



# A Community Ending Violence

June 2009

## Sexual Assault & Child Abuse Month Recap

### Upcoming Events:

#### Laramie Summer Safety Fair:

July 4<sup>th</sup>, Washington Park

#### Rural Advocacy Conference:

July 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>, Ramkota, Casper

#### Victim Services Conference:

August 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>, Little America, Cheyenne

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April was a very busy month for SAFE Project. Highlights include:

#### Take Back the Night:

Bad weather moved TBTN indoors this year to the Union

Gardens, but 175 still attended for live music, food, performances and speakers. Women's

Action Network and SAFE helped to sponsor the event and brought in speakers:

Jess Bryski (Women's Studies Professor), Cathy Connolly (House of Representatives Member), and Bryan Watt (SAFE Project Volunteer Advocate). STEP Up Peer Educators and Greek Men Against Assault performed skits about rape myths and victim blaming for attendees after the march.



Bryan Watt speaking at TBTN

#### Sexual Assault Summit:

SAFE was fortunate to send four staff members to Casper, Wyoming, for three days of vigorous training and workshops centered

around sexual assault. Track sessions focused on perspectives from law enforcement and prosecution, advocacy, and medical. These track sessions allowed professionals from different disciplines to attend and receive training specific to their fields.

#### Presentations:

SAFE gave 22 presentations that educated the community about the realities of sexual assault and child abuse. Of these, six were given at WyoTech. Esteemed Board Member, Mike Ernst, joined Outreach Coordinator, Brittany Parsons, to discuss sexual assault statutes. Mike is a

great asset to have as a co-presenter at WyoTech because he has 20 years experience as an investigator of sexual assaults.

In addition, SAFE gave seven presentations at the University of Wyoming Lab School. Attendees ranged from kindergarten to 9th grade, and topics included child abuse and sexual violence. The kindergarteners traced their hands on paper pledging that their hands were not for hitting, which was a success with them!

#### Publicity:

Publicity for the April Awareness Months included napkins with sexual assault information at bars and cups of prevention with facts about sexual and child abuse at coffee shops; they raised over \$70.00! Also, SAFE wrote letters to the editor in the Boomerang, as well as city and county proclamations for the month. In addition, posters were at over 80 businesses in town stressing information about the awareness months and services we provide.

## SAFE Welcomes New Board Member

Board members are a necessary component of SAFE because of their devotion to the mission and their ability to bring their outside expertise to guide SAFE.

With that said, SAFE is ecstatic to welcome our newest Board member Matt Caires, Assistant Dean of Students at UW.

"Matt brings a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion to SAFE Project's mission and goals. The staff and clients will benefit tremendously from his dedication to eradicating violence in our community," according to Board President Jess Bryski.

"Having a representative from

the UW campus serve on the Board is important for so many reasons. We are fortunate to have someone with Matt's background in both academia and violence prevention willing to share his time and talents to assist with the difficult work we do," said Executive Director Kelly Collini.

**Staff**

Director: Kelly Collini  
 Office Manager: Genevieve Reilly  
 Director of Development:  
 Cynthia MacDuff  
 Volunteer Coordinator:  
 Hope Wilson  
 Outreach Coordinator:  
 Brittany Parsons  
 AmeriCorp Volunteer:  
 Amanda Blair

**Board of Directors**

President: Jessica Bryski  
 Vice President: Dasa Robertson  
 Secretary: Jennifer Benkman  
 Treasurer: Jonnie Jenkins  
 Members: Matt Caires  
 Mike Ernst  
 Shawna Kautzman  
 Maureen Lutterman

**Volunteers**

Abigail G.	Tammy W.
Andrea H.	Tess M.
Angela W.	Whitney C.

**Back-Up**

Chaz G.	Brian S.
Chelsay E.	Bryan W.
Clayton N.	Rosie L.
Erica S.	Sandy W.
Erin M.	Trish W.
Gina U.	
Hannah S.	
Heather D.	

**Translators**

Holly H.	Don R.
John A.	Emily B.
K.C. V.	Jennifer B.
Kaitlin H.	Klaus H.
Katerie D.	Megan M.
Kayla M.	Nicolette J.
Leah P.	Yan Z.
Linda G.	Yolima C.
Margeaux W.	
Mary B.	

**Volunteer Hours**

Rebecca F.	<b>February:</b> 1310.25
Ryan F.	(\$23,230.73)
Sagan M.	<b>March:</b> 829.5
Sean M.	(\$14,707.04)
Sherri H.	<b>April:</b> 908.25
	(\$16,103.27)

# Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters of SAFE Project:

SAFE's AmeriCorp Volunteer, Amanda Blair, has been putting a tremendous amount of work in to the Albany County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). SAFE has been helping to organize meetings; providing local healthcare agencies, victim service advocates and campus, county and city law enforcement agencies, including prosecution; with a forum to work on providing a coordinated community response to victims of sexual assault in Albany County.

