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New Hope for Women Newsletter (Spring 2008)

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New Hope for Women

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Spring 2008 Newsletter



NEW HOPE
for **WOMEN**

A Statement of Values

Budget cuts could cost New Hope 60% of its income

Early in March New Hope for Women was informed that the budgets submitted on both the federal and state levels held devastating cuts for programs that offer services to victims of dating and domestic violence. If passed, the proposed cuts would cost New Hope as much as 60% of its income.

After my initial shock, followed by a week's work to rally a response, I spent some time talking and thinking of the implications of these cuts. Budgets are, after all, statements of values as well as financial statements. When we decide how our money should be spent, we are assigning monetary worth to our values. The difficulty is deciding which things we believe are most important.

Last year New Hope's budget provided a safety net for 725 victims and their children. It provided for 71 Time for Change clients, as well as 14 staff people, and 7 Time for Change educators. The cuts will exclude 60% of them: 435 victims, 43 Time for Change clients, over 8 staff members and 4 educators. These are not just numbers. They are your neighbors, friends, perhaps members of your family, or church, or colleagues at work.

Even with the safety net of dating and domestic violence projects throughout Maine, there have been seven deaths due to domestic violence since January 1st of this year. Every year, half the murders in Maine are due to family violence. Imagine you are a victim, or a child growing up in a home where abuse is present. Imagine you are the person who terrorizes them. What kind of statement are we making to them if we fail to fund services?

I am asking you to think about your priorities for our state and federal budgets. Who do you want included? What are you willing to see left out? What matters to you? What do you value? These are critical issues. New Hope is not the only domestic violence project that will be affected by the cuts, nor are the domestic violence projects the only social service agencies hurt. The proposed cuts will harm the most vulnerable in our society: children, victims of crimes, and individuals with disabilities. Please help in any way you can. Send a check, volunteer your time, or petition your legislators to restore the cuts. If you can, do all three.

Kathleen Morgan
Executive Director

Recognition

Each year in October, as part of domestic violence awareness month, a tea is held at the Blaine House to honor community members who contribute to the effort to end domestic abuse in Maine. The first lady of Maine, Karen Baldacci, hosts the tea.

Each of the nine domestic violence projects in Maine chooses one person to honor. For 2007, New Hope chose to honor Holly English of Camden, who has been a long-time supporter of New Hope and the work we do.

Pictured are New Hope's Services Director, Natasha Plaisted Chase, and Holly English.



Fundraising News

Monte Carlo Casino

The Camden Harbour Inn celebrated New Year's Eve in style by hosting a Monte Carlo Casino party to benefit New Hope for Women. The casino featured gaming tables where guests could try their luck at roulette, poker and black jack, while the inn's restaurant, Natalie's, provided a delicious buffet. Guests were entertained throughout the evening by the music of Ann Delaney and her band. Everyone came out a winner after this evening of fun! Many thanks to owners Raymond Brunyanski and Oscar Verest and their staff at the Camden Harbour Inn who made this event possible and to all of the casino-goers whose generosity resulted in a donation of \$868.00 to New Hope.

Dining for Hope

The Historic Russell House Restaurant and Tavern in Boothbay Harbor hosted a benefit on Sunday, January 20th. Restaurant owners Scott and Corinne Larson donated 20% of all proceeds from meals, gift certificates and beverages purchased that day to New Hope for Women. Members of the Domestic Abuse Prevention Council of the Boothbay Region publicized the event and decorated the dining room in purple ribbons and violets. In spite of fierce competition from a hotly-contested Patriots playoff game that same afternoon, the restaurant was filled most of the day, enabling the Larsons to contribute \$500.00 to New Hope. Two of the waitresses serving guests throughout the day, Holly Stover and Jen Grover, donated their tips as well, adding another \$338.00 to the total. New Hope is grateful for the generosity of all who made "Dining for Hope" a wonderful success.



