



CENTER NEWS

Southwestern Illinois

WINTER 2008

THE FIRST STEP TOWARD PEACE

Our Mission:

To work to eliminate domestic violence in individual lives and society as a whole.

2008 Marks The 30th Anniversary Of NCADV

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, or NCADV, is celebrating a milestone event this year as it moves into its 30th year of service. When the coalition began in 1978 there were only 250 women’s shelters in operation in the U.S. Today more than 2,000 shelters and programs are providing emergency services to victims of domestic violence across the nation. With the help of the National Coalition and State Coalitions, thousands of victim advocates work tirelessly to make every home a safe home by ending violence in the family. While we recognize the enormous strides that have been made; we also know there is still so much to be done. Below are some of the accomplishments that have come under the tenure of NCADV.

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Inside this issue:

Holiday Thanks...	PG
Corporate Support...	2
Director’s Corner...	PG
Domestic Violence	3
Court gets new Judge...	
Thanks for your support...	PG
	4
Memoriam & Honorarium...	PG
	5
President’s Corner ...	PG
Program Spotlight...	6
Teen Dating Violence Awareness...	PG
Peace Tree goes global...	7

- 1984: The report from the U. S. Attorney General's Task Force informs Congress of the problem of domestic violence and assists in the passage of the Family Violence Prevention Services Act, the first federal funding specifically created to support programs serving battered women and their children.
- 1987: With the support of Johnson & Johnson Personal Care Products Division, NCADV establishes the first toll-free national domestic violence hotline.
- 1994: Ms. Magazine, in conjunction with NCADV, creates the basis for the Remember My Name project, an annual recognition and memorial to those murdered as a result of domestic violence. Since its first publication, each year's memorial has listed over 500 names.
- 1995: The Violence Against Women Act was passed in Congress to provide federal funding for training of police and prosecutors, assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and re-establish a national domestic violence hotline and many other programs.
- 1996: The Domestic Violence Offender Gun Ban is passed to extend the federal prohibition on firearms possession by criminals to include individuals convicted of misdemeanor, domestic violence, and child abuse crimes.
- 2006: NCADV hosts the 12th National Conference on Domestic Violence. This conference is considered the premiere training and networking event in the domestic violence movement.
- 2007: NCADV releases the Eighth edition of the *National Directory of Domestic Violence Programs* listing over 2000 shelter programs. This comprehensive listing of programs remains the most used publication in the domestic violence field.

The VPC is a proud member of both the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV) and NCADV. We look forward to another 30 years in service of victims of violence as we move closer to the mission of safe homes for all.

The Violence Prevention Center’s Newsletter is published quarterly by the Violence Prevention Center of Southwestern Illinois Staff. Winter 2008. Casey Hagarty, Editor



Did You Know?
In the U.S. a woman is abused every 9 seconds.



Being a volunteer at the VPC means: I do it because I believe in helping the cause. I have been here 20 years and only missed 3 days!

Board of Directors:

Jean Joseph
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MaryLou Shepherd

Happy Holidays from the VPC Board and Staff

Thanks again for another year of support!

Another holiday season has come and gone and all of us here at the VPC would like to thank each and every one of you for your support through our holiday programs. This year 26 families were part of our **Adopt-A-Family** program thanks to your generosity. Both the **Peace Partners** and the **Holiday House Warming** (which readies families to move out of the shelter and into their new homes) programs had a good response along with the **Stocking Stuffer** program. Your thoughtfulness and contributions helped to make this a very Merry Christmas for many VPC clients.

The **Peace Place Open House** Christmas party was a success thanks to **St. Michael's Episcopal Church** in O'Fallon. Each year St. Michael's plays St. Nick by making sure each and every child has a present under the VPC tree. This year they brought over 100 presents, ensuring that even those who could not attend the open house have a present waiting for them when they came in. Families enjoyed dinner together and participated in craft projects, like making snowmen and snowflakes. We would like to thank **Subway** and **Cutters** for provi-

ding dinner at a discounted price and **Wal-Mart** for donating a gift card to buy supplies and snacks. Thanks to all who attended and we hope you enjoyed the festivities.

