



# Susan B. Anthony Project

Safety • Healing • Growth

Newsletter • Fall 2002

## Executive Director's Message:

# Why Does She Stay?

At Susan B. Anthony Project, this is a question we hear over and over again. It's a logical question, isn't it? If a woman is being abused, she shouldn't stand for it or she should leave. Leaving an abusive relationship makes sense...unless you're in her shoes.

While I will try to answer this question, it's important to state my strong opinion that this is the wrong question to be asking. Why are we focusing on the actions of the person who has been abused? The victim of domestic violence should not be blamed or judged. In fact, the questions we all need to be asking are.... Why did he hit her? Why does he always put her down? Who is he to tell her she can't be with her family and friends? Why does he feel like he can control her every move? How can he get away with this? How can he be stopped? What can I do to stop this cycle?

To address the question--why women stay--I offer the following: Sometimes women stay in such a relationship because leaving an abusive partner can be an extremely complicated move and not always the safest action. Studies show that the most dangerous time for a victim is when she is leaving or has recently left the abuser. 75% of domestic violence homicides occur when the victim has left the abuser or indicated her intent to leave.

Leaving an abusive relationship can be high risk. Threats of violence or actual physical violence may get worse. Risk to children may increase, particularly in cases where the abuser will be unsupervised with the children. Risk of losing custody of children is a concern. And, there are potential financial losses. A woman who leaves may risk losing her home, her job, or the income and financial security from her partner's job. To complicate matters, consider the reaction of family, friends,

and religious institutions that pressure families to stay together.

Under the best of circumstances, it's difficult to end a relationship with an intimate partner. Love, family, shared

memories, and a sense of commitment are bonds that are hard to break. Cultural and religious beliefs may become barriers to ending a marriage. Immigration status may be another obstacle. In addition to these already formidable difficulties, battered women face the additional risks of physical, emotional and psychological harm. Finally, many battered women want the violence and abuse to stop, but they don't want the relationship to end.

In the United States, a woman is battered every 12 seconds. It's time for the response to this horrific social problem to be "What's wrong with him? What gives him the right to do this? Was he arrested? When will he be prosecuted? Is she getting adequate police protection? Are the children safe? Did the court evict him from the house?" In short, it's time to focus on holding the abuser accountable for his actions.

~ Barbara Spiegel

**Note:** *We know there are men who are abused by women and that domestic violence occurs in gay and lesbian relationships. But, since the vast majority of reported domestic violence is male to female, and the question commonly asked is, "why does she stay?" this article uses the pronouns "she" and "he" accordingly.*

## Shirley Pierce Bostrom to Speak at Annual Candlelight Vigil

Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 p.m.  
Coe Park, Torrington, CT

We are privileged to present Shirley Pierce Bostrom as keynote speaker at this year's annual Candlelight Vigil. Shirley's goal is to prevent intimate violence by informing women, men, families and health care professionals about the dangers that exist in abusive relationships.

Shirley's daughter, Dr. Margaret E. Bostrom, 31, a Lewisburg, PA Federal Penitentiary clinical psychologist, was the victim of an intimate homicide. On August 16, 1996, her husband stabbed her 16 times in the chest with a butcher knife following Margaret's request for a divorce.

Margaret was the youngest of three daughters of Shirley and Larry Bostrom. Following her death, her parents participated in a number of conferences to bring violence prevention awareness. They were co-vice presidents of the Survivors of Homicide support group and are Connecticut representatives for Fight Crimes: Invest in Kids. They also participate in training police and correction department officers regarding victims' issues.

Shirley Pierce Bostrom is author of a book titled, Funny, He Doesn't Look Like A Murderer, But Margie is Dead. Shirley has said that, "if one victim escapes an abusive relationship or one family member becomes aware of the danger signals, Margaret's work will continue and her death will have meaning."

Her presentation is powerful and heartfelt. Don't miss it.

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## Domestic Violence Awareness Month Activities

### October 1:

Statewide Day of Unity/Kick-off Purple Ribbon Campaign Public Awareness Campaign Kick-off: State Capital

### October 1:

Clothesline Project Display; Susan B. Anthony Project, Torrington, CT - Displayed at the agency offices throughout the month of October.

### October 4:

"Walk in Our Footsteps" An awareness event focusing on children's issues. Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT (Raindate: Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>)

### October 15:

Candlelight Vigil; Coe Park, Torrington

**Keynote Speaker:** Shirley Pierce Bostrom, author; Funny, He Doesn't Look Like a Murderer, but Margaret's Dead

Silent Witness Exhibit, Walk in our Footsteps Exhibit, Speak Out, Remember My Name Candle Lighting

### October 19:

Women's Wellness Expo 2002  
Information & Display - Torrington Armory - 10:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m.

### Month-long Activities:

Awareness tables at high schools and colleges; Library information; Ribbons in the Park at Coe Park; Clothesline displays throughout downtown Torrington; FACES Project. **Call 489-3798 for more information.**

## Agency Programs & Services

**H.E.A.R.T. Group:** (Help End Abusive Relationship Tendencies) An on-going, peer support group for women who have experienced any form of family violence meets Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**Trauma Survivors Group:** A start up, on-going group for women survivors of trauma; Call Nancy to participate or for more information.

