



# Albany County SAFE Project

Working To End Violence

Fall 2011

## Author Lundy Bancroft to speak in Laramie

On October 18th, domestic violence and child abuse expert Lundy Bancroft will visit Laramie for a series of talks. His keynote speech, "Causes and Solutions for Domestic Violence," will be at 7 p.m. in the University of Wyoming Ballroom. The talk is free and open to the public.

Additionally, Bancroft will speak at Whiting High School, conduct a seminar for domestic violence first responders, and hold a workshop for SAFE Project clients.

The seminar, focusing on intervention strategies, will be from 12:30-2:00 p.m. in the training room at Laramie Police Department, 620 Plaza Court.

Both an author and a practitioner, Bancroft has been working with men, women and children in domestic violence and child abuse cases for twenty years.

According to his website, Bancroft focuses on three areas:



- 1) Training professionals on best practices for intervening with male perpetrators of violence against women, toward the goal of promoting accountability and requiring change,
- 2) Training professionals on the dynamics of emotional injury and recovery in children who are ex-

posed to a man who abuses their mother, to prepare participants to offer the most effective and safe assistance possible to children and their mothers, and 3) Supporting healing and empowerment for abused women, with an emphasis on advocating for the human rights of mothers and their children.

Bancroft has used much of the information gleaned from working with abusive men to inform his healing work with survivors and their children. He is the author of three books, including *Why Does He Do That?: Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men*.

Sponsors of these talks are SAFE Project, UW Student Activities Council, UW STOP Violence Program, Wyoming Women's Foundation, Laramie Woman's Club, and the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Wyoming.

Call SAFE Project for more information on these events.

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or 1-800-230-3556  
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[info@safeproject.org](mailto:info@safeproject.org)

### Upcoming Events:

**Lundy Bancroft:**  
Keynote: 7 p.m., October 18th, University of Wyoming Union Ballroom.

First Responder Seminar: 12:30-2:00 p.m., October 18th, Laramie Police Department, 620 Plaza Court.

**Candlelight Vigil:**  
6 p.m., October 26th, Alice Hardie Stevens Center, 603 E. Ivinson.

## Sexual violence prosecuted in Albany County

Several charges for sexual violence have been seen in Albany County in the last few months. SAFE Project supports every victim's decision to either report their assault or not report it, but we applaud when the criminal justice system is able to successfully put perpetrators behind bars.

In September, two Laramie men were charged with counts of sexual assault against minors. One allegedly molested two boys, and one allegedly raped a teenage girl. Both had bonds placed on them, and both pleaded not guilty. One will appear in court January 23rd and the other February 6th. According to Laramie Police Department Detective Sergeant Mike Brisendine, another man has been charged with attempted first degree sexual assault, and his trial is November 3rd.

Two perpetrators have been incarcerated. According to the District Court Clerk, one, who pleaded no contest

to sexually assaulting his girlfriend's teenage daughter, was sentenced on June 27th to several counts of first and second degree sexual assault. He is appealing his 20-35 year jail sentence.

In July, a Laramie man was sentenced to up to five years in prison. He was also ordered to pay over \$14,000 in restitution to the victim for counseling services, and will now be a registered sex offender. This perpetrator was a repeat offender of sexual violence, having also committed third-degree sexual abuse in Oregon.

"These cases are the result of much hard work on behalf of local law enforcement and the County Attorney's Office. It sends a clear message that sexual violence will not be tolerated in our community," said SAFE Project Executive Director Kelly Collini.

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# Letter from the Executive Director

**Staff**

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**Housing & Life Skills**

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Gina Udick

**Outreach Coordinator**

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**Volunteer Coordinator**

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Michal

Christine

Molly

Christy

Nick

Cori

Rachel

Eleanor

Roberta

Ellen

Sean

Emma

Sophie

Hannah

Susan

Jennifer

Sydney

Jennifer

Whitney

Kalayla

Keileigh

**Back-Up**

Kelsey

Cynthia

Lexi

Christy

Kristen\* came to SAFE after a referral from her counselor. She explained that she only had three weeks until she graduated from college, and after that she would be leaving her partner of eleven years. He was the father of her two girls, aged five and nine. This man kept the household in a constant state of fear and upheaval. She was worried about the effect that the abuse was having on her children: her oldest daughter was exhibiting nervous behaviors that included picking sores all over her body.