The **14th Annual Cookie Walk** had a record breaking year. Even though we moved the Cookie Walk to 325 East Main Street - Bella Vida Studios - this year we still sold out of cookies just before noon. Cookie Walk has never sold out! Thanks so much to the entire community for coming out to show your support and thanks to all the bakers who worked so hard to make such a delicious selection. From the classics to some innovative new recipes and decorations there was literally a cookie for everyone. This year also marked the first year for Cookie Walk delivery. Two VPC Board members graciously delivered cookies all over Belleville to homes and businesses alike. We had 14 deliveries for our first year so thanks to everyone for your orders. We would also like to thank **Bella Vida Studios** for the use of your space and the **Belleville News Democrat** for your help in getting the word out through advertising.

Corporate Support - Giving Back To The Community

Giving back for the greater good seems to be catching on with national and local organizations. Whether the gifts come in the form of a grant, a cash donation, a sponsorship, or an in-kind donation; the community's of St. Clair, Randolph, and Monroe Counties are breathing a breath of fresh air as the company's where you work, spend your time, and spend your money; give back to local charities.

National organizations look to support the communities in which they have a presence through grant opportunities. The **Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation** recently awarded the VPC with a gift to assist with Shelter operation in support of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. **Target** recently awarded the VPC with funds to assist in Prevention & Education efforts in our community.

Local businesses also offer a great amount of support in their communities. **ROHO Inc.** has supported the VPC in many various ways every year for 20 years and running, from holiday programs to our annual campaign, and they also assist in sponsoring fundraisers that benefit the VPC. **Thrivent Financial for Lutherans** is another VPC supporter who provides matching funds for fundraisers. Other examples of local businesses who give back through cash donations are: **Empire Comfort Systems**, **Copper Bend Pharmacy**, **BEL-O Sales and Service**, **Newbold Toyota**, **Anheuser Busch**, and so many more.

Finally, there is the in-kind donation. **City Wide Maintenance** cleans our 18,000 square foot facility free of charge every month. The City Wide Maintenance crew is here every week to keep the shelter clean and healthy. **South Belt Storage** allows the VPC to use one of their storage sheds free of charge for shelter shop seasonal storage.

The VPC would like to thank those listed and the many others who support our mission and the missions of the many other local social services agencies who work to provide better lives for those in need.

Words From a Survivor:

Excerpts from ethnographic observations made by a survivor.

"This is my opportunity to break the silence on domestic violence against women. I believe there is power in information...Women need to understand that they are not the cause of their partners' abuse...A red alert system is a cross between a woman's intuition, a biological sensory response, and a spiritually whispered warning. This system has all the wonderful makings of a free body-guard service if women listen and respond to it...I believe that women can take back control of their lives by having faith in themselves...Women need to be their own cheerleader...Remember what Eleanor Roosevelt said - No one can make you feel inferior without your consent -"



The Violence Prevention Center is one of many domestic violence service providers in the State of Illinois. Together we serve victims under the umbrella of the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The VPC often reports how many victims we have served throughout the year, but what about the services provided state wide? ICADV issued a report on these facts for the fiscal year of 2007. These findings are based on the reporting of 51 VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) funded programs, of which the VPC is one.

- VOCA funded Illinois domestic violence programs served 44,526 adults in FY 07, 96% women, and 9,596 children.

- Approximately 84% of clients were non-residential clients and 16% of clients received shelter.

- Programs provided over 577,000 hours of service to victims of domestic violence and their children. That is equal to 66 hours of service every hour of every day.

- Programs provided over 243,778 days of shelter to victims and their children.

- Approximately 59% of the children served were under the age of 8 and 72% were under the age of 11.

- Programs provided public education to 144,577 persons; professional training to 29,489 persons including medical, social service, criminal justice, and others; and school prevention programs to 144,577 students.

- Programs answered over 197,700 hotline calls.

- The report also shows that since 2000, direct service hours for victims have raised dramatically with the average number of service hours per client at an all time high in 2007.

As you can see, domestic violence services are being preformed in excess all over the state. According to the latest census information, there are approximately 12,831,970 residents in the State of Illinois. Based on the ICADV report (which is only the numbers for 51 service providers), this means that 1 out of every 237 Illinoisans will seek domestic violence services a year. Take into consideration that: those are only the number people who seek help, not the number of people abused, and those numbers come from only 51 service providers...then imagine how many victims there are across the state.

While the VPC is the only certified domestic violence service provider serving St. Clair, Monroe, and Randolph Counties, keep in mind that there are thousands of dedicated victims advocates all over the state, country, and world working together to end the abuse and provide safer, healthier, and happier lives.

