

# The *SafeVoices* Echo

*Working to End Domestic Violence*

Formerly the Abused Women's Advocacy Project

## NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Welcome to Safe Voices. In September the Board of Directors of The Abused Women's Advocacy Project voted to change the name of the organization to Safe Voices. Why the name change? Our name became a misnomer of who we are today and where we will be in the future.

We have been hearing for years that there is some confusion over who we serve. We serve all people who are experiencing domestic violence in any kind of relationship. Many believe that because AWAP says "Women" we only serve female survivors. In actuality, we provide services to men and children, as well. However, our name created a gender bias that resulted in some individuals thinking there was no place for them to turn. In addition, AWAP has been in business for 34 years: We are not a short term "project" but a fixture in the community. What's more, "Abused" is a

hard label for someone to carry with them, and many survivors do not even identify with the term.



The change to Safe Voices is the result of a deliberate and careful process with input from consultants, staff, board, survivors, and community members. It was chosen because it is uplifting, gender neutral, short, and easy to remember. However, the truly decisive moment came from the women of our support group. Upon hearing the possible name "Safe Voices" they gasped and said, "We had no voice, now it is safe to have a voice." We could not say it more eloquently.

Safe Voices will honor and continue the high quality service delivery of Abused Women's Advocacy Project. I

personally want to thank the staff for their enthusiasm and dedication to this name change; and I want to thank the Board of Directors for their bravery, vision, and leadership into the future.

## MEMORIAL VIGILS

Safe Voices marked the start of Domestic Violence Awareness Month with memorial vigils on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The vigils were held in Farmington, S. Paris, Rumford, and Lewiston-Auburn. Katie Marble, a Safe Voice's board member, acknowledged that while much has been done against domestic violence, more work still lies ahead. She encouraged the crowd gathered in Farmington to be voices against domestic violence in their communities. At the Auburn vigil,

Sheriff Guy Desjardins (also a Safe Voices board member) and Dist. Attorney Norm Croteau echoed Katie's theme. Sheriff Desjardins noted that despite heightened

awareness, domestic violence is just as prevalent, if not worse, than decades before. Mr. Croteau added that domestic violence does not just hurt the individual experiencing abuse. It affects their friends, family, and, ultimately, their community. Rep. Sheryl Briggs attended the Rumford vigil and shared the last year's legislative achievements on domestic violence. In South Paris, Detective Tom Harriman of

the Oxford County Sheriff Dept. painted an evocative picture of the fear and challenges victims face on their way to becoming survivors. At every event, survivors bravely shared their stories—some for the very first time. Safe Voices would like to thank all those who attended the memorial vigils, as well as those who



Lewiston procession led by Safe Voices' Victoria Williams, right and Lana Whittemore, left.

participated in our events throughout October.

## FEED A FAMILY ADOPT A FAMILY

It's Fall, which means Safe Voices is turning its attention to the holiday season with our annual Feed-A-Family and Adopt-A-Family programs. For many families, living with domestic violence comes with a host of financial setbacks. In response, Safe Voices partners with community donors to provide Thanksgiving and Christmas to the families we support.

Feed-A-Family, our Thanksgiving program, collects complete meal baskets from local citizens and businesses. These baskets are delivered to Safe Voices and include all the traditional Thanksgiving fare—a turkey, canned or fresh vegetables,

biscuits, gravy, pie ingredients, and more.

Feed-A-Family is immediately followed by Adopt-A-Family, which pairs donors with individual families struggling to put Christmas gifts under the tree. Both programs help to give some holiday hope to those we support.

If you are interested in being a donor for one or both of these vital programs, please contact Claire Pettingill-Austin at 795-6744 x10, or [cpettingillaustin@safevoices.org](mailto:cpettingillaustin@safevoices.org). She will be glad to match you with families who are rebuilding their lives.

## NEW WEBSITE

Safe Voices is excited to announce the launch of its improved website, which went live in September. The new format is the result of months of collaboration between staff and our volunteer web tech Neil Pomerleau. Neil generously donated his time and talents to give the site a more user-friendly layout.

