it is imperative to have wide representation and even wider outreach to every corner of our county. With these facts in mind and as our motto states "Everybody Safe, Everybody Welcome" I would like to ask for your help in order to move closer to our goal. Here are a few suggestions that each one of us can do to make a difference:

- Urge my local and state representatives to support work done toward ending violence in our community;
- Write letters to the editor of my local papers to show my commitment to a safer community;
- Use my neighborhood meetings as a vehicle of promoting safety and raising awareness about domestic, dating and sexual violence.

(Adopted from "Cycles of Change-DVAM 2005 WHBW,WRCC,SS)

Our mission is to promote and enhance the safety and well being of all members of the Addison County community

Violence (ACCDSV) was established in 1987 under the name of The Domestic Safety Team. Over the last two decades we have evolved and shaded names a few times, but our convictions and vision have stayed the same. Our mission is to promote and enhance the safety and well being of all members of the Addison County community and we believe that through strengthening interagency and community members' awareness and cooperation to comprehensively respond to the needs of those who have experienced domestic, dating and sexual violence as well as those who have perpetrated domestic, dating and sexual violence, we can move closer toward the eradication of violence in our community.

- Model healthy, nonviolent behaviors and create safety in interactions with all people;
- Be aware that my own friends, family and neighbors could be survivors of domestic, dating and sexual violence;
- Believe survivors and support them through their chosen healing process;
- Stop blaming victims as victim blaming promotes silence;
- Speak up when I witness someone being treated with disrespect;
- Learn about community resources available to victims and survivors of domestic, dating and sexual violence;
- Donate my time and/or money to organizations that are working to end domestic, dating and sexual violence;

Members of the Addison County Council against Domestic and Sexual Violence (ACCDSV) have a lot of work in front of us and you are the key to our success. Thus, we count on your support and guidance in order to move closer to our shared vision of a healthy and violence-free community. Please feel free to contact us with your ideas, suggestions and if you can help.

Respectfully,
 Anera Fôco
 ACCDSV Coordinator
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 afoco@aol.com

Sexual Assault Oversight Committee at Middlebury College

By Karen Guttentag, Associate Dean, Middlebury College

In the fall of 2008, Middlebury College President Ronald D. Liebowitz announced the launching of a new Sexual Assault Oversight Committee (SAOC). Although many different offices and individuals were previously responsible for some aspect of sexual assault response, no one entity was responsible for addressing campus sexual assault prevention and response from a more comprehensive vantage point. The SAOC was created to bring all of these offices and individuals together along with additional students, faculty, and staff, to create a truly coordinated approach to prevention and response.

The SAOC provides oversight in five areas: College sexual assault policies and the protocols for enforcing them; support and resources for survivors and perpetrators; campus-wide education and prevention programming; regular evaluation of the effectiveness of College policies and programs; and coordinated communication strategies about all of the above. There are 15 members, including deans; representatives from the health, counseling, athletics, wellness education, and public safety offices; the judicial affairs officer; the Chellis House director; a Summer Language Schools representative; and the Human Relations officer who oversees Middlebury's harassment policy. Students and faculty also serve on the SAOC in an at-large capacity.

In its first year, the SAOC has defined four areas of priority. One subcommittee has begun to explore the development of

a new sexual assault policy that would involve investigation of sexual assault allegations by a trained professional investigator rather than a College judicial board. This group is also researching definitions of "consent." Another subcommittee is working on developing a Web presence that will provide comprehensive information about all aspects of sexual assault, including emergency information, policies, resources, links to useful external Web sites, and educational material. A third group is conducting an informal needs assessment process to invite current students and alumni to share feedback on which campus and local resources have provided them with helpful support, which existing resources are not as helpful as they might be, and what new resources would be useful. As it explores the issue of support services, this group will also work with WomenSafe to determine how our services are utilized by Middlebury College students, and where there are opportunities for further collaboration. Finally, a fourth subcommittee is researching effective campus sexual assault prevention strategies, as well as educating themselves and the larger SAOC about useful current research on campus sexual assault issues.

In December, the SAOC chair met with the Addison County Council Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (ACCDSV) to discuss their shared interest in this work and began to explore ways in which both groups might collaborate in the future. We look forward to the development of strong alliances between the SAOC, WomenSafe, and the ACCDSV as we work together to address and prevent sexual assault in Addison County. Please feel free to direct any questions about the SAOC to Associate Dean of the College Karen Guttentag at kguttent@middlebury.edu.



WomenSafe

Committed to ending
domestic and sexual violence

The Advocate

Newsletter of WomenSafe

Volume 14, Issue 1, Spring 2009

WomenSafe Provides:

▪ Advocacy Services (Free & Confidential)

24-hour Hotline
Information & Referrals
Emotional Support
Medical Advocacy
Legal Advocacy
Systems Advocacy
Support Groups

▪ Community Outreach & Education

▪ Supervised Visitation & Monitored Exchange

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