- MaryLou Shepherd

Domestic Violence Court Says Goodbye to Judge Brandon and Welcomes Judge Cason

The Honorable Judge Brandon took his leave of St. Clair County's Domestic Violence Courtroom on 12/31/07. Not only has Judge Brandon served victims of domestic violence in the courtroom, he has also appeared and spoken about domestic violence at various VPC events throughout his tenure. He has also welcomed VPC staff, practicum students, and senior service students into his courtroom to observe the legal process as it pertains to domestic violence so that we may learn and better understand the

victim's path to safety. The legal advocacy staff presented Judge Brandon with a plaque on December 11th to thank him for his service to victims of violence and wish him well on his future endeavors.

The Honorable Judge Cason is now on the bench in the St. Clair County Domestic Violence Courtroom. She comes to us as a seasoned veteran who is well versed in the Illinois Domestic Violence Act and how it pertains to the individuals who come before her bench.

The VPC would like to welcome



Judge Cason and offer our thanks for your commitment of service to victims of domestic violence. Our legal advocacy staff is looking forward to working with Judge Cason as we strive, together, to make our community a safe place for everyone to live.

Don't forget to use goodsearch.com to raise money for the VPC!

NEWS FLASH: In May 2005 the REAL ID Act was passed with the intent to limit terrorists access to state and federal issued ID's, however; this Act endangered thousands of victims of domestic violence by requiring all applicants to use their principal residential address. This forces victims to disclose their confidential address to receive federally acceptable forms of ID. Amendments were made in 2006 in order to protect victims of violence. In 2007 the Department of Homeland Security released regulations on the REAL ID Act to include exemptions for victims of violence, protected witnesses, law enforcement personnel, and judges. Translation: if the disclosure of an address jeopardizes the personal safety of an individual then that individual is exempt from having to provide their principal residence.



Thanks for your support in the second half of 2007!

PEACE

Illinois Department of Human Services
St. Clair County
Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
Attorney General
St. Clair County Mental Health Board
Mary Kay Ash Charitable Foundation
Amgen Foundation
The United Way

CONFIDENCE

Monroe County 708 Board
Boeing St. Louis
The Gateway Foundation
Anonymous

FREEDOM

Randolph County 708 Board
Friends Can Help
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

SECURITY

Newbold Toyota
Roho Inc.
Select Comfort
First United Presbyterian Church
ASMC Land of Lincoln Chapter
Target Stores
William and Mary Baker Charitable Trust
Nancy Meyer
Patricia Dunn
Harriet Fore
Pfizer Employee Giving United Way Campaign
The Great Southwestern Illinois Association of Plumbers
James Kellim
Commerce Bankshares Foundation

SAFETY

O'Fallon Sunrise Club
O'Fallon United Church of Christ
Provident
SBC Employee Giving United Way Campaign
St. Elizabeth's Hospital
St. George's Episcopal Church
First Baptist Church of Belleville
Friends of Peace
General Federation of Women's Club
Ameren IP
AT&T
Belleville News Democrat
Charity Cars
City Wide Maintenance of St. Louis
Coast to Coast Equipment and Supplies
Community of Christ
Copper Bend Pharmacy
James and Laura Kunz
Kaskaskia Mariners Association
Mascoutah Zonta Club
Home Advantage Child Care

Peace is considered the highest level of giving with Confidence second, Freedom third, Safety fourth, and Hope fifth. Each category is broken down through specified giving amounts and includes donations between that category's range.



SAFETY Cont.

ICADV
Hollywood Tan Inc.
David Kelsheimer
Robert Kueker
Phillip Lazare
Robin MacNeil
Henry Mattis
Richard May
Jan Nevios
Brenda O'Connor
Sabina Pennington
Yvette Rice
Alyse Richardson
Robert Ringhofer
Guillermo Rodriguez
Hubert Shakelford
Mark Slocomb
Peter Soto
Dolores Stover
Lynn Thies
Merle Wischmeier
Heather Wisling
Donna Woods
Nanon Anderson
Kevin Barnett
Bart Bridges
Vincent Chillemi
Sandra Colbert
Juanita Eckert
Bob Grabe
MaryLou Shepherd
Pat Huth
Hoffman & Slocomb