Scott Larson of the Historic Russell House Restaurant and Tavern presents Tina Tucker of New Hope for Women with a check for \$838. Photo by Lisa Kristoff, Boothbay Register

Winter Wonderland Escape Raffle

Two energetic and dedicated women and a few of their closest friends from the Damariscotta area found a sure-fire way to beat the mid-winter blues. They organized a prize package of merchandise and services worth over \$1,200.00 to raffle off as a fundraiser for New Hope for Women. Heidi Leeman and Monica Yeakel received donations from Roger Bintliff of the Sheepscot Village and Resort and Bintliff's Ocean Grille, Arbonne International, Country Coach Charters, Dana Tavares-LMT, First Impressions Hair Salon, The Endless Spa, Harbor Waves, Healing Hands, Sylvia Tavares-EFT, Louis Doe's, Waldoboro Chiropractic and Spa, Ames Supply, Area Electrologist, Sea Gull Restaurant, and Damariscotta Bank and Trust.

The winning ticket belonged to Fred Sidelinger of Newcastle, pictured below with Heidi and Monica. Many thanks to the organizers, donors and those who purchased tickets for helping to raise \$2,075.00 for New Hope for Women.



Just Desserts

Bintliff's Ocean Grille in Edgecomb put the frosting on our fundraising cake by selecting New Hope for Women to benefit from their "Just Desserts" event on February 21st. Each Thursday, a local non-profit is selected to receive 10% of the evening's proceeds.

Many thanks to Roger Bintliff and his staff for raising awareness and funds to support victims of domestic violence.

Maine Legislature Enhances Domestic Violence Law

PFA's for pets, Predominant Aggressor, and Domestic Violence charges

Victims of domestic violence depend on the legal system to provide safety from abusive partners. Maine has been setting and amending statewide domestic violence policy to protect victims since the original enactment of the Protection from Abuse law in the 1980's. There have been three recent changes that empower victims and strengthen the law in holding batterers accountable for their actions.

Maine is the first state to include protection for pets when a Protection from Abuse order is filed. This acknowledges the demonstrated link between animal and human abuse and takes away an abuser's ability to control a victim through threats of violence towards a beloved pet.

In July 2007, the legislature passed the Predominant Aggressor law. Prior to this, both the abuser and the victim could be arrested as part of a domestic violence investigation. The new law contains language describing self-defense, and spells out when and how victims can use force to protect themselves from present or imminent danger. It requires law enforcement officers to make the determination of who is the dominant or most significant aggressor in the relationship, and then arrest that person.

The law mandates training of all law enforcement officials on this change in the investigation of domestic violence complaints. The Maine Criminal Justice Academy trained teams, composed of law enforcement and domestic violence advocates, who are responsible for training law enforcement on the local level. Ellie Hutchinson, Community Educator will be working with local police departments in New Hope's area to provide this training.

A third law, which went into effect early this year, identifies domestic violence crimes as being separate and different from other types of violent crimes. This distinction makes the violence harder to ignore, and helps communities build a consistent and helpful response to domestic violence. The abuser is held accountable for specific actions by being charged with Domestic Violence Assault or Domestic Violence Terrorizing rather than Assault or Terrorizing. An abuser who has been convicted of one misdemeanor domestic violence crime may face felony charges for subsequent domestic violence crimes. This is a powerful tool for prosecutors.

FY 2007 Statistics

Clients Served

639 women
42 men
44 children

Shelter

68 nights of shelter for 15 women and 16 children

Time for Change

71 clients served
2,222.5 hours of service

Hours

3,956 total hours including
1,099 hours of legal
service

Hotline

3,298 hours of volunteer
hotline coverage

Community Ed

5,722.75 hours of
community education

From a Girl's Point of View

Prevention services took a fun and interesting turn this year when New Hope collaborated with Mainely Girls to facilitate a girls' book discussion group called A Girl's Point of View.