Kristen told SAFE advocates about numerous incidents of being punched, kicked, and slapped. Most recently, her partner had beaten her with the blunt end of a hammer. After realizing that she was severely injured, he took Kristen to the hospital. When they arrived at the emergency room, there was a police officer in a patrol car in the parking lot. Her perpetrator gave her a look that said, "Don't even think about it." She never even dared look at the officer. Instead of going in the hospital to seek help, she collapsed back into the car and said, "Take me home." She told me that she went home to die. She was hopeless, exhausted and ready to give up.

Somehow, because of the love for her daughters, a good counselor and support from SAFE, Kristen mustered the courage to formulate a plan to get out. We asked her to please consider living in our shelter, as many abusive situations become lethal when the perpetrator discovers the victim is leaving. But she insisted on staying in her home just long enough to graduate. SAFE staff helped her with safety planning, but she lived 20 miles out of town with no close neighbors. We feared for her life.

A few days before she was to graduate her plan fell through. Her partner became angry and she knew from the way he told her, "I'll see you at home later," it meant a beating. She picked her daughter up from school and fled to her counselor's home. Through the UW Domestic Violence Legal Clinic she was able to obtain a Domestic Violence Protection Order. Police officers escorted her home to pick up her youngest daughter and her belongings. Kristen managed to finish her classes with an extension. She is currently living in another state.

I can't begin to explain the dramatic change in Kristen since she left. She looks, speaks and acts like a different person. She has made the break and will never return. She is still trying to understand how he managed to keep her so isolated and why she tried for so long to make things work. She and her girls are no longer living in a lethal situation, walking on egg shells and waiting for the next bomb to drop. They have a peaceful home, peace of mind and a hopeful outlook for the future.

SAFE Project worked with 236 new victims of domestic violence this past year. Now is the time to take a stand against this dreadful crime. Please join SAFE in recognizing Domestic Violence Awareness Month, as we host activities to bring hope to victims and increase awareness of this problem in our community.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Collini

*\*name changed*

## "... I was not at fault for his actions."

*A client recently shared her story.*

"I came to the SAFE Project May 2011. I left from an abusive relationship and got into Wyoming where I found SAFE Project. When I got here I had nowhere to go and knew no one. I had no money, but SAFE took me in. SAFE gave me a place to stay where I felt safe. They helped me realize that I was not at fault for his actions. They offered me counseling so I can get a more positive outlook on life after the abuse I received.

"I stayed at the shelter for a month, where I got the help I needed to better myself. They

gave me a peace of mind, where I knew I didn't have to get back into a bad relationship. The people at SAFE Project gave me back my life. They made me realize that I wasn't a bad person. They gave me hope for a better future.

"Since I left the shelter, I have been working on getting my health back. I am working on getting a GED. Without SAFE Project, I wouldn't of even thought I could've done anything on my own. They gave me the confidence in myself to succeed.

"I would just like to say that without SAFE Project, I would most likely be dead. They helped me in so many ways. I would also like to tell others that are in an abusive relationship that there is hope. And SAFE Project is there for you. And for all the staff members at SAFE Project, I would like to thank you all, for everything you have done for me. You did give me my life back. And may God bless all that help out at SAFE Project."

- TLC (name changed)

## Staff and Board Update

This past summer there were several changes in SAFE Project's staff and Board of Directors.

Our goodbyes to former Housing and Life Skills Coordinator Cynthia MacDuff and Outreach Coordinator Brittany Parsons were bittersweet. We were sad to see them go, but excited for their new endeavors. In their stead we have happily welcomed Gina Udick and Abigaile George-Edling to staff!

Gina became SAFE's Housing and Life Skills Coordinator after serving as a long-time hotline volunteer and former intern. We have all seen Gina jump into her position with both feet, and we are lucky to have such a motivated and organized person for the shelter.

Abigaile, or Abbey, has become Volunteer Coordinator after being a

SAFE volunteer herself for over three years. With that experience under her belt, she has quickly taken on an active role communicating with, and showing appreciation for, SAFE's many dedicated volunteers.

SAFE's Board of Directors has seen changes as well, both in faces and titles. We said farewell to Vice President Matt Caires, who served on the Board for two years. Additionally, we give a proverbial standing ovation as Board Chair Jess Bryski leaves us after six years of faithful support and service.

We now celebrate Board Members Kyle Morris as the new Board Chair, and Katrina McGee as the new Vice President. Warmly welcomed are new members Yvette Haeberle, Laura Rainwater, and Amanda Brodie.