HOPE

P.E.O. Chapter GM
Presbyterian Woman's Association
RSIS Information Systems
Signal Hill United Methodist Church
St. Clair County Chiropractic & Rehab
St. Louis Bread Company
St. Mark Ladies Fellowship Guild
Gateway Combined Federal Campaign
George Renner & Sons Funeral Home
American Water
Belleville Township High School District 201
Blessed Virgin Sodality of St. Mary's Church
Catholic War Veterans Inc. Post 370
Century Service and Construction Inc.
Christ United Methodist Church
Ehret Plumbing & Heating Company Inc.
Life Services Network
Mascoutah School District 19
Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church
Mid America Chapter F.E.W., Inc.
Modern Woodmen of America Camp 3829
United Association of Steamfitters Local 439
Windoor Company Inc.
GWC, Inc.
Highland B&P Women's Club
United Assoc. of Plumbers & Gas Fitters Local 360

Plumbers and Pipefitters 101
Publishers Billing Agency
Southwestern Illinois College
St. Ann's Altar Sodality
St. John's Lutheran Church
Emerson Motor Technologies
First Presbyterian Church
Glaenzler Electric
American Legion Auxiliary
Beimfohr Associates Insurance
Cecil Management Group
Bushnell Presbyterian Church
Call for Help Inc.
Chesley Fence Company Inc.
Christian Singles Club
Delta Kappa Gamma Society
Linus Blankets, Etc
Mick's Exterminating Service
Union United Methodist Church
Wendy Folen Interiors
United Methodist Women
Wilke Window & Door Inc.
Women of the ELCA
Head Start
Illinois Great River Conference

Joyce Achenbach
Susan Anderson
Daphne Ayllon
Cheryl Bauer
Cherie Bolbach
Jim Braatz
Larry Brockman
Julia Burgard
Paul & Alicia Slocomb
Harold Clinton
Dennis Cooper
Carol Crook

Charlene Alderfer
Judith Anderson
Mark Azar
Nancy Beasley
Edward Bott
Alan Brainerd
Betty Brooks-McCollum
Donald Buser
Kathleen Christopher
Thomas Cohoon
Michele Cooper
Carolyn Dahm

Janice Allen
Mary Anderson
Allan Azar
Le Etta Beers
Mary Boucher
Barb Brannan
Jeanie Brown-Oliver
Melvin Campbell
Thomas Cima
Dale Colbert
Anita Corley
Sara Davis

John Allsup
Phillip Auner
Thomas Barnett
Stephen Bishop
Mary Boyne
Grace Brashier
Theodore Bryan
Jane Chenault
Kay Clements
Barbara Constance
Donald Courtail-
Carolyn Day

HOPE Cont.

Vernon Dennis	Carolyn Descher	Donald Dorwart	Edward Dougherty	Kim Douglas
Jeff Downen	Steve Downen	Luan Downen	Leo Dumstorff	Ronald Duncan
Al Echols	Jean Eckert	Annette Eckert	David Favreau	Nadine Fee
Lawrence Friedman	Nancy Frizzel	James Gannon	Margaret Giedeman	Sam Giovanetti
Andrew Gregowicz	David Guymon	Dean Hageman	Richard Hartmann	Linda Hay
Tracy Hermanson	John Hicks	Jane Hicks	Robert Hillebrand	Ron Hodgkins
Daniel Hoffarth	Mary Hollenkamp	Gary Holman	Krissy Huber	Madeleine Hunter
Barbara Johnson	Lloyd Johnson	Claudia Jordan	Jeff Kettler	Panduranga Kini
Marlene Kolbe	Catherine Kreher	Patti Kubitschek	Dale Kurrus	Bruno Kwapis
Pat Laramore	Don Lee	Victor Len	Floyd Lippert	Joseph Logan
Glen Lose	Ferne Luther	Patricia Lynch	Mary Mabon	Nancy Mahoney
Jamie Martens	Renate Matthaues	Amy Maus	Tammy McClain	Dianna McCoy
Debby McDermott	Richard McDermott	Alice McIntosh	Susan McIntyre	Patricia Miller
Rita Milligan	Larri Milligan	Gerald Mitchell	Toni Moll	Elizabeth Mudd
Mary Murphy	Eva Murphy	Mary Beth Nebel	John Neel	Timothy Noelker
Mary Ellen Norman	Deborah Oakley	Sharon O'Connell	Michael O'Keefe	Marcia Orr
Kim Papproth	Lois Paul	Stephen Peterman	Lisa Phillipson	Wyatt Rawlings
David Reed	Helen Richter	Patricia Roche	Melissa Russel	Kimberly Sachs
Richard Sauget	Lois Schmulbach	Janet Schneider	Robert Schrader	Karen Scott
Carolyn Sedabres	Thomas Sehr	Sarah Seib	Howard Heileman	Larry Shultz
Pamela Simpson	Dawn Sitton	Karen Spencer-Witherspoon	Linda Stallman	Cherly Stanger
John Staudenmaier	John Stepanek	Nan Sternau	Julia Stewart	Steven Steigman
Mary Strong	Mickey Stygar	Ann Sullins	Thomas Sullivan	Gail Taylor
Michael Thompson	Anne Thomure	Judith Townsend	B. Unger	Kenneth Valentine
Anne Vlasak	Alice Waeltz	Dawn Wahlig	Charlotte Walther	A. Walther
Allen Watters	Cynthia Webb	Darlene Weihl	Malcom Weiser	Sandra Werkmeister
Susan Werstak	Alfred White	Dorothy Williams	Audrey Wilson	Barbara Wingertner
Sammylane Wirth	Janet Witmer	Katherine Witzig	Carl Wolff	Diana Worley
Mergie Wright	Terry Yokota	Theresa Zappia	John Zinkan	Deanne George
Steve Graf	Penney Hass	Eta-Bita-Phi Club	Our Lady of the Snows Shrine	

