



Newsletter

www.shelterhousenwfl.org
24-Hour Hotline: 1-800-44-ABUSE
Administrative Office
102 Buck Drive
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

Spring 2013

Myth Busting: The Surprising Truth About Who You Are Helping

When you think about Shelter House and the services we provide, you probably think about a woman fleeing an abusive relationship and coming to our emergency shelter. While that is certainly a big part of what we do, Shelter House is so much more to many different types of people.

Did you know our advocates spent more than 1,100 hours last year working with children? These are the children of domestic violence survivors who are in our shelter, transitional housing or outreach programs. Some of these kids also work with their moms and a licensed child therapist on things like how to express feelings, including anger, in a healthy way.

The Youth Department recently took kids from shelter, transitional housing and outreach on a dolphin cruise during Spring Break. Though the weather was chilly, the dolphins cooperated and delighted everyone on board by frolicking alongside the boat. Every child also had a turn in the captain's chair. Limousine transportation and a picnic in the park after the cruise made the adventure even more special.

Getting out of the shelter and having a carefree day just like any other kid on Spring Break was a wonderful experience for all the children. One boy who has not been very expressive, particularly of positive emotions, since coming into shelter told the advocates during the cruise, "I'm super duper happy!"

While not all of the children are old enough to understand how they are connected, getting out on the water and having fun was a real bonding experience for them and friendships were formed. We are already planning another outing in August when kids from Children in Crisis will also join us. Much of our youth programming is supported by funding from Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation.

Another group Shelter House services that you might not think of—abused men. Yes, there are men who are victims of domestic violence, and yes, we are here to help them.

Shelter House opened our doors to our first man in the emergency shelter last year. Like many of the women we work with, George* was physically and verbally abused at home by his spouse. He knew he wasn't safe in his own home and didn't want his children to continue seeing the abuse at the hands of their mother. While working through the legal system, he and the kids needed a safe place to stay and turned to Shelter House.

This was new territory for our advocates. They had discussions with the women staying in shelter at the time to be sure they would still feel safe with a man in the house. The women all agreed he needed a safe place to stay just like they did and welcomed George into shelter.



While George was in shelter, he received the same services as any other resident—peer counseling, referrals, services for his kids. After three weeks in shelter, George and his children were able to move out and safely return to their home.

When you give of your time, your talents or your resources to support

Shelter House, you never know who you might be helping. Yes, there are young women who come to us with fresh bruises. But there are also women who come to us after 30 years in an abusive marriage. There are pregnant women. There are mothers with five children. As you see from George's example, there are men whose wives have terrorized them for years. There are the children of victims who have witnessed more violence than you can imagine in their young lives. We work with young and old, rich and poor, straight and gay.

For anyone who has been touched by domestic violence, Shelter House's door is always open.

**Name changed to protect identity.*

South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival



Support Shelter House's programs for kids by attending the South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival April 25-28 at Grand Boulevard. For more info, visit www.sowalwine.com.

Purple Paws Kennel Update



April is Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month. Since announcing the addition of the Purple Paws Kennel to our emergency shelter, we've made great progress.

One bedroom in the shelter has been designated "pet-friendly", and we are already accepting pocket pets such as hamsters, gerbils and fish. This room has been outfitted with a special HEPA filter to cut down on the exposure of allergens to other residents.

A dog run in the backyard has already been completed, and the concrete for the kennel has been poured. Construction on the cat room is about 75% complete.

The Purple Paws Kennel would not be a reality without the generous support of the Dugas Foundation and generous individuals like you.

You can help a family keep their beloved pet close by donating the following items: pet food, treats, kitty litter, litter boxes, litter scoops, leashes, collars, ID tags, water bowls, bedding, cat climbers, scratch posts, toys, grooming services, pet medication and vitamins, bedding, combs, nail clippers and flea and tick medicine. We are also seeking veterinarians and groomers to provide in-kind services..



Thank you for helping women and children start new lives. As you move through spring, I challenge all of you to think of the things you take for granted like your friends, family and home and imagine having to give all of that up. We need to acknowledge the courage and strength that it takes for a woman to leave her home and come to a place where someone is willing to help her and her family start a new life, where she can push herself out of her comfort zone. I also encourage you to think about the thing you haven't done yet and try it.

3rd Annual Economic Empowerment Conference



Shelter House Welcomes New Board Members

Shelter House recently welcomed two new members on the Board of Directors. Get to know Dawn Hoffman of Beach Community Mortgage and Theresa Stucki of Pleat, Perry & Ritchie, P.A.

How long have you lived in the area?

Dawn: I moved here at the very end of December 2004.

Theresa: I was born and raised in Crestview.

How long have you been involved with Shelter House?

Dawn: Several years - I started by donating items and then was asked to help by teaching a section of the WAM! classes. I wanted to be on the board for a couple of years but just couldn't make the time commitment until now.

Theresa: Approximately three years. I worked closely with David Pleat when he was on the board of Shelter House and replaced him on the Board of Directors upon his resignation.