Providing consistent and comprehensive services helps to lessen re-victimization of victims and ensure that victims have access to all the services they may need. Recently the team has been working on creating, updating and sharing protocols. This is an important step for so many reasons.

Protocols help community agencies understand what services are available to victims and where to get a specific service. For example, the hospital needs to know what services SAFE can offer a victim who has suffered an assault (i.e. emergency clothing, shelter and assistance with navigating the legal process). Law enforcement needs to know that Laramie Reproductive Health can provide STD testing and emergency contraception, and so forth between all agencies. Written protocols also help to identify where services may be lacking, or conversely, overlapping. Strong communication and coordination among law enforcement, medical personnel, victim advocates and other community agencies not only leads to improved services for victims, but may also lead to improved prosecution and conviction rates of perpetrators.

There are so many challenges in providing a coordinated response, some shared among all agencies, such as victim confidentiality, and some unique to each agency, such as HIPPA laws which govern medical records. I am encouraged by the work that the Laramie community is doing with SART. It can be tedious and feel like added work on top of already busy schedules and crazy workloads, but we know the initial work that is being done is necessary, because when agencies are able to collaborate, victims are better served.

Thank you for all your continued support,

*Kelly Collini*

## In Her Words

**A survivor recently shared her story:**

When I first came to SAFE, my daughter had been living in a car with her father because I was in jail. My daughter's father was abusive to both of us and we were trying to start over. We needed assistance and support. SAFE was able to provide both to us.

The house shelter we stayed at was very beneficial because we needed structure, and someone was there almost every day to make sure we were getting done what we needed to. I am a procrastinator, so having someone we had to be accountable to was very effective for us. The shelter also gave my daughter and me the sta-

bility we needed to put our lives back together. It was helpful to live in the shelter with other women who needed support or who looked to me for support and guidance.

The Executive Director, Kelly Collini, was especially helpful because her positive encouragement made me feel so good. She always applauded me for making small steps and that made a big difference in putting my life back together.

My overall experience at SAFE was productively refreshing. SAFE helped me to feel like I got back on my feet without the support from my family, which was important to me.

It's hard to describe SAFE and what the advocates there actually do for clients. I think that an advocate is a voice for you when yours is too small. The monetary help I received from SAFE was helpful, but that is not the essence of what SAFE is. The communication, emotional support and ongoing enthusiastic encouragement are much more helpful to me, even to this day, than the financial assistance.

I now live in my own home with my daughter, and it feels nice to say that. However, it is good to know that I can still come to the office at SAFE and get help with things like my resume and talk to advocates about how I am doing.

-Lisa

*Name changed for confidentiality.*

**Another Way to Support SAFE!** When you shop at Albertsons, you can help SAFE by scanning a Community Partner Card (call 742-7273 to obtain one) and a percentage of your purchase will be donated to SAFE!

## Advocates Learn about Legal System

Legal Advocate Training this spring was a huge success, which was made possible by great attendance of current volunteers. Eight advocates completed the 10 hour training, which is above and beyond the necessary training requirements to work with clients at SAFE Project.

These advocates heard from Amy Smith, Attorney at the WCADVSA Legal Clinic, and Dasa Robertson, Victim Advocate at Crime Victim/Witness. They discussed their respective programs, protection orders, and statutes related to domes-

tic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Tours of the Circuit and District Courts, along with meetings with Judges Caster and Donnell rounded out the community cross-training.

A former client and current volunteer also spoke at the training about her experiences with the court system and SAFE. Many of the advocates really liked this segment of training, and one said, "Her story was very enlightening about the legal system. A real story helps piece together how it all works."

Staff who attended training also learned new information, which demonstrates the importance of continued dialogue and open communication with other agencies.

Knowledge gained through Legal Advocate Training will directly improve client services. One advocate even stated in her evaluation that, "Legal Advocate Training has helped me feel more prepared to work with SAFE clients and I would highly recommend it to all advocates interested in the legal process."

*Written by Hope Wilson*

## Volunteer Appreciation

Volunteers have always been at the heart of SAFE Project; and with issues like a recession and budget cuts, volunteers are becoming a more integral part of SAFE.

Our annual volunteer appreciation dinner was a great success with 30 people in attendance. The dinner in the volunteers' honor was at the Alice Hardie Stevens Center on April 27th. Volunteer Coordinator, Hope Wilson, and Executive Director, Kelly Collini, applauded volunteers for helping with the hotline,

serving as a Board member, and assisting with office work. Hope addressed how volunteers are the stars of our organization because of their commitment and dedication to ending violence.

Some of our volunteers have gone above and beyond what we require of them since January 09. Volunteers who have worked with clients for more than 10 hours are: Amanda B., Abigail G.H.E., Sherri H., and Brian S. Volunteers who have put in 100 or more hotline

hours are: Amanda B., Mary B., Whitney C., Katerie D., Abigail G.H.E., Chaz G., Holly H., Rosemary L., Cynthia M., Sagan M., Leah P., Brian S., Hannah S., Bryan W., and Sandy W.