Visitors to the site will now find more detailed information and resources on domestic violence, descriptions of our prevention and advocacy services, and ways to get involved with the agency. For those looking for daily updates on the agency, the site features a link to our

fan page on Facebook. We also have installed an Emergency Exit link that allows the visitor to navigate away from the site quickly.

Our Get Involved section provides information on volunteer, internships, employment, our holiday programs Feed-A-Family and Adopt-A-Family, as well as a wish list of needed donations. There is also a separate link for anyone who would like to make a monetary donation through our secured PayPal account. You can check out the changes at [www.safevoices.org](http://www.safevoices.org).

[www.safevoices.org](http://www.safevoices.org)



Dead Season concert fundraiser. Left to right: Ian Truman (Lead Vocals), Lana Whittemore (Safe Voices) Matt Truman (Guitar, back-up vocals), Chris Michaud (Bass, back-up vocals), Andy Hackett (Drums).

**Thank you Dead Season!**

### **Board Of Directors and new officers:**

**President:**  
Martha Deschaines  
**Vice President:**  
Peter Watko  
**Secretary:**  
Katie Marble  
**Treasurer:**  
Lorette Harvey

Cathlin Foster  
Joan Bryant-Deschenes  
Susan Reny  
Guy Desjardins  
Peter Watko  
Sarah Paton  
Donna Vachon  
Anne Torregrossa  
Cindy Cronkhite

## FARMINGTON COOK-OUT

In August Safe Voices partnered with local law enforcement to create a community barbeque. Several local law enforcement providers participated in the event by grilling the food and delivering orders to local businesses. Farmington PD Chief Jack Peck, Farmington PD Detective Marc Bowering, Farmington PD Patrolman Bill Tanner, Farmington PD Sargent. Peter Barton, Franklin SO

Detective David St. Laurent, Chief of UMF Public Safety Ted Blais and Androscoggin sheriff and Safe Voices board member Guy Desjardins were all in attendance to help with the event. We appreciate everything that they contributed to making this event successful. We hope to make this an annual event that will bring Safe Voices and police

departments in rural areas together. To often we are brought together to collaborate in hard times and it is great to spend time with partner



*Left, Lana from Safe Voices, Right, Guy Desjardins Ando Sherriff*

agencies when everyone is enjoying them selves. Thank you again to all of the officers donating there time.



*Left, Lisa Laflin Executive Director, Tri-Valley United Way, Right, Jane Morrison Executive Director, Safe Voices*



## UNITED WAY'S DAY OF CARING

Safe Voices was happy to host volunteers from L.L. Bean as part of the United Way day of caring. 5 volunteers came to help staff prime and paint our conference room, entrance and waiting room. We were very appreciative of the help we received

and are happy to be able to have a fresh, warm inviting space to support people who need our services. Thank you to the United Way for bringing the community together for this event and to the wonderful volunteers who contributed to our agency.



Androscoggin Community Educator Victoria Williams (left) and Officer Berni Mowatt of the Auburn Police Dept. (center) with Sara Karam of the UU Church of Auburn's Social Justice Committee (right). Victoria and Off. Mowatt teamed up to present a discussion on domestic violence and bystander intervention to members of the church congregation on October 17<sup>th</sup>.



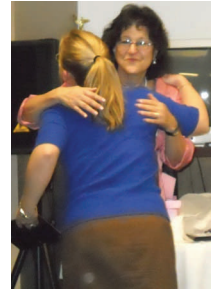
## AWAP RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

At the 2010 Annual Meeting Safe Voices presented three Community Hero Awards to members of the community who have made an impact on the agency and on people affected by domestic violence. Awards were given to attorney Daniel Stockford, Detective Thomas Harriman of the Oxford County Sheriff's Office, and Neil Pomerleau. Mr. Stockford has been generously providing pro bono legal advice to Safe Voices for over a decade. His counsel has been an invaluable resource to the agency. As a domestic violence investigator, Det. Harriman frequently works with Safe Voices advocates and has consistently demonstrated his understanding of the issue and all of the challenges involved for people impacted by domestic violence. His kindness and compassion are always in evidence, and we are lucky to have such a resource in Oxford County. Mr. Pomerleau was recognized for his work designing the new Safe Voices website. Neil, who is currently studying at Worcester Polytech, volunteered his time to create a new look and more functional setup for the website, which has given the agency a new tool for interacting with the public and spreading awareness of the issue of domestic violence and resources available.