Memoriam & Honorarium

In Honor Of Dorcas Cecil

Cecil Management Group

In Memory of Joseph Cima

Thomas W. and Marilyn G. Cima

In Honor of Terrell and Billie McLemore's

50th Wedding Anniversary

Walt and Carolyn Descher

In Honor of Dave and Sheila Misselhorn's

25th Wedding Anniversary

First United Presbyterian Church

In Memory of Janette Nedued

Albert A. and Judith J. Anderson

Pat and Merle Minor

Jack and Janice Gorrecht

Penney Hass

Rich and Marilyn Cannady

Rod Roger

In Memory of LaVerne Newbold

Craig J. and M. Susan Anderson

Joseph and Cheryl Bauer

Edward and Donna Dougherty

Charles M. and Nancy Frizzel

David and Marilyn Guymon

Glen E. and Patricia A. Lose

Renate G. Matthaues

James R. and Toni A. Moll

Timothy F. Noelker

Gregory D. and Janet D. Schneider

William A. and Ann Sullins

Michael H. and Carole S. Thompson

Susan L. Werstak

Thomas and Diana Barnett

Alan E. Brainerd

Donald D. Dorwart

Lawrence Friedman

Victor Len

Joseph P. Logan

Susan McIntyre

N. Joan Meyer

Michael D. O'Keefe

Lois R. Paul

Robert J. Schrader

B.J. Unger

In Memory of Elanor Polhamus

Walt and Carolyn Descher

In Honor Of Bonnie R. Rafeedie

Mid America Chapter, F. E. W., Inc

In Memory of Margaret Shackelford

Emerson Motor Technologies

Kenneth and Lorri M. Milligan

Daniel R. and Cynthia K. Webb

Hubert C. Shackelford

Rita A. Milligan

Michael and Carolyn Day

In Honor of Jane Weidmann's 90th Birthday

David L. and Phyllis Kelsheimer

Mark and Pat Azar

In Memory of Nikki and Baby J.J.

Donna Woods

In Memory of Lynn Kay Merwin Tiefenbrun

David Merwin

Kathleen O'Donnell

Brian O'Donnell

Kelly Archer

In Memory of Stanley Voellinger

Anonymous

Shin Caterpillar Mitsubishi

Dave & Sharon Brewer

Raymond Syniski

Marlene Gruenewald

Sharon Arbogast

Jim & Maxine Ele

In Honor of Sharon Goretzky

Orville N. & Sylvia M. Mueth

In Honor of James H. Braatz

Mike Braatz

In Honor of Dr. Brian Hohlt

Cor Jesu Academy Student Council

In Honor of Earlen Voigt's Birthday

George W. & Darlene J. Fritzinger

Shelter Needs**Food / Pantry Items**

Any / All snack foods

Condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayo, relish)

Sugar

Tuna

Baby food

Baby cereal

Boxed dinners

Chef Boyardee products

Capri Sun's

Juice

Children's Items

Sippy cups

Child plates

Child utensils

Pacifiers

Rattles

Medicine

Misc. Items

Sheets (crib and twin)

Micro Fleece Blankets
(Twin Size)

Towels

Deodorant



I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff, Board of Directors, volunteers and donors for everything they did for the Violence Prevention Center in 2007. Save-a-Family, Christmas baskets, Adopt-A-Family shelter clean-up days, support of the Shelter Shop, food, supplies, donations, in-kind services, etc. are what keep the shelter doors open so we can provide shelter, counseling, orders of protection, education and other outreach services to the 318,000 citizens in the three counties we serve.

