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Spruce Run News (Spring 1984)

Spruce Run Staff

Spruce Run

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Spruce Run Association

P. O. BOX 653 - BANGOR, MAINE 04401

INCORPORATED AND SERVING
THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1973

SPRING, 1984

VOLUME 11, NO. 1

SERVICES FOR
ABUSED WOMEN
207/947-0496



A PENOBSCOT VALLEY
UNITED WAY AGENCY

SHELTER WISH LIST

Dear Folks,

Many thanks to all of you who donated items after Christmas, and particularly to Irene Gray at United Way for thinking of us when United Way of America was giving away Electrolux vacuum cleaners.

We still need a few more items:

Toys (sturdy, non-toxic, safe), blocks

Heavy-duty washer and dryer

Wet vaporizer in good condition

Leaf rake and other yard tools

Consumable items

Automatic drip coffee (decaf & reg.)

Swimsuits

People are always needed, too:

Volunteer window-washers and
spring-cleaners

Volunteers for the Children's
Programming Committee, which
hopes to re-group soon

We'll soon be opening the third floor of the shelter, so look for a longer wish list in the next issue.

Sincerely,

Katharine

Katharine
Shelter Coordinator

SHELTER STATISTICS

The Spruce Run shelter has been full for the past two months. Our present capacity is three families, plus a couch in the living room for emergency use. Here are the statistics for January-March, 1984:

20 families

26 children

358 shelter bed days

3 families with 5 children have
repeated shelter stay this year

WHAT WE DO

Spruce Run Association is a nonprofit organization that counsels women in crisis and shelters abused women and their children. Our shelter, which opened August 1, 1983, provides a safe residence for three or four families. Our office is open Monday through Friday for walk-in and telephone counseling, and our volunteer counselors can be reached at night and on weekends by phoning Dial Help at 947-6143 and asking for Spruce Run.

Spruce Run counseling is geared to the needs of battered women. We give information about protective orders and pro se divorce, and we make referrals to other community services. We encourage women to learn to advocate for themselves, and we provide advocacy with courts and other agencies when necessary. We also work with our clients' children, who often have been profoundly affected by the violence in the home. Through our Community Education program, we tell people about Spruce Run and encourage open discussion of domestic violence and our efforts to stop violence against women.

NEW VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Spruce Run will begin a new 40-hour training course in crisis intervention counseling, geared to the needs of battered women, in mid-May. Training leaders Sue B. and Peggy B. are beginning to interview prospective volunteers this week. They are looking for hotline workers, to be on call from their homes at night and on the weekend, but volunteers are also needed to do office counseling and to work with shelter residents. If you'd like to be a Spruce Run counselor, and can make a one-year commitment, please call 945-5102 immediately.

1983 CLIENT STATISTICS

Adult clients served	474
physical abuse	318
mental abuse (only)	120
sexual abuse (only)	9
Adults sheltered since 1	
August, 1983	27
Adults denied shelter	20
Children served	73
Children sheltered since	
1 August, 1983	29
Total Bed Days since 1	
August, 1983	809
Relationship of Abuser	
spouse	284
ex-spouse	24
cohabitant	61
ex-cohabitant	14
parent/child	67
friend	7
other	22
Police involvement at intake	48
Alcohol involved	
victim	23
abuser	211
Other drugs involved	
victim	14
abuser	76
Referred by	
self	136
friend/relative	111
Dept. of Human Services..	22
counseling serv/therapist	46
legal	26
medical	26
clergy	5
law enforcement agency ..	24
media	13
other	64

ANNOUNCEMENT

Do you have a friend who would like to receive our newsletter? Let us know at 945-5102. Also, please tell us if you'd like your name deleted from our mailing list, if you should receive duplicate copies, or if corrections are needed. Thanks!

WHO THE WORKERS ARE

Spruce Run welcomes a wonderful new group of volunteers, who completed training March 2 and have already done valuable service on the hotline and with the shelter residents. We asked them for some information on themselves, as well as for their feelings about working for Spruce Run.

Peggy S. & Juanita are our new office counselors. Both of them particularly like working with children, and so they have been co-leaders of the children's support group. A mother of two teenagers who has worked with adolescents and also with alcohol issues, Peggy says she finds her Spruce Run work "rewarding; I really enjoy it." Juanita has three children of her own, is a substitute teacher, and still has energy to be warm and supportive to residents and their children. She likes working at Spruce Run and says she found the training a real eye-opener: "It made me realize how lucky I am."