New Hope for Women's Youth Educator, Lisa Couture, has been meeting once a month with an energetic group of 7th grade girls on Islesboro to hold creative and interactive discussions about issues relating to healthy relationships and dating violence in a non-threatening atmosphere. The group meets at The Zone, a part of the Islesboro Community Center dedicated to youth activities. A Girl's Point of View, now in its second year, allows girls in middle and high school to read some of the best contemporary young adult fiction with a focus on the many issues facing young women today. *The Misfits*, by James Howe, deals with labels, name-calling, respect and friendship. *The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big Round Things*, by Carolyn Mackler, tackles the familiar issue of a

young girl struggling with her self-image, disillusionment with the people in her family, and date rape. *Dancing in Red Shoes Will Kill You*, by Dorian Cyrone, teaches the girls about sexism and the pressure to conform to other people's ideals.

"If you want to talk about something, you have the opportunity to do so."

When asked what she liked about being in the book club, one of the young women answered, "I like the supportive environment. If you want to talk about something, you have an opportunity to do so, even if it isn't totally on topic. I also like that it brings up topics that you might have wanted to talk to your friends about before, but didn't have the opportunity."

It is our hope that providing the girls with a safe place to address important and difficult issues will empower them with the knowledge and confidence they need to make good choices for themselves. As one member says, "Having a place specifically created to bring up issues that are important really helps us to get stuff out."

New Hope Offers No-Cost Legal Assistance



Cheryl Ayer
Director of Legal Services

The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence recently applied and was approved for a second two-year Legal Assistance for Victims (LAV) grant. This is a discretionary grant program administered by the Office of Violence Against Women and intended to increase the availability of legal assistance for victims of domestic and dating violence,

sexual assault and stalking. Funding from the original 2005 grant has allowed New Hope for Women, along with other Maine domestic violence projects, to offer no-cost legal services to qualifying clients who need help with Protection from Abuse orders, divorce, custody and child support cases.

Victims of domestic or dating violence, sexual assault or stalking qualify for the no-cost services if they meet the

definition of low income set by the U.S. Department of Education (<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/incomelevels.html>). Clients who are leaving their abusers may meet the financial qualifications even if they were formerly living in high-income households. Financial isolation is used by abusers as a form of control and can cause victims to have limited earning potential when they leave.

New Hope for Women's on-staff attorney, Cheryl Ayer, attended the University of Maine and Vermont Law School. She worked as an attorney for the state of Maine prior to accepting a position as Legal Services Director for New Hope in 2006. Since then she has provided 1,900 hours of service to 125 clients. Cheryl focuses on providing clients with the information they need to make the best decisions for themselves and their families. She is able to give them a clear sense of what is likely to happen in court, what rights and responsibilities they have, and the full range of options available to them.

10th Anniversary of *The Vagina Monologues* to Benefit New Hope

Girl Power Productions is proud to present the 10th anniversary edition of *The Vagina Monologues* on Thursday evening, April 3, at the Lincoln Theatre in Damariscotta as a benefit for New Hope for Women. This will be followed by a new production entitled *A Memoir, a Monologue, a Rant and a Prayer* at the Skidompha Library April 4 and 5. Seating at Library limited to 75 each night. Shows start at 7:30 p.m.. Tickets for all events are \$15.00 and are available at Maine Coast Book Shop. Information is posted on our website www.newhopeforwomen.org.

The Gaslight Effect Save the Date

New Hope for Women will be co-hosting a workshop on May 3rd and 4th with Dr. Robin Stern, author of the *The Gaslight Effect*, a book that explores emotional abuse in relationships.

For more information, please call New Hope for Women at 594-2128, or Holly Stover at 624-8009, or visit New Hope's website at www.newhopeforwomen.org.