At the beginning of each New Year many of us make resolutions – most of which we do not keep, many of which we never even intend to keep. This year I am asking you to make a resolution that I urge you to keep. This resolution is very important to the future of our clients and the futures of victims of domestic violence everywhere. Please – keep an open heart and mind. Pledge to help those around you who may be victims of domestic violence, elder abuse, or teen dating violence. Let them know that help is only a phone call away. Don't be afraid to offer help or support - open your eyes and be aware of those around you. Sometimes all it takes is five minutes of your time or a kind word, other times all you have to do is hand them a phone number for someone who can help. Make it your duty to reach out to one person this year. Many times the difference between a victim and a survivor is the one person who showed someone in need that people do care.

Again thank you for your past support and I look forward to working with you all in 2008.

Jean Joseph – Board President

That's a Fact! - In September of 2007 the FBI reported that violent crimes were nearing a 5 year peak. FBI data shows that 2002 was a record breaking year for violent crime (with 1,425,000 violent crimes committed) but dropped dramatically in 2003 and 2004 (1,360,000 in 2004). However, the statistics on violent crimes are climbing again. Violent crime had risen 1.9% between 2005 and 2006 (with 1,417,000 crimes in 2006). Will 2007 reflect an increase or a decrease?

**Program Spotlight**

This quarter we will be taking a look at Project Renee. This program is two fold in that it centralizes victim services and offender accountability. The VPC provides 3 services through this collaboration. First we have police advocates stationed throughout St. Clair County. For example, one of these advocates works with the Belleville and Fairview police departments. These advocates are often the first point of contact a victim has with victim services. When police are called out to a home for a domestic violence dispute they turn over the information to our advocates who, in turn, make contact with the household. The advocate discusses the situation and assesses the safety of the person/

persons. Then the advocate offers VPC services based on the specific need. The advocate continues to make contact either at the person's request or with their permission. Without this very valuable service, victims may not know how to seek help, what services are even available to them, or know what their options are.

The other services provided are victim advocate services. One VPC victim advocate works with victims whose offender is facing criminal charges. This advocate, in collaboration with the State's Attorney's office, assists victims with paperwork, accompanies them to court appearances, and advocates on their behalf with law enforcement, probation officers, and legal authorities. Whether it is the victim who chooses to press charges or the State's Attorney, the VPC ensures that someone is there to uphold the safety and best interests of the victim. Another VPC victim advocate works with victims seeking a Plenary Order of Protection (POP). A POP is an Order of Protection that can last for up to 2 years. Most often victims are granted an Emergency Order of Protection at their first court hearing. This protection is good for 14 days. Victims who want to extend that protection have to attend a second court hearing. The VPC advocate follows-up with these victims to remind them of their current order's expiration and helps them prepare the paperwork correctly and accompanies them to their hearing.

Without the collaboration of the local police departments, the State's Attorney, probation officers, and St. Clair County's Domestic Violence Courtroom the VPC would not be able to bring this unique and valuable service to victims of violence. Project Renee is literally the first contact a victim has on their road to safety and their last contact as they move forward on their path to freedom. From the night of the incident to the day in court where their protection is approved, the VPC is there to ensure that victims receive the care and attention they deserve.

The first week of February marks the national Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week. The teen dating violence epidemic is growing at an alarming rate. As our Children's Program Director and Prevention and Education Manager spend more time working with teens, the VPC is learning that not only is this a rapidly growing problem, it is a very dangerous one for our youth.

One out of every 3 teens will experience some form of dating violence. Nearly all of the teens the VPC talks to about dating violence claim that they know someone who has been or is in an unhealthy relationship.

Harassment and stalking have taken on new forms thanks to technological

advances. What used to be the constant phone calls or hang-up calls has now transformed into text messaging and instant messaging. It is ironic that the cell phones we put into our teens hands to ensure their safety are now the same phones that can threaten their safety. The computers we put on their desks to enrich their learning are the same portals that let in abuse in many forms.