Why did you decide to volunteer with Shelter House?

Dawn: On a broad level, I consider myself a feminist and believe fully that empowering women benefits our entire society. On a personal level, domestic violence impacted my life and that of people I care deeply about. Because I saw the costs of domestic violence up close, I wanted to be part of the process of raising awareness and eventually ending domestic violence.

Theresa: Over the years, I have seen the positive impact that Shelter House has made on the individuals whose lives have been affected by the services they provide and wanted to contribute personally to heighten the awareness of domestic violence and its affects.

Why did you join the Board of Directors?

Dawn: I wanted to be directly involved with Shelter House and their efforts. Serving on the board seemed the most effective way to do that.

Theresa: I felt joining the board was the most effective way for me to utilize my personal strengths to further Shelter House's mission.

What is your vision for Shelter House and what kind of impact do you want to make?

Dawn: I would like to see the agency continue to grow and provide a broader array of services to victims (including possibly a shop/thrift store where clients can shop; access to child care, etc). I hope that my contribution can be to help make more people throughout the community understand what Shelter House is, who it helps and how they can assist (in big and small ways).

Theresa: I would like to see the agency build its fundraising efforts to continue the work and be able to support all individuals who have a need for these services. I would like to be able to heighten awareness of the opportunities that Shelter House provides and educate the community in an effort for the community to rally around the organization in support.

Walk Her Way



The second annual Walk Her Way one-mile fun walk in high heels returns to Rosemary Beach on Friday, June 7 at 5:30pm. Men, women and children will don fabulously decorated high heels and strut around the town square to raise awareness about domestic violence.

Walkers are encouraged to decorate their shoes to reflect their personal style or to make a statement. Form teams to get your friends involved and raise more money for Shelter House.

Advance registration is \$30 for adults and \$10 for children under 12 and includes a t-shirt and a fun celebration party at the finish line. Registration the day of the walk will be an additional \$5 per person.

Proceeds from Walk Her Way benefit Shelter House and Rosemary Beach Foundation. Last year's inaugural walk drew more than 100 walkers in heels plus a few canine companions and raised over \$25,000 for the two organizations.

For more information or to register, call Shelter House at 850.243.1201 or visit www.walkherway.com.

Purses with a Purpose

Women from across the Emerald Coast made their way to Silver Sands Premium Outlets for Purses with a Purpose, Shelter House's two-day purse sale and auction. Now in its fourth year, the purse sale and auction has become a must-attend event for many.



More than 130 shoppers turned out for the VIP party on Friday night to bid on designer handbags from Big Buddha, Coach, Kenneth Cole, DKNY and more. Dozens more showed up on Saturday morning to snap up the remaining purses at deeply discounted prices. The two-day event raised more than \$7,800 to support programs and services such as a 24-hour crisis hotline, emergency shelter, child therapist, group counseling and violence prevention classes.

Since its inception, Purses with a Purpose has brought in over \$33,000 for critical services. The best thing about this event is that it is women helping women. All funds raised at Purses stay right here in our

community and help women and children who could be your neighbors.

Shelter House would like to thank Silver Sands Premium Outlets, Carrabba's Italian Grill, Winn Dixie, Sam's Club and Bon Appetit for their support of Purses with a Purpose.

Mother's Day Drive

Every mom should feel special and appreciated on Mother's Day. Help us pamper the moms at Shelter House who are working hard to make life better for themselves and their kids.



We are seeking items for goodie bags that will be distributed to all the moms at a pre-Mother's Day self-care night. Items include: makeup, nail polish, magazines, books, diaries, journals, manicure kits, chocolate, bath gel, bubble bath, lotion, gift certificates for salon or nail services—anything that will brighten mom's day!

Donations can be dropped off at our administrative office located at 102 Buck Drive in Fort Walton Beach between 8am and 5pm Monday through Friday.

What We've Been Up To



(Left): Wendy Clines and Mary Damroth at Purse with a Purpose.



(Above): Mary Kay beauty consultants pamper Shelter House participants on Valentine's Day.



(Left): Ladies turned out in their finest at Hats for Hope, a luncheon and fashion show hosted by the Destin Woman's Club to benefit Shelter House.

(Right): Volunteers from Hurlburt Airman's Voice disassembled our old play set at the shelter and built a brand new one with funding from Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation.



Shelter House Shopping List

Immediate Needs:

Diapers (large sizes)
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)

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 cell phone drop off box, call the office at 850.243.1201 or email info@shelterhousenwfl.org.

Upcoming Events

April:

All About Banking Workshop (First Baptist Church, Crestview): April 20

South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival (Grand Boulevard): April 25—28

May:

3rd Annual WAM! Conference (Northwest Florida State College, Niceville): May 11

June:

Walk Her Way (Rosemary Beach): June 7

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.

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Call Michelle at 850-243-1201 if you are interested in serving on the Board or Fundraising Committee.

Printing underwritten by:

