



# Newsletter

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

## Summer 2011

### When Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse Cross Paths

When domestic violence strikes, it affects not only the family, but the family pets, as well. Our advocates take hundreds of calls a month from women in the community whose family includes children, dogs, cats, birds and even horses. Sometimes a loyal dog will put itself in harm's way to protect the woman from the abuse and other times the family pet is the first family member to be the victim of abuse. Between 25% and 40% of battered women are unable to escape abusive situations because they worry about what will happen to their pets or livestock should they leave. 71% of pet-owning women entering women's shelters reported that their batterer had injured, maimed, killed or threatened family pets for revenge or to psychologically control victims (American Humane Association). It is because of this that Shelter House and Alaqua Animal Refuge are joining forces to bring awareness about both organizations to the Emerald Coast.

On Sunday, July 24 from 5:00—9:00 pm, Share the Shelter Music Fest, benefiting Shelter House and Alaqua Animal Refuge, will be at Gulf Place on the corner of 30A and Highway 393. This concert will feature the musical talent of Bryan Kennedy, Daphne Willis, Dread Clampitt, Heritage and Kelsey Anna. Food and merchandise vendors will also be at the festival. Advance tickets for the event are \$20 while tickets at the door will be \$25. VIP tickets are available for \$100 and include beverages, appetizers and special seating. To purchase tickets, visit [www.shelterhousenwfl.org](http://www.shelterhousenwfl.org) or call Shelter House at 850-243-1201.

"Through Share the Shelter, we have found the perfect opportunity to partner with Shelter House," said Laurie Hood, President and Founder of Alaqua Animal Refuge. "At the heart of both of our nonprofits, we are focused on providing a safe haven and a second chance at life. This event will not only provide an amazing evening of musical entertainment, but it will also help both local organizations create a strong voice against the atrocities of abuse."

Up-and-coming artist Daphne Willis says the concert will be an easy and fun way to spread awareness about both organizations. Her goal for the concert is to pave the way for the future. "It would be great to get more people involved...the idea is not to get bogged down in the causes, but to try to bring positivity to it and show there are ways to change the way things are and that you can make a difference," says Willis.

"It's basic and fundamental in human nature to

want to be happy. It's the same in animal nature, as well. We're all living creatures trying to live in peace and both organizations are aimed at achieving that goal," says Willis.

"Domestic violence touches the entire family, from the woman we serve to the pet that shows her unconditional love," says Michelle Sperzel, Executive Director of Shelter House. Michelle's goal of this partnership with Alaqua and the musicians is to have the community come together and raise even more awareness on the issue of domestic violence and animal abuse in the home. "Social change flows from people naming the issue and standing up to say, 'let's do something about it'. When people band together and focus their collective and creative energy, social change can happen. When organizations, musicians and the community work together toward a common goal, that's movement. Movement makes change," Sperzel says.

As a family member or friend of someone who may be a victim and pet owner, there are some ways you can help. Always ask questions about the presence and welfare of the pets. See if you can find local animal shelters, veterinarians or rescue groups that can house the pets while the survivor is in the process of leaving. If their pet was already left behind, a Shelter House Advocate can safety plan and help them retrieve it. If the victim can no longer care for their pet, you may help them by finding someone who can take their pet such as a friend or an adoption agency.

You can support both Shelter House and Alaqua Animal Refuge by attending Share the Shelter Music Fest. Check out more about the artists performing at the event by visiting their websites:

Bryan Kennedy: [www.bryan-kennedy.com](http://www.bryan-kennedy.com)  
Daphne Willis: [www.daphnewillis.com](http://www.daphnewillis.com)  
Dread Clampitt: [www.dreadclampitt.com](http://www.dreadclampitt.com)  
Heritage: [www.heritageband.com](http://www.heritageband.com)  
Kelsey Anna: [www.kelseyanna.com](http://www.kelseyanna.com)

**Share the Shelter Music Fest  
Benefiting Shelter House &  
Alaqua Animal Refuge**

**Featuring Bryan Kennedy, Daphne Willis,  
Dread Clampitt, Heritage & Kelsey Anna**

**Sunday, July 24  
5:00—9:00 pm  
Gulf Place Amphitheater  
(Corner of Highways 30A & 393)**

### DVAM

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and as an act of honoring those whose lives have been touched by domestic violence, Shelter House will have a Clothesline Project on display at the Northwest Florida Regional Airport throughout the month of October.



Stop by the airport to see a variety of adult, child and baby t-shirts of various colors and designs that serve as a reflection of people's experiences with domestic violence. The project allows each victim to tell her story in a unique way with words or artwork.

This national project began with 31 shirts in 1990 and has since grown to a national and international social change project comprised of approximately 25,000 shirts.

For more information about the Clothesline Project visit [www.clotheslineproject.org](http://www.clotheslineproject.org).

Be sure to follow the Shelter House Facebook page throughout the month of October for more on Domestic Violence Awareness Month. [Facebook.com/ShelterHouseNWFL](https://www.facebook.com/ShelterHouseNWFL)



## Message from the Executive Director, Michelle Sperzel

As our fiscal year draws to a close, as an Executive Director, it is difficult not to get caught up in the grant deliverables, fundraising events and the business of running a nonprofit. While compiling reports and bar charts for our year-end, I had a moment when I was absolutely humbled by the number of people we have helped and supported this year. As a donor, you hear the numbers of the women, children and men that we serve, but I ask you to think of every one of those numbers as a voice—a voice of someone who could be brave, scared, tenacious, timid, courageous, tired or empowered.

In the past 11 months, the 19-member staff of Shelter House has directly touched more than 4,049 lives in Okaloosa and Walton Counties. Let me say that number again—4,049 individuals in our neighborhoods, schools and churches have received some type of service or education from Shelter House. But let's not stop there; let's talk about you, our fearless and generous supporters. I called upon each of you twice this year because our emergency shelter was full, and you rose to the challenge. You showed up with food, diapers, water, laundry detergent and toilet paper. There are no words to express how grateful I am that in a moment's notice you are there to help the women and children.

Looking toward the next fiscal year we will have one less program. On June 30 the shared Transitional Housing grant we had with Bridgeway Center ended. This pilot program was very successful and helped 20 women and their children break the cycle of domestic violence in their lives. All of the women in this program are now living on their own and their homes are safe and free of violence. Although the program is ending, we will continue to look for funding to move this pilot program to one that is a permanent resource in our community.

The next year will also bring about growth to our existing programs. With the help of The Allstate Foundation, we are very excited to expand our Economic Empowerment program to include a youth element, YES! (Youth Economic Strategies). One of our mission goals is to help our participants achieve economic self-sufficiency. If we teach our youth about money, then we are giving them another tool to help break the cycle of domestic violence in their family.

As I write this, our shelter is still full. We are still getting 80 to 100 phone calls a month for services. The need for our services is growing and the programs we are running are getting stronger. Again, I am so humbled by the energy and spirit of our staff. Everyday

they come to work and choose the arduous task of fighting domestic violence. I am inspired by the women and children we work with, for they are the reason we do what we do. Their stories, faces and bravery make what I do to keep Shelter House running seem easy in comparison. This year we have worked with women that have overcome horrendous emotional and physical barriers and newborns who's first crib was in our nursery instead of their own.

As the year progresses, I know we will be faced with the challenge of providing more services with less resources. I anticipate that there will be more nights that our shelter will be full and times we will run low on supplies. I am so very grateful to know that you will be there to support the women and children we serve. I am looking forward to what the next few months will bring and the stories of the people Shelter House will be able to help.

On behalf of the 4,049 women, children and men we've worked with so far this year, I thank you. With your help, our voices are heard throughout our neighborhoods, communities and state as brave, tenacious, courageous and empowered.

### Back to school

Shelter House is having a Backpack Drive to help prepare kids as the new school year begins in August. During the month of July, please help us collect the following items:

Backpacks, Number 2 pencils, Colored pencils, Lined paper, Glue sticks, Erasers, Crayons, Construction paper, Scissors, Spiral-bound notebooks, 3-ring binders, White glue, Divider tabs, Blue/black pens, Soft pencil cases, Two-pocket folders w/ fasteners, Markers, Glitter, Poster board (assorted colors), Colored or pre-designed printer paper, Acrylic paint, Paint brushes, Canvas, T-shirts (assorted colors and sizes) and Iron-on transfers.

