

Children Heal, Grow and Thrive at Shelter House

Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation (DCWAF) continued its generous support of programs for the children and youth at Shelter House with \$165,000 of funding at its annual check presentation event.

The support of DCWAF makes it possible for Shelter House to employ two youth advocates who work with our participants' children and educate the community on healthy relationships and violence prevention; contract with a play therapist who brings about amazing transformations in the children who have witnessed violence; provide school snacks, diapers and educational materials; maintain the emergency shelter playground; and hold a camp each summer, Camp Change, with



kids from Shelter House and Children in Crisis.

\$50,000 of this funding was also used as a match for the Impact 100 grant, a gift which enabled Shelter House to move into a new program office earlier this year. The DCWAF dollars were spent on a children's lobby and children's therapy room in the new building which are now named for the Foundation. Because of this funding, children waiting with their moms can play and be kids. The space is bright and welcoming, making the

children feel safe.

Cameron* moved into our emergency shelter earlier this year with her three daughters, ranging from toddler to tween.

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Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Throughout the month, we mourn those who have died because of domestic violence, celebrate those who have survived and work together to raise awareness and break the cycle.

Domestic violence remains a widespread problem. One in four women in the U.S. will experience domestic violence, yet only about 25% of victims ever report their abuse to the police.

Here are a few simple ways you can join with Shelter House in our efforts to make this a violence free community:

- Volunteer! Shelter House has opportunities to fit any schedule. You can help out with one event or come into the office every week. *Please see page 3 for more information on our direct service volunteer program.*
- Get Social! Like us on Facebook and follow @ShelterHouseNWF on Twitter and share the articles, information and events we post.
- Donate! We are always in need of groceries, household supplies, gift cards or money to help the women, children, men and pets utilizing Shelter House services.
- Show your support! Wear a purple ribbon all month long to show your support. Buy a Shelter House t-shirt and use it as a way to start conversations about domestic violence.
- Spread awareness! Contact us to display the Clothesline Project, a moving art installation of t-shirts created by domestic violence victims and child witnesses, at your business or community center.



Program Spotlight: Sexual Violence Services

The Sexual Violence program at Shelter House is relatively new, having been certified by the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence less than two years ago, but it is already making a big difference to assault victims and survivors in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

From July 2014 through June 2015, the Shelter House hotline fielded 154 calls that were solely sexual violence. Those calls came from victims, concerned friends or family members, law enforcement and medical personnel. In that same period of time, our advocates worked face-to-face with 72 participants. That figure includes calls out to hospitals by our Rape Response Team (RRT) and those seeking services in one of our Outreach offices. The average age of victims served was 29, however, there were participants under 18 and over 60.

Our staff and leadership continue to build relationships with partner agencies through the Sexual Assault Interagency Council (SAIC), one in each county. Shelter House has provided training to employees at Fort Walton Beach Medical Center, Twin Cities Hospital, Okaloosa County

Sheriff's Office and Fort Walton Beach Police Department. Hospital staff are trained on the services Shelter House offers, such as hospital accompaniment available 24/7, victims' rights and victim-centered care. That could mean asking the victim if she or he wants to report the assault to law enforcement rather than immediately calling and explaining the process of collecting a rape kit before starting the procedure.

Training for law enforcement also includes an overview of Shelter House's services so that they can refer victims when they meet them out in the field. Most are familiar with the emergency shelter but might not know the agency also gives legal service referrals, clothing vouchers, stalking safety plans and economic empowerment classes. The role of the advocate is also explained so they know the goal is not to investigate, nor is it to impede the investigation. The advocate's role is to inform the victim of her or his rights and to support the victim's decision.

The numbers and the partnerships are important, but what is most meaningful to us here at Shelter House is the stories of the individuals we help.

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Message from the Executive Director, Rosalyn Iovieno

Greetings! I am excited and honored to rejoin Shelter House as the new Executive Director. While a few things may have changed since the last time I sported a Shelter House nametag, the mission and service delivery has only strengthened. I came in knowing I had big shoes to fill but strive to deliver the same dedication that Michelle Sperzel provided over the past eight years.

In my new role as Executive Director, I can tell you that our focus at Shelter House will continue to be providing the highest quality service to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, spreading awareness through

community education and collaboration, and strengthening our partnerships right here in Okaloosa and Walton counties.