Additionally, Sherri H. and Sean M. have volunteered in the office and Jennifer B. has assisted with translating.

Finally, SAFE is excited to welcome Gina U. and K.C. V. who are filling the office and shelter assistant volunteer positions.

## Clients Steadily Increasing Since 2007

During the first four months of 2009, SAFE worked with more clients than we did in all of 2007. A comparison of 07, 08 and 09 shows a steady increase in clients, especially thus far this year:

- 194% increase in hotline calls from 07 to 09
- 103% increase in total clients from 07 to 09
- 33% increase in total client nights in shelter from 08 to 09
- 100% increase in clients in shelter from 08 to 09

These statistics really put into perspective how important the advo-

cacy is that we do here at SAFE. In addition, the substantial increase in hotline calls from 07 to 09 illustrates how important our volunteers are who take hotline shifts and assist with answering these emergency calls.

One of SAFE's main priorities is finding a shelter that better suits our growing number of clients. A 100% increase in clients in shelter from 08 to 09 demonstrates how crucial this goal is.

A 103% increase in total clients from 07 to 09 may be indicative of a couple of different issues. We know

that domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking are occurring in our community even if those victims are not seeking SAFE services.

Therefore, an increase in clients doesn't necessarily mean there is more violence occurring, rather it is likely more victims are speaking out about their abuse. Additionally, while a downturn in the economy does not cause more violence to occur, it certainly makes it that much harder to leave an abusive home. Clients may need more financial support and emergency services to make a transition to a safe place.

### Statistics

#### February 2009

New Clients: 17  
On-going Clients: 24  
Hotline calls: 141  
Types of Victimization  
Domestic Violence: 15  
Sexual Assault: 1  
Stalking: 0  
Child Abuse: 1  
Shelter Statistics  
Total Sheltered: 22

#### Outreach

Presentations: 0  
Persons Attended: 0

#### March 2009

New Clients: 19  
On-going Clients: 21  
Hotline calls: 155  
Types of Victimization  
Domestic Violence: 11  
Sexual Assault: 1  
Stalking: 5  
Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault (DV/SA): 1  
Unknown: 1

#### Shelter Statistics

Total Sheltered: 10

#### Outreach

Presentations: 6  
Persons Attended: 175

#### April 2009

New Clients: 40  
On-going Clients: 19  
Hotline calls: 142  
Types of Victimization  
Domestic Violence: 34  
Sexual Assault: 2  
Stalking: 1  
DV/SA: 2  
Unknown: 1

#### Shelter Statistics

Total Sheltered: 8

#### Outreach

Presentations: 22  
Persons Attended: 346

### Interested in Donating?

SAFE is grateful for all and any donations and humbly accepts monetary and car donations on our website at [www.safeproject.org](http://www.safeproject.org)



**Albany County SAFE Project**

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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.”**



SAFE Project would like to extend our warmest thank you to the following individuals and organizations who have made contributions since February 2009:

- Altitudes/LoveJoys
- Bath & Body Works
- Beta Sigma Phi Chapter
- Linda Brooks
- Jess Bryski
- Corina Du Charme
- Chickering Books
- Chi Sigma Iota-Counseling Education Clinic
- Gloria Christensen
- Christian Women’s Fellowship/First Christian Church
- Cup of Prevention Awareness
- Reverend Lyndie Duff
- Mariah Ehmke
- First Baptist Church
- First United Methodist Church
- Fraternal Order of the Eagles
- Friends of Community Recreation
- Mary & Richard Guenzel
- Marcia Hanks
- Hastings
- Lana Henman
- Jeffreys Bistro
- Jonnie & Bradley Jenkins
- Juan Jose & Alicia Flores
- Kiddie Cottage
- Kathy Klein
- David Kubicheck
- Laramie Civic League
- Laramie H.O.G. Chapter
- Laramie Women’s Club
- Dr. Sue Lowe & Eric Lundall
- Tom Nachtigal, MD
- Mary Naumann
- Amber Ness
- Anne Olson
- Jeremy Page
- Trisha Parsons
- Sid Peters
- Josh Rebholz
- Genevieve Reilly
- Rho Chi Pharmacy Honor Society
- Susan & Eric Sandeen
- Soroptimist International
- Carrie Spaulding
- STOP Violence
- United Presbyterian Church
- UniWyo FCU
- UW Foundation
- Sue Wedel
- Women’s Civic League
- J. Zimmerman Ellsworth & Peter Ellsworth
- ZONTA Club of Laramie

**Electronic Version Available:** If you would like the newsletter to be sent to you electronically, please let us know!

Contact Brittany at [safeoutreach@qwestoffice.net](mailto:safeoutreach@qwestoffice.net) or 742-7273