VPC initiatives like the Clothesline Project and the Peace Tree Project give our teens a forum to learn about, discuss their own experiences, or share their attitudes and beliefs about dating violence. Educating our teens about dating violence and what constitutes a healthy or unhealthy relationship is crucial.

The VPC has been, and will continue, to seek input from local teens on how to educate their peers about dating violence in order to reach this population on a level that speaks to them. Through focus groups and one on one discussion, we learn the problems that affect teens most, what resources they will use to seek help, and what we - as a community- can do to keep them safe.

Upcoming Events

1st week of February
Teen Dating Violence Awareness Week.

March 1st
Tastes of the World

March 22nd
Vagina Monologues

April 26th
Monroe County 5K Walk/Run



Tastes of the World



Remember the VPC annual fundraiser *Just Deserts*? Well this year a committee of dedicated volunteers, and past Just Deserts attendees, have put together a similar event with an exciting new twist called *Tastes of the World*. What is different you ask? First of all it is all the beauty of traveling the globe for the finest foods without any of the hassle. Second, we bring this event to you in a venue unlike any you have attended in the past.

Tastes of the World will be an interactive experience showcasing cocktails, cuisine, and deserts from Greece, Italy, Mexico, and America. Each country will be stationed in a separate location in *Frillman Manor* to provide guests a unique cross-cultural environment that is just minutes from home. Here you can travel the globe in a few short hours while tasting the best food and drink each country has to offer.

Picture a live Jazz band playing on the balcony. You fly into Mexico for a margarita and quesadilla. You cruise on in to Italy and enjoy delicious wine and pasta. Take the train into Greece and sip ouzo and nibble at your favorite Greek deserts. All while enjoying the company of your travel companion. Circle the globe and wake up in your own bed! For more details on the event please call Janet Witmer, Director of Funds Development at 236-2531 ext 230.

exciting is that the Peace Tree is now global! During DVAM the VPC was fortunate enough to have visitors from a domestic violence shelter in Romania. After learning of the Peace Tree Project and it's purpose to collect visions of peace, the staff of the Romanian shelter began their own trees.

We are happy to report a Forest of Peace that houses literally thousands of visions of peace and still growing. Is peace possible? Thanks to all of your help there is a resounding answer of...Absolutely!

Calling All Artists...

The VPC will be holding a wine reception prior to this year's Vagina Monologues and we are looking to showcase local female artists. So if you have empowering art that you would like to display at the Miner's Theatre in Collinsville, IL. or you would like more information on this year's monologues please contact Deb Mize at 236-2531 ext 111.

The Peace Tree Project Grows Locally and Expands Globally

What began as a challenge during Domestic Violence Awareness Month has blossomed into a community embraced initiative. Prevention and Education Manager, Debra Mize, challenged the many groups and organizations she visited during DVAM to capture their "Vision of Peace" on a purple ribbon to be hung on a Peace Tree. A tree donning a handful of purple ribbon turned into a tree bursting with visions of peace. So she added another tree, then another. The trees traveled to churches, schools, businesses, St. Clair County's Courthouse, and even had live appearances on WESL T.V.

Before we knew it there were Peace Trees springing up at Belleville West High School, City Hall, Memorial Hospital, and more. Instead of waiting for a VPC tree to make it's way there, the community took charge and began their own Peace Tree. What is even more

Violence Prevention Center of Southwestern Illinois

PO BOX 831
Belleville, IL 62222-0831

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit Org
US Postage
Paid
Belleville, Illinois
Permit No. 282

Serving St. Clair County, Monroe County, & Randolph County for 27 years.

The philosophy of the Violence Prevention Center of Southwestern Illinois is that all people have the right to be free from harm, to be respected, to determine and pursue their own goals. The mission of the organization is to work for the elimination of domestic violence in individual lives and society as a whole.

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Yes! I want to help the VPC to continue to serve victims of domestic violence with excellence.

Please bill me:

For a one time donation of \$ _____

Monthly/Quarterly (circle one) _____

In installments of \$ _____

For a total of \$ _____

My gift will be matched by:

In addition to my financial gift, I would like to volunteer. Please send me an application.

Company name (please enclose company form)

Please return this portion with your donation.

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

Checks payable to: Violence Prevention Center

Please charge my: Discover Master Card Visa

For a one time donation of \$ _____

Monthly/Quarterly (circle one) _____

In installments of \$ _____

For a total of \$ _____

Account Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Name On Card (Please Print) _____

Signature _____