If we really want to end the cycle of violence in our backyard, it is going to take more than just one person and more than just one agency. It is going to take all of us, working together, to make this community a safer, better place for us and our children. As we recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month this October, I challenge each of you to start a conversation. What do you know about domestic violence? What do you not know? Bring your questions to our awareness event, Walk 4 Respect, on

October 31st to share and learn how to promote healthy relationships and end relationship violence in our community. Though the subject is serious, this family-friendly event will be a fun one, with fall festival activities, food trucks and music. *You can find additional details about Walk 4 Respect on Page 3 of this newsletter.*

In my first three months, the outpouring of support I have experienced has been both humbling and inspiring. I look forward to getting to know you and thank you for being a friend and advocate for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Hope to see you all on October 31st!

Children (continued from Page 1)

Cameron's husband had abused her, and she wanted a better life for herself and her daughters. The girls had witnessed much in their young lives and were quite reserved when they arrived. It was only after settling into the safety of our emergency shelter that the youngest child revealed she had been sexually abused by her father. In addition to being a domestic violence survivor, Cameron is also now considered a secondary victim of sexual violence as the mother of a victim.

All three children have since utilized many services at Shelter House. They have received counseling with the play therapist, attended the Back to School Bonanza for school supplies and participated in violence prevention classes.

Their youth advocate has been with them, supporting them every step of the way. When the girls were nervous about starting the school year at new schools with no friends, the youth advocate encouraged them, challenged them to make at least two new friends their first day and told them to remember every single detail so they could tell her all about it. And that is exactly what they did!

The family has now moved out of the shelter and into a transitional housing apartment. The girls continue to take positive steps with the youth advocate and play therapist while their mom meets with her own advocate through our Outreach program.

The support of Destin Charity Wine Auction

Foundation enables Shelter House to make a difference in the lives of these children and more like them. From July 2014 to June 2015, advocates at Shelter House provided almost 1,300 hours of counseling to children. The play therapist logged an additional 156 hours. Youth advocates led 19 violence prevention groups where more than 325 tweens and teens were educated on healthy relationships. They led 40 children's support groups and 17 teen dating violence support groups.

Thanks to DCWAF funding, these children have the opportunity to heal, grow and thrive.

**Name changed to protect identity.*

Sexual Violence Services (continued from Page 1)

Despite education efforts, many people still believe that most sexual assaults are committed by strangers and that sexual violence centers only deal with fresh trauma. In reality, 65-80% of victims know their attacker. And in America, there are more than 42 million survivors, adults and children, of sexual abuse. For children, one in three girls and one in five boys will be sexually abused before age 18.

Natalie* initially came to Shelter House in the fall last year and began meeting regularly with an advocate about the abusive marriage she had recently left, taking her young son with her. This soft-spoken young woman accessed many of Shelter House's services, including support groups, economic empowerment classes, peer counseling, youth services for her son and more. She and her son made quick progress and moved into a safe place in a good school district.

Even with all the burdens that had been lifted from her shoulders, Natalie still felt a heaviness. Feeling safe after months of

working with her advocate, Natalie disclosed that she is an adult survivor of childhood sexual abuse. The abuse began when she was just three years old and was perpetrated by a family member. This was the first time she had ever told anyone.

Natalie's advocate informed her about her options and what might or might not happen if she reported the abuse. Natalie chose to report but wanted to give her statement from the Shelter House office where she had grown to feel safe, telling her advocate, "I know these four walls like I know my own home." She was also afraid if the interview was conducted at her house, she would cry in front of her son and she did not want him to view police officers negatively.

Her advocate made the initial call and explained the sensitive nature of the situation. A sheriff's deputy agreed to come to the office to meet with Natalie. Before the interview, the advocate prepared her by telling her to be honest, advocate for herself, use coping techniques and take a break if needed.

Writing out the report brought up more visual memories for Natalie. At the conclusion, relief flooded over her. She beamed as she told her advocate, "I feel so empowered!"

In the weeks since filing the report, Natalie has reached out to her sisters who also survived the abuse. They were all very supportive of her. One sister even decided she would also file a report. They have started to heal as a family and are now speaking much more openly.

Natalie had carried the burden of her abuse alone for more than 20 years. The safe, non-judgmental environment she found at Shelter House enabled her to share the secret and bring the abuse into the light.

