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## Spruce Run News (Fall 1985)

Spruce Run Staff

*Spruce Run*

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# *Spruce Run Association*

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SERVICES FOR  
ABUSED WOMEN

207/947-0496

INCORPORATED AND SERVING  
THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1973

A Penobscot Valley  
United Way Agency

Volume 12, No. 2  
Fall, 1985

## LEGISLATURE VOTES MORE FUNDING

This year's legislative session was a very successful one for the ME. Coalition for Family Crisis Services. The statewide, nine-project Coalition, of which Spruce Run is a member, presented three proposals: 1) a Part II budget allocation for general improvement of services; 2) an act to fund children's programming; and 3) an act to fund community response programs. On April 23, the Coalition held a Legislative Information Day to educate legislators about domestic violence, what we've been doing to solve the problem, and how these new proposals would further our efforts. With several people from each project talking to legislators over coffee and cookies, much information was shared, and many lawmakers voiced enthusiasm and support for our work.

The hearings were packed to overflowing and impressed the Appropriations Committee with the diversity and impact of testimony, which included formerly battered women, adult children from violent homes, police chiefs, a representative of the Maine Bar Association, and many others.

The outcome of our effort is astounding in a year of cutbacks: the Coalition was allocated \$100,000 for general improvements; \$102,930 for children's services; and \$75,000 for community response organizing. For Spruce Run, that means \$10,500 for our increasing expenses and to add more counseling hours to one staff position; \$13,500 for a fulltime children's services coordinator; and \$2,000 to begin laying the groundwork for a community response program.

Many thanks to all who wrote letters, called their legislators, and went to the Info Day and the hearings. Thanks also to the great legislators who showed amazing support for our programs. Together our voices rang out loud and clear!

- Shannon Carson

## DID YOU KNOW?

"While women represent 50% of the world adult population and one third of the official labor force, they perform nearly two-thirds of all working hours, receive only one-tenth of world income, and own less than one percent of world property."

"Programme," Mid-Decade  
Conference for Women,  
Copenhagen, 1981

## FALL RUMMAGE SALE

Volunteer Carol L. held a huge Fall Rummage Sale to benefit Spruce Run on October 19-21. Winter clothing was featured. Carol, with help from volunteer Dorinda Y., organized hundreds of items into "departments"-- jeans, coats, maternity, etc. Many local residents took advantage of the low, low prices and carried off bags and boxes full of good, used clothing.

We are so lucky to have such wonderful volunteers as Carol and Dorinda! Thanks, you two, and all the others who assisted.

## KALEIDOSCOPE or

### THE COLORFUL AND MYRIAD FACETS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Thanks to the preliminary efforts of Connie H., Peggy B., and the Children's Committee, services for children have begun to boom. This Summer we were able to provide group and one-to-one counseling for our shelter children, the "support" group at All Souls', and several weekly activity sessions designed for fun.

Warm and wonderful volunteers (Ben G., Bert M., Carol C., Cathy M., Holly Y., Kelly B., Marie M., Pam M., Peter B., and Stephanie W.) have provided stories, songs, ideas, labor, aerobics, playground time, walks, goodies, and love. Hearty shouts of gratitude to them all for hours of quality time and role modeling. Special thanks to Marie M. for driving 140 miles every week for support group and sometimes having no children to support! Hats off to such dedication.

Other important ongoing tasks and activities relating to children are: (1) advocacy via court witnessing, joint counseling sessions with DHS re child sexual abuse, and networking with such agencies as BDP and CHCS; (2) volunteer programming, i.e., developing training which will be offered to all incoming volunteers as well as current interested volunteers, coordinating the Children's Services Committee, developing systems of volunteer recruitment, interviewing, processing; (3) gathering, sorting, and developing children's materials, e.g., welcome-to-the-shelter handbook, age-appropriate packets of materials for use in coun-

seling sessions, and literature on parenting; (4) community education, developing with Mary C. plans and curriculum for use in school systems and other children's programs such as Y's, day care, etc., (5) Coalition networking with other DV projects and shelters to coordinate the quality children's services statewide; (6) developing guidelines, forms, and record-keeping systems which assure quality of service; (7) maintaining (or attempting to maintain) some kind of grassroots centeredness so everyone (including me) stays aware that we are people reaching out to (young) people.