**Adult Survivors of Sexual Assault/Abuse Group:** This group will meet on Thursday evenings starting in October. Call Molly or Nancy for more information.

**Self-Esteem Group:** A six-week peer support group for women who want to develop more positive views of themselves. This group will begin during the Fall, 2002. Call Lois for more information and sign-up.

**For more information about exact dates, times and to pre-register, call 489-3798 and reference the title of the program of interest.**

## Announcing...

### The Faces Project:



The Faces Project offers individuals a creative outlet for expressing feelings, such as, frustration, anger, fear, pain, sadness, hope, happiness or joy. Diana S. Boehnert, Coordinator of ART for Healing Program at Hartford Hospital Integrative Medicine Department says, "We don't have to be artists to access the images that lie within waiting to heal our lives. Only the willingness to remain open to the process and suspend judgment is required. Many times the body can be healed through these connections of the mind-body-spirit."

The process allows individuals to participate by creating a three-dimensional plaster face mold of their own face. Participants decorate these faces using various images, words and color. Through guided visualization and group processing work, individuals

will connect with their personal experiences and tap in to their creative expressions.

Opportunities to share feelings and talk about the journey will be offered throughout the workshop.

This workshop, consisting of two 4-hour sessions, will be offered beginning in November, 2002 at Susan B. Anthony Project.

Please contact Doreen for more information and to register by calling 860-489-3798

## Polly's Dream Thrift Shop

To benefit the  
Susan B. Anthony Project, Inc.

### Hours:

Tuesday-Saturday  
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.;  
Thursday evenings - until 6 p.m.

Donations accepted during  
business hours only.

Furniture Donations: Please call  
for an appointment.

Volunteers are always needed-please call  
if you are interested

**114 Water Street  
Torrington, CT 06790  
860-489-2808**



Susan B. Anthony Project

Save the Date!  
Save the Date!

April 12,  
2003

5th Annual

## "Festival of Performing Arts"

The fifth annual **Festival of Performing Arts** promises to be a family affair as it is staged on Saturday, April 12, 2003 at the Warner Theatre in Torrington. This very special event will delight audiences of all ages. Mark your calendar and plan to join us.

## Susan B. Anthony

### Project Wish

If you have a question about an item listed, please call 489-3798.

- Household cleaners for shelter
- 2-4 Wet mops with changeable mopheads
- New curtains and window blinds for shelter

### List

#### On-going needs:

#### Holiday Wish List:

- Cash donations designated specifically for client assistance
  - Gift certificates to be used at local grocery stores for food, prescription and basic living needs
  - Phone cards
  - Gas cards
  - Diapers for older babies and toddlers including pull-up training pants
  - Diaper wipes
- Gift Certificates for Haircuts
  - Gift Cards to local department stores
  - Movie Passes
  - Gift Cards for small electronics such as walkman stereos, CDs, DVDs
  - Gift Cards for athletic supplies

*In addition to the many donations of toys we receive for younger children, we are often in need of gifts or cash to purchase gifts appropriate for teenage girls and boys and for adult women.*

*To adopt a family, call for details about the family.*

## Agency News & Notes

Thanks again to Burns, Brooks & McNeil, Litchfield Bancorp and Northwest Community Bank for all of your efforts in hosting the tremendously successful "Golf for Two Good Causes" tournament at Fairview Farms. Susan B. Anthony Project and FISH were the beneficiaries of this successful and FUN event.

The shelter is looking bright and beautiful with the donations of new linens and towels from the attendees at the Wine Tasting Reception hosted by the women attorneys of Robinson & Cole. Much appreciation to Advisory Board member Gina Barreca, guest speaker at the reception, who requested donations come to Susan B. Anthony Project.

We're proud to announce the following recently received grants: from the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation for printing new teen brochures; from EVE's Fund (Ending Violence Everywhere) for shelter furniture and community education, and from the Womens' Fund of the Torrington Area Foundation for the development of a teenage girls' empowerment group.

The Board of Directors welcomes new Board members Ann Bott, Millie Belfort and R. Christopher Walton. We're also thrilled that long-standing Board member, Diana Savory is the Board's new Vice President.



## Holiday Wreath Sale

### Handmade in Maine

20" @ \$15  
28" @ \$25  
38" @ \$40

Wreaths are available December 2nd. Place your orders early.

Are you busy but interested in volunteering your time to Susan B. Anthony Project? Consider becoming a Wreath Friend. Call Jeanne or Lisa at 860-489-3798.

\*\*100% of the annual Holiday Wreath Sale proceeds are used to provide shelter and services for victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse here in Litchfield County.



24-HOUR CRISIS LINE:

860-482-7133

Statewide Toll Free Hotlines:

Domestic Violence: 1-888-774-2900

Sexual Assault: 1-888-999-5545

En Espanol 1-888-568-8332

is a United Way agency.





SINCE 1983

# Susan B. Anthony Project

**SAFETY • HEALING • GROWTH**

**works to promote the autonomy  
of women  
and the safety of  
all victims of domestic  
abuse/sexual assault  
in northwest Connecticut  
as well as to promote  
community action  
toward ending  
domestic violence  
and sexual abuse.**

### Board of Directors

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Barbara Spiegel

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# Susan B. Anthony Project

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OCTOBER IS . . .  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH  
Candlelight Vigil -October 15, 6:30pm - Coe Park