These items can be dropped off at our offices in Fort Walton Beach, Crestview and DeFuniak Springs:

102 Buck Drive—Fort Walton Beach  
290 Martin Luther King Blvd.—Crestview  
1846 US Hwy., 90 W.—DeFuniak Springs

### Purses with a Purpose



**Silver Sands**  
FACTORY STORES

auction and sale that brought in approximately \$4,000 for the agency.

The Fall two-day purse auction and sale will be held on Friday, October 7 and Saturday, October 8 at Silver Sands Factory Stores. The Preview sale on Friday will feature food and wine with an entry fee to provide shoppers the opportunity to have first pick of the purse selection.

Purse donations are now being accepted for this new and gently used purse auction and sale.

For more information about the event, to help volunteer or to purchase tickets for the preview party, please contact our office at [info@shelterhousenwfl.org](mailto:info@shelterhousenwfl.org) or 850-243-1201.

The 2011 season of Purses with a Purpose started off with a successful Summer fundraiser. For the first time in the event's history we had a two-day purse

### We're moving in Walton County!

Our Walton County office has moved! Our new Walton County location will be in DeFuniak Springs. Please note that our phone number has not changed.

Join us for an open house on Thursday, August 4 from 2:00—4:00 pm. Come see our new location, visit with our Walton County Advocate and enjoy refreshments.

Please call the office for an updated schedule of support groups offered at this location and in Santa Rosa Beach.

#### Find us here!

**1846 US Highway 90 West, Suite B  
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433**

#### Give us a call!

**(850) 622-5411**

#### Open House!

**Thursday, August 4**

**2:00—4:00 pm**

Trish is dedicated to serving Shelter House's purpose of "all relationships violence-free" and she knows she is in the right place.

Registration for the event will be \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. Scholarships will be available.



## What We've Been Up To



(Above) Shelter House's carriage won first place at the Billy Bowleg's Parade. Pictured: Erin Campbell, Miss Heart of America Queen of Hearts and Michelle Sperzel, Shelter House Executive Director.

(Above): One happy donor at the Spring Purses with a Purpose at Silver Sands Factory Stores.



(Above): Thank you to everyone who responded to our ask for donations in May. These much-needed donations helped the women and children in Shelter.



(Left): 100+ Mothers Day Bags were given out thanks to the many donors and volunteers.



(Right): The Women & Cars Workshop. Josh Woodhams, manager at Express Oil Change & Service Center, teaching the women about cars.

(Left): Vicki McCain, Kitchenique Cooking School Director, teaching the Cooking on a Budget workshop in April.



### Shelter House Wish List

#### Immediate Needs:

Dirt Devil "U" Vacuum Bags  
Clorox Wipes  
Magic Erasers  
Trash bags  
Universal Remote Control  
Storage Shelves  
Ziplock Storage Bags (Sandwich & Gallon)

#### Monetary:

Gift cards for gas and grocery stores (WalMart, Kmart, Target, Publix)

#### Food:

Non-perishable/Canned food & fruits  
Frozen Foods  
Cold food items (meat, milk, eggs, etc.)

#### Cleaning Supplies:

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

**Back to School items** (Please see page 2 for a complete list).

If your organization or place of work would like a cell phone drop off box, call the office at 243-1201 or email [info@shelterhousenwfl.org](mailto:info@shelterhousenwfl.org).

### Upcoming Events

#### July:

**Backpack Drive:** 7/1—7/30

#### Share the Shelter Music Fest (Gulf Place):

Sun., 7/24, 5:00—9:00 pm

#### August:

**Cooking on a Budget Workshop**

(Kitchenique): Sat., 8/13, 12:00—2:00 pm

#### September:

**Women & Cars Workshop:** Sat., 9/10, 12:00—2:00 pm

#### October:

**Purses with a Purpose (Silver Sands Factory Stores):** Fri., 10/7 & Sat., 10/8

#### November:

**Cooking on a Budget Workshop**

(Kitchenique): Sat., 11/13, 12:00—2:00 pm

For a full list of events or volunteer opportunities, visit our Events Calendar on our website: [www.shelterhousenwfl.org](http://www.shelterhousenwfl.org).

### Board of Directors

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**Looking for a speaker?** A Shelter House representative will come out to your event and speak about our agency, domestic violence and how you can get involved! For more information, call the office at (850) 243-1201.