Many other new and exciting things will emerge in the next few months as all these existing tasks are completed. Jump on the bandwagon and join the Children's Services Committee, where your ideas and energy can really go places! Also, check Kaleidoscope or call about upcoming in-services on children and domestic violence so you can become a qualified children's worker. We need you!

- Norma Mallory  
Children's Services Coordinator

## NOW CONFERENCE IN ORONO

The Bangor chapter of the National Organization for Women will host a statewide conference on Saturday, November 2, 9-6 p.m., in the Memorial Union at UMO. The conference theme is "Feminism: The Power of Diversity," and Judy Goldsmith, past president of national NOW, will be a prominent facilitator of a workshop. The conference offers workshops on reproductive rights, racism, incest, pornography, lesbian/gay rights, running for office, ageism, and fitness.

For more information, phone Ada Harrigan at 947-2537 (evening) or Jo Anne Dauphinee at 989-3306, or write to G.B. NOW, Box 8026, Bangor 04401.

## THE HANCOCK COUNTY PAGE

### OUTREACH AND GROWTH

The outreach project in Hancock County continues to roll along, gathering strength and support. In September, we began a membership drive in Hancock County, which so far has brought us 24 new members and \$420 in donations. We expect more to come in over the next few months.

In anticipation of opening an office in Ellsworth by the end of this year, we are forming a new advisory committee to be composed primarily of people who live in Hancock County. This committee will be a regular committee of Spruce Run. We will define issues of serving battered women and their children in Hancock County, work on fundraising, and clarify our own role within the organization as a whole.

A new Hancock/Penobscot crisis counselor training is beginning this month, and we hope by December to have several new volunteers there. We want to begin to offer walk-in counseling and support groups in our Ellsworth office as soon as we have enough volunteers to staff it.

Our budget for the coming year is extremely tight. Full services will not be possible until more community support is realized. If you have any fundraising ideas, would like personally to help in the Hancock effort, or could become a volunteer, please let me know.

- Katharine Storer

### HANCOCK COUNTY VOLUNTEERS

We especially welcome our six volunteers from Hancock County. Katharine S. and Martha W. led the spring training group in Ellsworth. Dotty C. was the reporter for her group:

Jaki, a College of the Atlantic graduate, is interested in education

and mental health; primarily, she likes to work with children. She'd like eventually to do expressive arts therapy. She and her husband and two kids, aged 8 and 2, recently bought land on Mt. Desert Island.

Dorcas sees Spruce Run as representing hope for the "trapped" women she works with: "During my employment, I have become aware of the plight of many of the women.... They are often single parents or in relationships which are unstable, and the stress in their lives affects their work performance and all facets of their lives."

Pam works at College of the Atlantic and is on the board of several community agencies in Hancock County. About her reasons for volunteering at Spruce Run, she says: "I've been interested in women's issues since junior high school, and I feel it's very important for women, collectively and individually, to gain and assert their power and influence in the world. I also find the skills that I learned in SR training are helpful in my life, at work, with family and friends."

Dotty, a UMass sociology graduate, is a longtime coop member and childbirth instructor; presently, she's volunteer coordinator at her local elementary school. Dotty says, "These activities, along with my SR work, finishing our house and raising two kids with my husband, are more than enough to keep my life interesting." Her primary professional interests, which are "on hold" due to small children, are in family and community mental health.

Mary Ann is a craftsperson from the coast. While we didn't get much info from her for this column, we did hear that she got three crisis calls while she was on hotline last weekend. Good work, Mary Ann!

Lake is taking time off to be with her new baby daughter, Bridget Isabella. Good luck to you two!

## BROTHERSTORM IN MAINE

Several weeks ago we received a donation from Brotherstorm, along with the following letter of explanation from Peter B. Thanks, Peter.