Maddy says Spruce Run training made her paranoid: "I no longer feel safe deer hunting alone." Maddy likes racing canoes and bicycling. She's been involved in health care issues for some time: she used to work on an ambulance and now is teaching childbirth education classes, and waitressing. Maddy wins the prize for having done the most reading on women's issues during training. Her growing awareness of battering, rape, and incest made her angry, and she was known for driving down the road, screaming, after training sessions. She has now settled comfortably but not complacently into hotline work, loves it, and concludes, "I feel like I've found a new family."

Mary V., the third Mary on the list of Spruce Run workers, first came in contact with SR about eight years ago, when she received help with a pro se divorce. Since then she's been working in the Forestry College at UMO, doing research, which is done mostly alone but sometimes with men. Mary came back to SR as a volunteer because she wanted to work for and with women. She says she's a "female chauvinist who would like to help women realize their potential."

Lois found her Spruce Run training "invaluable. So much of training was an affirmation. I kept hearing things I had thought and felt for a long, long time." Though she finds it necessary to be inactive for the present, Lois misses her Spruce Run work and hopes to go back on the hotline before long. She is now devoting much time to her writing career, and we all wish her success with that.

WHO THE WORKERS ARE, continued

Carol says she needed "a break from rural living with my 3-year-old. I needed something I could commit to. All winter I've enjoyed my contacts with everyone associated with SR, and I have a great respect for what they've built . . . not to mention what Noel is building! The facility has so many possibilities that it's more a question of whether it's big enough to incorporate all the fine ideas circulating for its growth and development."

Ginny came to Spruce Run to work with people. "After bashing rocks in the mountains as a geologist for five or six years, I needed a change. I tried chemistry and felt isolated with my chemicals. I decided that people are a better solution than chemicals. Working with everyone at SR has been great."

SHELTER EXPANSION/CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

The renovations are nearly finished on our third and final floor. The Shelter Committee has held heated discussion over what linoleum to put down in the children's playroom, and we still have furniture to obtain. The space is bright and fresh, with luxurious carpeting and colorful walls.

We have decided not to open the third floor officially until we are able to hire someone to develop a full program for children in the shelter. We are keeping our fingers crossed that United Way will grant us the funds for a permanent part-time children's services worker; when we have that person, he or she will be looking for volunteers to assist in planning more supervised activities for shelter children, not only to give the moms some time off, but also to assess what harm has been done to the young members of violent families.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

We baked again! But it was fun at the Holly Near concert on April 13 at the University, where several Spruce Run workers sold \$175 in coffee and goodies and visited with old friends at the same time. Thanks to Sandy Gardner for organizing the sale, and to those who worked and baked.

Dottie has been at work organizing the sixth Mother's Day Carnation Sale, which will be held May 13 in area churches and nursing homes. Approximately forty groups have ordered the flowers, which will be given out as a symbol of motherhood and a reminder of how many mothers are abused. Helping Dottie with the project are Sandy G. and Julie. Thanks to you all.

One of the biggest fundraisers for Spruce Run is the June yard sale, to be held as usual at 40 Garland Street, Bangor. We need donations, particularly household goods, for the sale. We count on making \$1000 or more each year from this sale, so please begin checking your cellars and attics for items. You can phone 945-5102 for details on when and where to drop off your old treasures.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION NIGHT

The Spruce Run staff gave a party for all the volunteers, counselors, and steering committee members on April 4 at Mary C's house in Orono. Along with hot fudge sundaes and strawberries, the volunteers were given colorful certificates (designed by the talented Brenda Miller of Brenda's Art Service in Bangor) and "worry stones" to hold for comfort when they're the counselor on call on the hotline. The Fear That Binds Us, an excellent film on violence against women, was followed by a discussion. Connie H. won the fabulous door prize, a one-month membership in the YWCA Fitness Center.

POLICE REPORT 25.4% INCREASE IN DOMESTIC ASSAULTS

The Uniform Crime Reporting Unit, State Bureau of Identification, Department of Public Safety, has reported that domestic violence assaults in 1983 increased 25.4% over the 1982 period. During 1983, Maine law enforcement agencies cleared 1, 543 domestic violence assaults, an increase of 341 offenses over 1982's total. Penobscot County reported 187 domestic assaults, or 11.1% of the state total.

These were the categories of domestic violence assaults reported:

Male Assault on Female	71.9%
Female Assault on Male	3.9%
Parent Assault on Child	7.0%
Child Assault on Parent	7.1%
All other,	10.2% of total

The total number of assaults reported to police seems very low in comparison to the number of calls we receive from abused women. We plan to report more on this concern in our next issue.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE--A DYSFUNCTION OF AMERICAN CAPITALISM?

by Tracy R. Gran, Associate Professor of Sociology, Bangor Community College of the University of Maine at Orono

Physical abuse of spouses and children occurs at all rungs of the economic and social ladder. The consequences are grave, the causes complex, and the cures are elusive. The question of who gets violent and why is leading to the general orientation that abuse is learned behavior, oftentimes understood within the context of particular social structures.