Yvette is a physician with years of experience in family and victim advoca-

cacy, family medicine, and forensic medical examinations. We are thrilled to have the expertise she brings to the table!

Laura brings with her the perspectives of both positions she holds in the community: Associate Pastor at United Methodist Church, and Director/Campus Chaplain of Wesley Foundation Campus Ministries. SAFE is excited to have her on board!

Amanda is a former attorney with the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. She is now the Associate Director of Planned Giving at the University of Wyoming Foundation. We welcome her passion for advocacy!

### Statistics

#### June 2011

New Clients: 22  
On-going Clients: 10  
Hotline calls: 101  
Types of Victimization  
Domestic Violence: 16  
Sexual Assault: 1  
Stalking: 5  
Shelter Statistics:  
Total Sheltered: 7

#### July 2011

New Clients: 16  
On-going Clients: 20  
Hotline calls: 175  
Types of Victimization  
Domestic Violence: 12  
Sexual Assault: 2  
Stalking: 1  
Shelter Statistics  
Total Sheltered: 8

#### August 2011

New Clients: 12  
On-going Clients: 20  
Hotline calls: 70  
Types of Victimization  
Domestic Violence: 8  
Child Abuse: 2  
Shelter Statistics  
Total Sheltered: 11

## Summer outreach a big success

Among other successful outreach efforts this summer, SAFE Project was invited to be part of University of Wyoming's freshmen orientation in June. With nine sessions in all, SAFE advocates were able to share information with about 1,500 freshmen.

Points emphasized during SAFE's 10-minute segment were agency services, sexual assault (SA) statistics, university policy against SA, and reasons why SA is often not reported.

Two orientation leaders helped illustrate the facts and numbers with personal stories in pre-recorded video clips. One spoke about supporting and consoling a friend whose family member was sexually assaulted. Another told the story of a friend who was sexually assaulted by a number of acquaintances at a party.

Other outreach activities this summer included the Arts in the Park in August, where 35 adults and 42 children stopped by SAFE's booth. SAFE also had a booth at a Naughty Pines Derby Dames home bout in June. Naughty Pines helped raise awareness throughout the event by advertising SAFE Project and informing the audience about the issues we work with. They also sponsored a fundraiser event during halftime. The bout had about 200 attendees.

Lastly, in August, SAFE had a booth at the Beitel Elementary Open House, where approximately 100 children and adults came by the table.

Please visit [www.safeproject.org](http://www.safeproject.org) and submit your email address for our electronic newsletters.

## Silent Witness Ceremony in 14th year

The voices of approximately 60 Wyoming women have been quieted, but now their stories are heard by many every year at the Silent Witness Ceremony. We stand in acknowledgment of their murders as we stand against the abuse they endured.

This year, Wyoming's 14th statewide Silent Witness Ceremony took place on October 1<sup>st</sup> in Thermopolis. Since 1997, Wyoming has commemorated those women who have died at the hands of a spouse, intimate partner, or family member. Nationally, the Silent Witness Initiative has existed since 1990.

The oldest Wyoming Silent Witness was 76 at the time of her death; the youngest was 15.

Victims are symbolically represented by



life-sized wooden silhouettes made by the incarcerated women of the Wyoming Women's Center in Lusk and the men of the Wyoming Honor Farm in Riverton. Included in the exhibit are silhouettes representing the seven men, four boys, and one girl who were also killed by the perpetrators of domestic violence homicides.

At county and state Silent Witness Ceremonies, the victim's stories are read aloud. Family members and other survivors are welcomed to speak.

Four of the 60 women were from Albany County, although one silhouette has been retired. On October 26<sup>th</sup> our community will honor the remaining three with a Candlelight Vigil at the Alice Hardie Stevens Center.

Albany County SAFE  
Project  
P.O. Box 665  
Laramie, WY 82073



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## Return Service Requested

### Our Mission:



*SAFE Project strives “to advocate for victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, rape, and incest, and to create change through education and awareness to eliminate violence.” We also work with victims of stalking, child and elder abuse.*

SAFE Project would like to extend our warmest thank you to the following individuals and organizations who made contributions from April-August 2011.

- |   |   |                              |                                       |
|---|---|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| · 21 anonymous donations                                  | · First National Bank of Wyoming              | · Judith and Peter Ellsworth | · Randy and Susan George              |
| · Abigaile George-Edling                                  | · Fraternal Order of the Eagles               | · Kathy Griswold             | · Sean Ryan                           |
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