I was hitching to Portland. The first ride gave me five bucks from his gas money when I told him my day's business--BROTHERSTORM, a national men's call for the end of men's violence against women. I planned to celebrate on a corner in the big city, spreading the word, challenging my brothers' ability to work for creative change, raising some \$ for my sisters' work, and enjoying myself.

Unbeknownst to me, the Old Port Festival was on, with tents, roped-off streets, crafts, and mobs of people. My "OH BROTHERS!" sign went on a light pole, and I stepped off the curb, to play my bagpipes before a curious gathering. It worked. They read the sign and, dollar by quarter by dollar by pennies, dropped \$170 into my pipe case.

The cash matters to Spruce Run, but it seems to me that what it stands for is as important, *i.e.*, the hundreds of people participating, the photographs to be explained in a couple of weeks, the women who took heart, and the individual men who read the sign and consciously made a step with their money.

This first ride, he shared his life of Vietnam, alcoholism, and divorce, and now, for eight months, cautious freedom. He is my hope that someday a man will go to Abusers Anonymous and be able to tell a stranger, "I'm an abusive man, but I haven't been violent, haven't lost my temper, for eight months."

## COMMUNITY DONATIONS

Spruce Run has benefitted from major donations in the past three months. We are so thankful to these organizations!

Hancock County Quilters for raffling  
a fantastic quilt for SR  
Bangor Elks Lodge, \$1000  
Old Town Knights of Columbus and  
Ladies Auxiliary, proceeds from  
their Casino Night given to SR

## FAREWELL PARTY HELD

On Friday the thirteenth we had a volunteer potluck to honor three retiring Steering Committee members, Martha W., Elaine O., and Eloise S. The high point of the evening was the arrival of a car full of colorful helium balloons for a 21-balloon salute. The group spent the evening eating, singing, getting to know one another better, and reminiscing about the many prominent moments from past Steering Committee meetings.

Martha turned out to be the only guest of honor, maybe because the party was held at her house. We called Eloise's non-functioning answering machine to leave a singing tribute, and we waited to see if Elaine would win the never-ending tug-of-war between family fun and volunteer fun. Unfortunately, this night we lost.

We do wish these dear friends the very best, and hope they will become involved with Spruce Run in new and exciting ways. Their valuable contributions to the Steering Committee will be missed.

- Peggy Badran

## UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN OFF TO A GOOD START

September 19 marked the kickoff of the 1985 United Way campaign, with Spruce Run already a Pacesetter agency (100% of our staff contributed). This year's goal is \$1.1 million to fund partially more than 30 social service agencies in the Penobscot Valley. The United Way continues to provide 25% of Spruce Run's budget, providing salaries for our Counseling Coordinator and half the Shelter Services Coordinator. (The other half will be allocated if the campaign attains its goal and has extra money to give us.)

The United Way campaigns in most workplaces in this area. Please give what you can. Thank you!

- Shannon Carson

## WHO THE WORKERS ARE

Susan C. interviewed the new volunteers from this summer's training group. Here's what she learned:

Lee Ann is a child development specialist who is taking time out to give birth to her second child. Little did she know that her involvement with Spruce Run was going to become a nightly commitment! Three shelter calls, one police call, and one ambulance call are pretty vigorous work for a new volunteer. We have decided to give her a break between now and November at least. Happy Baby, Lee Ann!

Beth N. has miraculously taken time out of her horrendously hectic schedule to commit time and energy to Spruce Run. She has managed to juggle hotline and office service with a fulltime academic schedule, parttime waitressing, and preparation for law boards. Our hats are off to you, Beth!

Diane B. is an active mother of two, a UMO student majoring in psychology, and a woman who has experienced battering. Through Spruce Run and her education, Diane hopes to "contribute to changes toward a better world where all people, especially women and children, can live in dignity and safety."

Susan F. realized her intense interest in Spruce Run when she was assigned to the agency as part of her field placement at Bangor Community College. She has continued her education at UMO and has at last fulfilled her goal of finding time to complete training as a Spruce Run volunteer. We all feel fortunate to have Susan's enthusiastic support and long-term dedication.