Two agency volunteers were recognized that night, as well. Cindy Cronkhite, a helpline volunteer, Adopt-A-Spot coordinator, and Board Member, received the Extra Mile Award. The Purple Angel Award went to Celia Wright, who contributed the most helpline hours of any volunteer, totaling 194 for the fiscal year.

Outgoing Safe Voices Board President Katie Marble was recognized for her two year term. During her co-presidency, Katie has seen the agency through many changes, including a name change. Her time and commitment are appreciated.

Three staff members received Shining Star Awards for outstanding performance over the past year. Lana Whittemore, Victoria Williams, and Julie Hausman have all shown a commitment to excellence and have repeatedly gone above and beyond to provide the highest level of services.



## WREATH ORDERS

Happy Holidays! Start off the holiday season helping to support Safe Voices' holiday fundraiser by purchasing a seasonal and festive wreath and/or kissing ball. Spread the word to your friends, family, and other loved ones to make a contribution to this imperative and beneficial cause. All proceeds will go to Safe Voices, which advocates for and supports those individuals affected by domestic violence.

For those who are interested in participating in a one time volunteer project, wreath making may be the project for you. Please contact Lana Whittemore at 795-6744 ext. 14 about volunteering, to place an order over the phone, or

ask any questions. Wreath making begins November 29th until the end of the week and pick up for the wreaths is December 1st and 2nd. Delivery is available to those who order 5 or more wreaths or kissing balls. Complete

order forms can be mailed to P.O. Box 713, Auburn, ME 04212-0713, or faxed to 795-6814. Or you can download additional forms from [www.safevoices.org](http://www.safevoices.org).



*Actual pictures of Wreath and Kissing Ball made by Safe Voices staff.*



SOME STATISTICS FROM  
FISCAL YEAR 09-10 2009-2010

- Safe Voices staff had 3,369 phone contacts supporting people in domestic violence situations
- An additional 4,838 contacts were made in person
- Safe Voices sheltered women and children for a total of 4,895 bednights
- 4,525 people received education about domestic violence through presentations
- Safe Voices provided 1,615 hours of empowerment in support groups



Mary Theriault and Jane Louise Smith of Marden's in Rumford along with Barbi Marsters (not pictured) decorated the store as part of Oxford County DV Task Force Paint the County Purple Campaign for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The mission of Safe Voices is to support and empower those affected by domestic violence and engage the community in creating social change in Androscoggin, Oxford and Franklin counties.



Stay updated on all our events and activities on Facebook. Search Safe Voices and click "Like."



I would like to make a contribution to Safe Voices.

I am interested in volunteering with Safe Voices. Please contact me.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to:** Safe Voices

**Please mail to:** P.O. Box 713, Auburn, Maine 04212.

Or visit us at [www.safevoices.org](http://www.safevoices.org) to make a donation



*Thank you for your support!!*

OUR SERVICES:

- 24 Hour HELpline 1.800.559.2927
- Domestic Violence Shelter
- Transitional Services
- Individual and Court Advocacy
- Support Groups
- Community Education
- Dating Violence Prevention
- Youth Services
- Advocacy with Child Protective Services
- Batterers Intervention Programs
- Volunteer Programming

Questions or comments about this newsletter? Contact Lana Whittemore at 207.795.6744 x14 or [lwhittemore@safevoices.org](mailto:lwhittemore@safevoices.org)



Formerly the Abused Women's Advocacy Project

The SafeVoices Echo

Working to End Domestic Violence

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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 Abused Women's Advocacy Project  
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