If you or someone you know is a survivor of sexual violence, whether it occurred recently or many years ago, call our 24/7 hotline at 850-863-4777 and start your journey toward empowerment and unburdening today.

**Name changed to protect identity.*

Walk 4 Respect Scheduled for Halloween in Destin

WALK 4 RESPECT

Did you know nearly 1 in 3 students report being bullied during the school year? Did you know more than 70% say they have been cyberbullied at least once during the school year? Did you know 1 in 3

adolescents is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner?

With those statistics in mind, Walk 4 Respect brings together children and youth of all ages from Okaloosa and Walton counties during National Bullying Prevention Month to talk and learn about healthy, non-violent relationships and treating everyone with kindness and respect. The 2nd Annual Walk 4 Respect will take place on Saturday, October 31 from 10am to 1pm at Morgan Sports Center in Destin.

In addition to a one-mile walk, the event will feature a proclamation by Destin Mayor Mel Ponder, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office,

NWF Raider athletes, fun games, food trucks and music. Youth who have participated in Shelter House's violence prevention programming will also be on hand to share what they have learned and give their thoughts on what a healthy relationship looks like.

Walkers are encouraged to wear non-violent Halloween costumes or something orange, the color of the anti-bullying movement.

The inaugural Walk 4 Respect last year focused on bullying awareness and prevention, but the message has expanded for this year's walk. In addition to anti-bullying, attendees will hear about topics such as teen dating violence, warning signs, healthy relationships and respect in all interpersonal relationships.

Walk 4 Respect is produced by Project Respect, a subcommittee of the Okaloosa-Walton Domestic Violence Coordinating Council and made possible by Shelter House and Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation.

For updates on the event, visit Project Respect's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ProjectRespectOW.

DeFuniak Springs Office Relocation

Please note that the Walton County Outreach office has moved to 171 State Hwy 83 North, Suite A101 in DeFuniak Springs. The new phone number is 850-240-4955. Shelter House has partnered with Okaloosa Walton Homeless Continuum of Care/Opportunity, Inc. and Lutheran Services Florida in a shared space to provide ease of access and referral to these valuable organizations.

Seeing Red Wine Festival



Celebrating its silver anniversary, the SEASIDE® Seeing Red Wine Festival has grown to be a sell-out event, attracting wine novices and connoisseurs alike. The festival takes place November 5-8 and includes the Vintner's Dinner, Al Fresco Reserve Tasting, Grand Tasting, Celebration of Bubbles and

Fall Walkabout and Charity Auction. Attendees are encouraged to reserve their tickets well in advance. The Seeing Red Wine Festival has been recognized as a "Top 10 Can't-Miss Fall Wine Festival" by Fodor's Travel.

A portion of proceeds will benefit the children at Shelter House via Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation.

Direct Service

Many of you reading this newsletter have supported Shelter House in various ways, including volunteering in the office or for special events like the Luminaria Run or Purses with a Purpose. Did you know we also have volunteers who work directly with participants?

Direct service volunteers are required to go through 60 hours of training, the same as Shelter House staff, on domestic and sexual violence. The training program includes monitoring, learning policies and procedures, role playing and a background check. Tasks performed by direct service volunteers include answering the hotline, facilitating support groups, being on-call for the Rape Response Team (RRT), teaching enrichment classes and helping with youth. Respite care is always a big need—tutor or just hang out and play with the children in shelter while the mother takes a shower or gets a much needed nap.

The next training class begins in October. Please give us a call at 850-243-1201 if you are interested.

5th Annual Luminaria Run



take place on Saturday, December 5 with runners taking off at 4:30pm. The run, which includes 5K and 9K courses, begins and ends at Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. in Destin.

More than 2,000 luminaria bags line the courses which wind throughout the Indian Bayou neighborhood. These luminarias represent how Shelter House and our community partners light the way to a safer place for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence in Okaloosa and Walton counties. The 9K distance serves as a reminder that a woman is assaulted or beaten every nine seconds in the U.S.

Shelter House is proud to host our 5th Annual Luminaria Run to End Domestic and Sexual Violence this year.

The unique twilight run will

We invite runners to get your GLOW on! An award will be given for the "glowiest" runner. Glow packs will be available for purchase when you register online and up for sale at packet pick up and on race day.

Packet pick up will take place 5pm to 7pm at Bubba Gump on Friday, December 4 and race day registration opens at 2pm on Saturday.