Susan C.'s commitment to Spruce Run comes by way of her academic program in social work at UMO. As a student Susan will spend two semesters learning about all phases and functions of Spruce Run. Since completing training, she has worked both on hotline and in the office. "It has been a long road to travel, but I know this is where I want to be."

Beth L. and Patty D. gave us the following information on the volunteers from their training group:

Robin's major job is mothering three children (ages 15, 13, 10), and wifing one absent-minded, but loving, boat builder. She is also mothering a new labrador puppy. Currently, she has closed her shop on Mt. Desert Island for the season, and is a parttime student at UMO, where she is not the oldest student there. Robin volunteers as an office counselor and public speaker for Spruce Run. Thanks to Mary C.'s Public Speaking course, taken in the Spring, Robin recently spoke to the MDI Lioness Club and the Episcopal Church Women of MDI. She feels great raising the public awareness!

Carol C. is a student at UMO with a major in Economics, planning to do almost nothing with it. She's also a master procrastinator. She likes to work at modern dance and enjoys the company of children. If given the chance, she'd marry Bill Murray, though she's disappointed in his recent film, The Razor's Edge. Too broad. Too clichéd. She owns a map of the USA. It's actual size.

Beth L. started her new career on October 7, as an investment advisor! This exciting new experience proves to be challenging for her. She is also a poet by nature and hopes to get published before she's 25. As you can see, she's high on ambition, but low on motivation (procrastination being a major obstacle). Some of her hobbies include baking pies and eating them, motorcycling, and biking (all when time permits)--and we can't forget volunteering!

Patty is a junior at UMO this year, majoring in social work. She's into sociology classes and likes Sandy G.'s class in particular (hoping to get an A in it: hint-hint!). Patty is looking forward to taking the training again because she's a glutton for punishment. Of course, the yellow training manual is her best friend! She enjoys macramé. She is also in the Big Sister/Big Brother program.

Alas, Judy F. has been too busy to return phone calls, so we didn't get any good stuff on her to print.

## MEDIATION AND BATTERED WOMEN

(Editor's Note: On April 16, 1985, the Bangor Daily News printed an article on mediation, a system used primarily by divorcing couples to work out child custody, visitation, and property settlements. The article presented positive results from mediation, but failed to point out that some people, particularly battered women, find mediation inappropriate, and even harmful, in their situations. A former client submitted this guest editorial to the BDN, but it was not published.)

In marriages where there has been long-term physical and emotional battering, there is an imbalance of power that even many professionals do not comprehend. The abused woman has not only suffered physical injury, she has also been degraded, isolated, and terrorized, sometimes for years. To expect such a woman to go into marriage counseling, mediation, or any other negotiation situation, and be able to state her case and defend her position, in the presence of her abuser, is unrealistic. To expect the abusive husband to consider fairness, equity, and "the good of the minor children," when he has been accustomed to exercising his power freely, may also be unrealistic.

Even in the emergency room or the police station, where there is obvious injury, a battered woman often will make excuses and deny the abuse out of fear. The abuser may deny his wrongdoing; he may appear calm and reasonable. When the couple enters mediation, these forces of power and fear are still in play.

I left my husband several times because of his violence, but I always returned. He, like many abusive men, was emotionally needy; after a blow-up, he became contrite and loving until I believed there was still hope. However, once I was back home, in a vulnerable, isolated position, he would again become abusive.

At last, in terror for myself and my small children, I went to a shelter. With the support of the counselors there,

and also seeing a therapist, I was finally able to free myself from the cycle of fear and need that had continued for years. I obtained a Protection from Abuse order (my third) and filed for divorce (for the fourth time).

Less than a month later, I was summoned to mediation. Both my lawyer and the mediator assured me that, though emotions were high, we would be able reasonably to negotiate a voluntary agreement. My husband's position was that he had done nothing to me, that I was emotionally unstable, that he should have custody of our children, that his budget made it impossible for him to pay any child support. (He is in middle management in a large corporation.) He used every threat he could, and tried to convince the mediator that he was right. Meanwhile, the mediator tried to convince me that joint custody of the children would work, and be advantageous, even though I still had a Protection from Abuse order in effect and was afraid even to let my husband know where I was living. (The protective order gave me temporary custody of the children, but he did have visitation rights, so we met every other weekend in a public place to exchange children.) When no agreement could be reached, a second mediation session was arranged, which also proved fruitless. I am still waiting, nine months later, for the court to hear the divorce. Meanwhile, I have gone to Support Enforcement because my husband refused to pay the court-ordered child support, and I still have a Protection from Abuse order and a confidential address. Yet the fear is still there.