New Development Director Hired

New Hope for Women is delighted to welcome Glen Rainsley as the Development Director. Many of you may know Glen as the former minister of the First Congregational Church in Camden, a professional tennis instructor of thirty years, the author of four books of prayers, parables and children's lessons, and a writer for the financial newsletter, *The Complete Investor*. We know Glen as a supporter of our agency and its mission in both word and deed for over ten years.

"How we spend our money is a statement of what we value," says Rainsley. "I can't value anything more highly than the work that New Hope for Women does." It is a natural progression for Glen to represent our agency to the community as he works to build our donor base.

Glen attended the College of Wooster as an English major, then continued his studies at Princeton Theological Seminary. He was a minister for 30 years in Maine, Connecticut and Wisconsin, but Maine has always felt like home for the Rainsleys. Glen's wife, Susan, is a history teacher who has spent half of her life here. Their daughter Abigail, a graduate of Camden Hills Regional High School, will complete her degree in Environmental Studies at the University of Maine at Orono

this May. "We enjoy the natural and cultural advantages of the area. The pace and style of life are especially well suited for us in Maine," Glen notes.

Glen's interests are as varied as his talents and experience. He has a passion for baseball, especially the Mets, and loves reading, fishing, drawing and guitar.

He and his wife enjoy gardening: she with flowers and herbs and he with vegetables. They also enjoy a wide variety of music, with Glen having a special preference for Celtic music.

Glen Rainsley will officially begin as Development Director on April 7, 2008, and he would like to hear any and all ideas. While he already has extensive plans in mind, what he enjoys most is hearing from the community. "Be as creative as possible about fundraising. I'm here as a sounding board." Glen will personally meet with anyone who wishes to donate to New

Hope for Women. "This cause and this organization are something worthy, and that's a great word. It means it's worth it."

Glen pitching at Mets fantasy camp.



Glen Rainsley and wife Susan.

"This cause and this organization are something worthy..."



Remember my name

Jennifer Soto

Age 21 | Portland, Maine

Stabbed and strangled inside her Portland home on October 25, 2007. Her body was found in the Cathance River in Bowdoinham. Her longtime boyfriend, Joel Olavarria, 27, is charged with murder.

Kristin Smart Hart

Age 25 | Lagrange, Maine

Shot to death in her home on November 27, 2007. Her husband, Jeremy Hart, 34, is charged with murder.

Katie Cabana

Age 29 | Marshfield, Maine

Shot and killed in her home on January 23, 2008. Her former boyfriend, Richard Widdecomb, 25, is charged with two counts of murder.

Aaron Settipani

Age 41 | Marshfield, Maine

Shot and killed on January 23, 2008. Richard Widdecomb, 25, is charged with two counts of murder.

Carol Bolduc

Age 42 | Old Orchard Beach, Maine

Stabbed to death inside her home on February 20, 2008. Her son, Matthew Cushing, 22, is charged with three counts of murder.

Christopher Bolduc

Age 42 | Old Orchard Beach, Maine

Stabbed to death inside his home on February 20, 2008. His stepson, Matthew Cushing, 22, is charged with three counts of murder.

Joshua Bolduc

Age 15 | Old Orchard Beach, Maine

Stabbed to death inside his home on February 20, 2008. His half-brother, Matthew Cushing, 22, is charged with three counts of murder.

Damon Nason

Age 2 1/2 | East Machias, Maine

Died March 2, 2008. His stepfather, William L. Bryson, 22, is charged with manslaughter.

Pandora Mitchell

Age 1 month | Skowhegan, Maine

Died March 6, 2008. Her father, Mika Mitchell, 23, is charged with manslaughter.

Domestic violence is a crime.

24 hour crisis hotline | 1-800-522-3304

Belfast
111 Church St.

Rockland
93 Park St.

Damariscotta
17 Water St.

Boothbay Harbor
115 Townsend Ave



New Hope for Women is a non-profit organization funded by the Maine State Department of Health and Human Services, United Way of Midcoast Maine, United Way of Eastern Maine, United Mid-Coast Charities, and local donations.

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