

### Shelter House Expands Sexual Violence Services

Shelter House became the certified rape crisis center for Okaloosa and Walton counties just two years ago. In the short time since the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence issued the certification, the need for our services and our increased knowledge of how best to serve victims of sexual violence have made it necessary to expand Shelter House's services.

Thanks to a grant from the White-Wilson Community Foundation for \$22,542, Shelter House is adding an on-site sexual assault examination room at the program office in Fort Walton Beach and developing a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program.

Shelter House already provides services including a 24/7 rape crisis hotline, peer counseling and victim accompaniment during medical exams and law enforcement interviews. However, rape victims often wait up to six hours in an emergency room before receiving a sexual assault forensic exam. The new on-site exam room will allow victims ages 12 and up to come directly to Shelter House for immediate counseling with an advocate, an exam by a certified SANE nurse and a safe space away from the chaos of a busy ER where law enforcement can interview the victim. This approach enables Shelter House to provide victim-centered trauma-informed care to survivors of sexual violence so as to not re-traumatize them.



The exam room project includes the renovation of a bathroom with a shower and wash station as well as purchasing an exam table, camera, medical lighting and other exam equipment and medical supplies.

In January, Shelter House staff visited the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay and the Victim Services Center in Orlando to tour the on-site forensic exam rooms at those agencies and discuss best practices for offering this new service to victims.

Staff have also met with area experts on forensic rape exams to gather input on what a model forensic exam room should look like and what a model SANE program should entail.

Shelter House plans to train at least five nurses in the first year to be SANE certified, but that

number could double in order to accommodate the demand of 24/7 on-call rotations. The expanded services also require Shelter House to add a medical director. The director is a physician who will contract with the agency to oversee the medical aspects of the program, ensuring quality of care.

As services expand, Shelter House's sexual violence staff will grow. New advocate and management positions are slated to be filled this summer. Direct service volunteer positions are also available but do require training. If you are interested in joining the Rape Response Team, contact Shelter House at 850.243.1201.

### Sexual Assault Awareness Month



Someone is sexually assaulted every two minutes in the United States. As we observe Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April, we ask

you to join with Shelter House to raise your voices for those affected by sexual violence.

Here are a few simple ways you can take a stand for victims and 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. If you are interested in direct service, training is available for members of our Rape Response Team (RRT).
- 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 items for the bags our advocates take to rape victims at the hospital: new socks and underwear, elastic waist pajama or yoga pants, brushes, travel size toothpaste, deodorant and hand sanitizer.
- Show your support! Wear a teal ribbon all month long to show your support. Buy a Shelter House t-shirt and use it as a way to start conversations about sexual assault.
- Spread awareness! Contact us for posters with our sexual assault help line number to display at your business or community center.
- Speak up! If you see someone in danger, say something if it is safe for you to do so or call law enforcement.

Together we can make our community safe.

### White-Wilson Community Foundation



The White-Wilson Community Foundation was formed in 2012 to help improve health care in Okaloosa, Walton and Santa Rosa Counties through service and education. The Foundation believes it is important to educate the community on the importance of preventive health care and to support

organizations and charities in the community that provide health services to individuals in need. For more information, please visit [www.whitewilsoncommunityfoundation.org](http://www.whitewilsoncommunityfoundation.org).

## Message from the Executive Director, Rosalyn Iovieno

Greetings! On the Emerald Coast, we all know that the changing of the seasons from winter to spring means the start of "the season" when the water is beautiful and calm, tourists flock to the white sandy beaches and it's best to not be in a hurry if you are traveling down Highway 98. At Shelter House, Spring Break also kicks off the busiest season for our sexual assault program. Living in paradise, we don't want to believe it happens here, but it does happen here. And more than you may think.

From July 2015 through February 2016, Shelter House responded to 115 sexual assault calls on the 24-hour hotline, and the Rape Response Team has been activated 53 times to our five local area hospitals. These numbers are staggering and have continued to increase since Shelter House first became the certified sexual assault center for

Okaloosa and Walton counties in 2014. We know that sexual assault happens in every community, including ours, but we also know that many victims are too afraid or ashamed to report it to the police or even talk about it with their closest confidant. We are here for those victims – whether the assault happened today or decades ago – to provide continuous support, services and advocacy.