In our case, mediation was a waste of time and money. Though the mediator does not charge the couple, both lawyers were present throughout the sessions. Perhaps if the mediator had held a preliminary meeting with each of us separately, she might have brought an understanding of both positions to the joint mediation session. As it was, mediation just increased the expense and prolonged the pain. Had I faced mediation without the backing of a lawyer and personal counseling, I might have agreed, out of fear, ignorance of my rights, and low self-esteem, to a mediated settlement that was not in the best interest of my children or myself.

## SR ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the membership of Spruce Run was held October 3 at All Souls' Church in Bangor. The assembly heard a number of reports from staff and Steering Committee members on the past year's progress and growth. Of special interest were our two new programs: Children's Services and Hancock County Outreach Project.

After a break for refreshments, the group presented farewell salutes to retiring Steering Committee members Linda Luther Starbird, Elaine Opitz, Eloise Stiglitz, and Martha Wildman. Three new members of the Steering Committee were elected: Roberta Kuriloff, Sandra Haggard, and Judy Frost. Karen Harlan has also agreed to participate in the Steering Committee to facilitate the consensus decision-making process.

## SHELTER WISH LIST

Thanks to all those who have donated goods to the shelter lately. We have been very busy, with as many as six women and nine children here, and we really appreciate all your support.

Here are a few items we could use right now:

- washcloths
- dish towels
- bath towels
- disposable diapers (all sizes)
- sanitary supplies
- lamps
- toothbrushes
- toothpaste

Thanks again for everything you do for our residents.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

Anyone interested in supplying/buying/donating books for a Spruce Run library, please contact Kathleen at 945-5102. Thanks!

## DV AWARENESS WEEK

The week of October 6-12 was designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Week. All over the United States, battered women's projects held special events to celebrate women who have survived abuse and gone on to violence-free lives; to mourn those who have been beaten and even died; and to educate the community about the extent of the problem of battering and the need for everyone to become part of the solution.

The week ends with a National Day of Unity, on which Spruce Runners attended a Coffee House on Saturday, October 12, at the Damn Yankee Room, UMO, for an evening of entertainment by such talented folk as Joan Wellhauser and her friends. A large crowd enjoyed music, readings, and refreshments. Thank you, Joan!

Spruce Run, along with other members of the Coalition for Family Crisis Services, helped to sponsor the visit of Susan Schechter to the Bangor area on October 10-11. The author of Women and Male Violence: The Visions and Struggles of the Battered Women's Movement, Schechter led a workshop for Coalition members, as well as delivering a lecture at UMO and conducting a workshop open to the public for the Maine Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Spruce Run people got lots of new energy from talking with her, and we felt affirmed by what she had to say about the battered women's movement nationwide and our role in it.

## SWEATSHIRTS ARE HERE!

The new Spruce Run sweatshirts, bearing the same logo as we have on the T-shirts, have arrived in time for holiday gift-giving. They come in two styles, hooded pullover (\$15) and plain pullover (\$12) and two colors, navy and maroon. Stop by the office to see them, or phone 945-5102 to order the size, style, and color you want.



\$151.00

\$151.00



143  
689  
54

113.00 JAN 16

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2733 2:25 - 3:05 Portland

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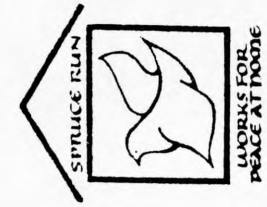
March 6 1:35 p.m. LaGuardia stop  
6:15 Bangor 2728 Portland

March 14 10:10am Bangor 2747  
1:35 LaGuardia 2791 Port

14 Feb tickets will be held

58.00

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Please Remember Spruce Run  
in Your Holiday Giving!