The after-party will take place at Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. with gumbo, s'mores, hot chocolate and coffee from Bad Ass Coffee, hot toddies and the signature sweet finish courtesy of KaraBoo Bakery.

Registration is available online at www.ShelterHouseNWFL.org. For sponsorship information contact Jeni at 850-243-1201.

Stay up to date on the latest happenings, including silent auction items, by following the Luminaria Run Facebook page at www.facebook.com/ShelterHouseLuminariaRun.

4th Annual Walk Her Way



More than 220 men, women and children put on high heels and took to the streets of Rosemary Beach this summer for the largest Walk Her Way yet. Now in its fourth year, the Rosemary Beach Foundation event brought awareness to domestic violence and raised \$30,000 for Shelter House and Rosemary Beach Foundation.

Walk Her Way is not just a fun walk. It also carries a serious message about respect and healthy relationships with a display of Shelter House's Clothesline Project, a touching exhibit that allows adult and child victims of domestic violence to tell their story through words and art, at the start and finish lines.

Thank you to Rosemary Beach Foundation, everyone who participated in Walk Her Way

and the 2015 sponsors: 30A.com, 30Avenue, 30A TV, August + Brill, Bamboo Bicycle Company, Beach TV, Bombora Sun & Surf, Bud & Alley's Restaurant Group, Davis Properties, Grayton Beer, Henderson Barrett, J. Conley Images, George and Dianne Lindahl, The Merchants of Rosemary Beach, Moonpize, Perspicacity, Rosemary Beach Cottage Rental Company, Rosemary Beach Fitness, Rosemary Beach Property Owners Association, Rosemary Beach Racquet Club, Rosemary Beach Realty, Rosemary Beach Trading Company, Sacred Heart on the Emerald Coast, Schwarzkopf Family, Sea Oats Beach Service, Silver Sands Premium Outlets, Sixpence Productions, SoWal.com, Tamara and Carl Tricoli, UPS Store—Inlet Crossing, Warren Averett and Waterstone Mortgage Corporation.



30A 10K



For the second consecutive year, Shelter House has been selected as a benefiting charity of the 30A 10K.

Give yourself a reason to have that second slice of pumpkin pie! The 30A 10K and one mile fun run takes place at 7:30am on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, in Rosemary Beach.

An awards ceremony will conclude the festivities. All runners will receive a complimentary custom designed 30A 10K t-shirt and post-race refreshments. All 10K race participants may compete for the Road Runners Club of America's State of Florida 10K Championship. For more information or to register for the race, go to www.30A10K.com.

As a benefiting charity, Shelter House is responsible for providing 30 volunteers. If you are interested in giving back on Thanksgiving, contact our office at 850-243-1201.

Shelter House Shopping List

Immediate Needs:

Diapers (large sizes, 4+)
Baby wipes
Juice
Trash bags
Resealable plastic bags (quart & gallon)
Canned tuna & chicken
New bed pillows
Tampons
Deodorant

Monetary:

Gift cards for gas & grocery stores (WalMart, Kmart, Target, Publix, Winn Dixie)

Food:

Non-perishable/canned food & fruits
Frozen foods
Cold food items (meat, milk, eggs, etc.)
Breakfast cereal
Mac & cheese

Cleaning Supplies:

Laundry & disinfectant soap
Dryer sheets
Disinfectants (e.g. Lysol)

If your organization or place of work would like a donation drop off box, please email us at info@shelterhousenwfl.org or call the office at 850-243-1201.

Upcoming Events

October

Walk 4 Respect (Morgan Sports Center, Destin): October 31

November

Seeing Red Wine Festival (Seaside): November 5—8

30A 10K (Rosemary Beach): November 26

December

5th Annual Luminaria Run to End Domestic & Sexual Violence (Bubba Gump Shrimp Co., Destin): December 5

Shelter House, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, mental or physical disability/disability status, sex/gender, pregnancy, military status/status as a veteran, genetic information, citizenship, immigration status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender orientation, limited English proficiency, language spoken or other legally protected status.

Sponsored by Shelter House, the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the State of Florida, Department of Children and Families.



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Shelter House is currently accepting applications for members of the Board of Directors. If you are interested in serving, please contact Rosalyn Iovieno at riovieno@shelterhousenwfl.org or 850-243-1201.

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