As the numbers rise and the need increases, Shelter House continues to expand the scope of our sexual assault services and build partnerships with organizations, businesses and individuals that want to help create a more trauma-informed experience for those who have been victimized. We are so grateful for the White-Wilson Community Foundation for providing Shelter House the funding to create an on-site forensic examination room and host Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner

(SANE) training so that starting in 2017, victims can come straight to Shelter House instead of going to the emergency room. Becoming a stand-alone exam site is no easy feat, but we are eager, dedicated and prepared to make it a reality.

We hope you will join us during Sexual Assault Awareness Month by spreading our message of prevention and awareness through social media with the hashtags #SAAM and #ShelterHouseNWFL, inviting Shelter House to provide training and education to your place of business and being a part of the numerous other activities we have planned for SAAM. And as always, thank you for being a friend and advocate for survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

We could not fulfill our mission without you!

## Destin Charity Wine Auction Weekend

The 11th Annual Destin Charity Wine Auction will take place April 29 to May 1. The event draws wine aficionados, gourmet chefs and celebrity vintners from around the globe to enjoy world-class wines all while raising money for local charities impacting the lives of children in need, including Shelter House. Events include patron dinners, a reserve tasting, live auction and the South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival.

The patron dinners provide a unique opportunity to interact with fellow wine

enthusiasts while enjoying innovative cuisine and the world's best wines. As patrons, you will also enjoy complimentary transportation to and from your dinner. Each dinner will benefit one of DCWAF's 14 charities and allow a chance to see firsthand how your generosity is changing the lives of the children in need in our community.

On April 30, the Reserve Tasting and Live Auction will be held under an air-conditioned tent on Grand Boulevard at Sandestin Town Center's North Lawn. It will feature distinctive wines from internationally acclaimed vintners, poured and paired with

cuisine created by a selection of the area's top local restaurants. The Reserve Tasting is accompanied by a silent auction as well as an almost live auction featuring wine, autographed large format bottles, art and more. The event will culminate with a high-energy live auction, which includes rare and distinctive wines, spectacular trips and other incredible one-of-a-kind items.

DESTIN  
CHARITY  
WINE AUCTION  
FOUNDATION



festival presents great wines, fine foods, world-class tasting seminars, live music from national artists, culinary celebrities and more.

Tickets are available now at [www.dcwaf.org](http://www.dcwaf.org) and [www.sowalwine.com](http://www.sowalwine.com).

The Destin Charity Wine Auction was recently recognized yet again as one of the nation's Top 10 U.S. Charity Wine Auctions by *Wine Spectator* magazine.

Funding from Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation makes many of the programs for children at Shelter House possible.

The 4th Annual South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival also runs throughout the weekend and features more than 800 wines. The

## Little Black Dress Party



The Little Black Dress Party is back again for the seventh year with A Night at the Opera. The elegant and fun-filled event is an evening dedicated to celebrating good health and raising funds for local women in need. The event features dinner, dancing, live and silent auctions and entertainment.

This year's event will take place May 21 beginning at 6:30pm at the Sandestin Linkside Center. Cocktail attire, little black dresses and dancing shoes are highly recommended.

This event will sell out! Get tickets today at [www.FWBLittleBlackDressParty.com](http://www.FWBLittleBlackDressParty.com).

All event proceeds benefit the White-Wilson Community Foundation and help to increase access to health services for women in need. The annual Little Black Dress Party was formed in 2010 and has raised over \$165,000 for women's health initiatives.

## 5th Annual Walk Her Way



Whether you choose to parade in pumps, walk in wedges, strut in stilettos or stroll in sneakers, make plans to attend the 5th Annual Walk

violence. High heels are strongly encouraged but not required for walkers.

Online registration is available at [www.WalkHerWay.com](http://www.WalkHerWay.com). Sign up as an individual or start building your team. On-site registration will also be available the day of the walk from 5:30pm to 6:15pm.

Walk Her Way begins at 6:30pm. Wear costumes to express your style and personality. Stick around for the after party at Rosemary Beach Town Hall. Awards will be given for the top fundraiser, largest team, best costumes, most spirit and more!

Sponsorship opportunities are available. If your business is interested, call Shelter

House at 850.243.1201.

Proceeds from Walk Her Way benefit Shelter House and Rosemary Beach Foundation, a nonprofit organization that offers community, educational and other charitable activities in Walton County.