Entertain the contention that much domestic abuse in America is linked to the social structure of capitalism with its emphasis on commodity ownership. The American family, like all major societal institutions in this country, is imbued with the ethic that its members are commodities of a capitalistic system. Principles of familial equalitarianism aside, family members are often "owned and operated" by their "immediate superiors." For many, the question of identity is not "Who am I?" but "Whose am I?" Who owns me? To whom am I obligated?

This commodity-minded brand of ownership is predicated on an obligation-structure involving a one-way process of communication. Control and, perhaps, physical/verbal abuse are delegated downwardly via the social status hierarchy. Witness the subjugative mentality of our domestic composition of social roles, whereby younger sibling is obligated to parent, spouse obligated to spouse. Human participants, related by blood and bond, may become possessed commodities.

Importantly, this internal capitalistic mentality of the family may merely be reflecting the structural relationships of the external social system (for example, the obligative relations of employee to employer, parishioner to clergyman, student to teacher).

In turn, who do I own? Who is obligated to me? What "possessions" of mine are human possessions? Witness the domino-effect of violence in domestic relations: the more violent a spouse is toward a mate, the more the abused mate is to a child;

correspondingly, the more violent the affected child is toward younger siblings. The more violent the siblings are to one another, the higher the likelihood they will eventually be abusive with their own children and/or their elderly parents. The corporate frustration emanating from a sense of being owned by a supervisor may be scapegoated in the form of abuse within the employee's family. The abused becomes the abuser in this cycle of violence and the abusive spinwheel commences its systematic pattern.

Could it be that the premium placed on a sense of possession and associated control in America has not been obviated by a new spirit of freedom and liberation? This is a relevant question to ponder in the understanding of domestic violence in American society.

SUPPORT GROUP

An abused women's support group meets on Tuesday mornings in Bangor. Facilitated by two Spruce Run staff members, the support group consists of former shelter residents, current residents, and other women who need support in dealing with their feelings about abuse. There are usually six or so women in the group, and they say it really helps them not to feel so alone. A support group for the children is offered at the same time. If you are interested in joining the group, phone 945-5102 for details.

CONFERENCE ON VIOLENCE

On March 15 and 16, the first statewide conference on Violence Against Women was held at the Augusta Civic Center. Sponsored by the Maine Commission for Women, the Coalition of Family Crisis Services (our state coalition), and the Coalition Against Rape, the conference drew an audience of 225 for two days of seminars and workshops on battering, rape, and incest. Highlights included an appearance by Governor Joseph Brennan, a keynote speech by Freeda Kleine of Boston tying together all forms of violence against women, and a dance/narrative by Karin Spitfire called "Incest: It's All Relative."

Of particular interest to Spruce Runners were two seminars. One, called "Breaking the Cycle of Violence," was presented by the Family Crisis Coalition members; Spruce Runner Mary Cathcart presented part of this seminar, a talk on self-help and empowering. Another excellent presentation was a seminar on "Enforcing the Domestic Violence Laws," with Judge Henry Brennan and District Attorneys Janet Mills and Margaret Kravchuck, as well as a formerly abused woman from the Augusta shelter and Mimi Marchev, director of the Augusta shelter.

Other volunteers, Steering Committee members, and staff members also attended the conference: Sandy Turallo, Katharine Storer, Dottie, Ginny, Maddy, Mary V., Sandy Gardner and Joan Marx.

Many conference participants expressed a need and wish to make this an annual event.

ARE THESE STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE?

- T F 1. A minor beating results in a release of tension and will decrease the likelihood that the beater will commit severe violence.
- T F 2. Women provoke beatings.
- T F 3. People involved in battering are poor or unemployed, uneducated, and lower class.
- T F 4. Alcohol causes violent behavior.
- T F 5. Women who stay with beaters are masochists. They enjoy pain.
- T F 6. One out of every 2-3 women will become battered.
- T F 7. Whatever happens in the male-female relationship is patterned after the model behaviors observed in the couple's parents.
- T F 8. Violent explosions, in courtship or marriage, are signs of love.
- T F 9. Adults who were frequently abused by their parents as children have a spouse-beating rate much higher than that of other adults.
- T F 10. If a woman tries to be a better wife, the incidence of battering will decrease.
- T F 11. In dating &/or marriage, a woman's role is to be submissive.
- T F 12. Women who are battered have low self-esteem.