Her Way presented by Rosemary Beach Foundation on May 20.

Men, women and children of all ages are invited to don their fiercest footwear for a short walk through the streets of Rosemary Beach to raise awareness about domestic

## Shelter House Welcomes New Board Members

Shelter House welcomed two new members to our Board of Directors in November 2015.



Major Arnold Brown began his career in law enforcement at the age of 14 as an Explorer Scout with the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Junior Deputy Program and has been with the OCSO ever

since. He currently serves as the Investigations Bureau Chief. Major Brown is designated by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement as a subject matter expert in the

field of narcotics identification, is the current area representative for the Florida chapter of FBI National Academy Associates and is active on several non-profit boards, including Safe Connections, Emerald Coast Crime Stoppers and OCSO Star Charities.



Paul Montalvo, owner of Professional Computer Training & Services (PCTS), has a relationship with Shelter House reaching back more than a decade when he was hired as one of the agency's first

male advocates. After retiring from the United States Air Force in 1997, Paul settled down in Fort Walton Beach and worked as a government contractor at Eglin Air Force Base for six years. In 2004, he started his own computer repair business. He has since been an active member of the community, volunteering for various fundraising events, serving on the Board of Directors for the Fort Walton Beach Chamber of Commerce and actively participating in the planning committee for the Little Black Dress Party benefiting the White-Wilson Community Foundation.

## Literacy Program Helps Families Heal

Mothers who come to Shelter House with their children are no different from mothers all over the world. They love their children. They want the best for their children. They want their children to succeed. Thanks to a grant from ProLiteracy, one of the world's leading literacy organizations, Shelter House is helping those moms create a brighter future for their children.

The staff recently led its first story time for the children at Shelter House and their moms. The women heard a brief presentation on the benefits of improved literacy and how reading aloud to their children can improve academic success and serve as a special time to bond. They also learned some basic literacy building skills, like teaching early readers to

look at pictures and headlines and try to predict what comes next. The children then joined the moms where three books were



read aloud to them. Every child in attendance was able to keep one book for their own reading pleasure. The kids had several books to choose from at different reading levels,

ranging from board books for babies and toddlers to novels for teenagers. The excitement over the books was palpable, and our advocates reported seeing the children reading their books in shelter in the days that followed.

Studies show that the number of books in a home and a parent's involvement are better predictors of a child's academic success than socioeconomic status or even the parents' education level. By building family literacy, Shelter House hopes to improve the lives of our participants and their children's future.

In addition to the family literacy program, Shelter House has plans to offer financial literacy courses by the end of the year.



## Purses with a Purpose Sets New Record



Purses with a Purpose returned to Grand Boulevard last month for a record breaking purse sale and auction!

More than 1,000 purses were up for sale and auction to the 300 shoppers who attended the two-day event. Sales and sponsorships totaled nearly \$20,000!

Friday evening's VIP party featured food by Travinia Italian Kitchen, music from Rock the House and a purse fashion show featuring women who have been directly impacted by domestic and sexual violence, including Shelter House advocates, volunteers and survivors, with hair and makeup by Pin Up Girls Hair Studio. Laura Holloway of The Storyteller Agency served as the emcee.

Thank you to our 2016 Purses with a Purpose sponsors: Grand Boulevard at Sandestin, Pin Up Girls Hair Studio, Appleseed Expeditions, 5 Star Photo Booth, Rock the House, The Storyteller Agency, Flip Flop Real Estate, Silver Sands Premium Outlets, Massage Envy, Mara Fiorentino, MD, Travinia Italian Kitchen, Panera Bread, Primp and Serenity by the Sea.

Since its inception six years ago, Purses with a Purpose has raised more than \$73,000 for lifesaving services at Shelter House.



### 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](mailto:info@shelterhousenwfl.org) or call the office at 850-243-1201.

### Upcoming Events

#### April

**South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival** (Grand Boulevard, Sandestin): April 28—May 1

**Destin Charity Wine Auction Weekend** (Grand Boulevard, Sandestin): April 29—May 1

#### May

**Walk Her Way** (Rosemary Beach): May 20, 6:30pm

**Little Black Dress Party** (Linkside Exhibition Hall, Sandestin): May 21, 6pm

*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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