ANSWERS: 1) F, 2) F, 3) F, 4) F, 5) F, 6) T, 7) T, 8) F, 9) F, 10) F, 11) F, 12) T.

If you did poorly on this test, why not phone and ask for a Spruce Run speaker to do a program for your club, class, or church group?

CAUSES OF SPOUSAL ABUSE

by Bob Darveau of MANAGE

from the Newsletter of the Bangor Area
Veterans' Center

Battering is the assault of another person, whether it is actual physical violence, psychological harassment, sexual exploitation, or the deliberate destruction of pets and property.

No matter which of these categories a particular incident fits into, it all boils down to one person (usually male) manipulating another (usually female).

Just what makes one person a batterer and another a non-batterer? Is it incessant "Bring in the dog and throw out the cat?" nagging? Poor sexual relationships? A hard day at the office? Or maybe too much to drink, smoke, sniff, or snort? These variables may act as catalysts to a battering situation or may add to escalation, but they in themselves are not causes of spousal abuse.

Battering is a learned behavior. As a matter of fact, most assailants have witnessed violent manipulation at some time during their lives, and children who have witnessed or been victims of intra-familial abuse run a very high risk of experiencing violence in their own intimate relationships as adults.

Three factors are parts of the batterer's personality that are not found in that of the non-batterer.

First: the assailant believes that he has a right to beat HIS woman as she is his property.

Second: this man sees these beatings as an acceptable means of dealing with the daily problems associated with an intimate relationship. It is not uncommon to find a victim severely beaten for burning the breakfast.

Lastly: the batterer views his violence as a necessary tool to maintain his control in his relationships with all women.

This process of male domination at any cost has been condoned in this country for centuries, from the Scarlet Letter to the New Bedford gang rape. Our society encourages violence when it thrives on the macho images constantly presented by the media that are major influences in our lives. We even see Popeye and Olive Oyl slugging it out in the name of love.

Violence is also seen as an acceptable means of solving problems from the battlefield to the hockey rink, where Wayne Gretzke has become a hero because he won't brawl.

The society we live in is responsible for programming men with misogynist, patriarchal attitudes and stripping them of their emotionality, leaving them unprepared to cope in an adequate manner with any type of emotional relationship.

Domestic violence affects all of us, either directly or indirectly, and because of this, we all need to look inside of ourselves and at our attitudes.

Do we perpetuate the battering cycle by supporting misogyny in our everyday life or do we work toward a society in which men have a right to their feelings and individuality; a society in which personal growth, change and emotionality are encouraged?

I know some of us need to do some serious thinking before we can honestly answer this question.

For more information on men who batter, and on the issue of battering, contact:

Dave Davis
MANAGE (Men Helping Men Stop the Abuse
of Women)
c/o Cooperative Extension Service
105 Hammond Street
Court House Annex
Bangor, Maine 04401

ARE YOU A SPRUCE RUN MEMBER?

Our members are a very special bunch of people: in addition to receiving the Newsletter, they are invited to the Annual Meeting each September and are eligible to vote for, and even serve as, Steering Committee members!

If you are not already a member of Spruce Run, you may become one by completing the form below and mailing it, with your check, to Spruce Run, P.O. Box 653, Bangor 04401.

Yes, I want to be a Spruce Run member!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

I enclose \$ ____ (\$10 suggested, but any amount you can send will be accepted).

We really do appreciate your support.

SANDY JOINS THE STAFF

Spruce Run has a new Administrative Coordinator, Sandy Turallo, who came just in time for the January training group. Sandy brings with her some previous experience in human services. She has become thoroughly immersed in the budgeting aspects of Spruce Run, having recently finished her first United Way budget. At this point she is pondering whether the rumored appearance of sunny days will make doing the state budget easier or more difficult. Of course, Sandy periodically intermingles her budgeting stints with counseling calls.

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

Bangor women will hold their own Take Back the Night rally and march on Friday, June 1. The evening will begin at 6:30 with a rally in West Market Square, where participants will hear speakers denouncing violence against women, followed by a candle-light march to demonstrate women's determination to make the night safe for themselves and other Bangor women.

If you would like to help with the planning and publicity for the march, try to attend the meetings of the Take Back the Night Coalition. All will be held at the Bangor Public Library, 7:30 PM, on these dates: May 3, 10, 24, 31.

Please come to the March on June 1 to show your support for women's right to live without fear of violence.

DID YOU KNOW?

One woman is beaten up in her home in the U.S. every 18 seconds.

Crimes against women (rape and domestic assault) were the only violent crimes that increased last year in the State of Maine.

Spruce Run Association
P.O. Box 653
Bangor, Maine 04401

