



The Regional Review

The latest news from the Western Illinois Regional Council & Community Action Agency

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SILVIE'S RIDE RAISES OVER \$21,000 FOR SURVIVORS OF ABUSE

A record number of people came together on Saturday, June 19, to participate in Silvie's Ride Against Child Abuse. The annual fundraising event is held to collect donations for Western Illinois Regional Council-Community Action Agency (WIRC-CAA) Victim Services. This year, thanks to the generous support of attendees, local businesses and organizations, \$21,918 was raised to help survivors of abuse who are served by the agency.

"It was heartwarming to see so many people come together in memory of Silvie and in support of survivors," said Victim Services Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth. "Thanks to this fundraiser, our Victim Services counselors and advocates will be able to help



On Saturday, June 19, 2021, Silvie's Ride Against Child Abuse had a record turnout at the Elks Lodge in Macomb. [Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA]

many survivors start their healing journey."

Silvie's Ride Against Child Abuse is an annual event that is held in memory of five-year-old Silven "Silvie" Yocum and in memory of all children who have witnessed and experienced abuse. Silvie became a fatal victim of domestic abuse in September 2006. Members of Silvie's family and the Knights

Motorcycle Riding Club host the annual day-long event at the Macomb Elks Lodge. Riders departed the Elks Lodge as a group and traveled to several pre-determined locations in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties to raise awareness. The public was also invited to support the cause by purchasing breakfast or bidding on items in the

silent auction. Backdraft BBQ of Prairie City provided dinner to the riders when they returned to the Elks Lodge. All donations went directly to Silvie's Fund at Victim Services to provide free counseling and advocacy to local child and adult survivors of abuse.

This year's donation total was boosted thanks to the efforts of Tim
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(Silvie's Ride; continued from page 1)

Weaver of Weaver Guns & Ammo. He hosted a gun raffle prior to the event and raised \$10,000 for Silvie's Fund. "We were stunned when we found out how much Weaver was able to raise in such a short period of time," said Roth. "We are so grateful that he was moved to do this additional fundraiser in memory of Silvie and to help survivors."



Tim Weaver (left) of Weaver Guns and Ammo presented a donation of \$10,000 to WIRC Executive Director Tracy Camden (right) as part of a raffle he held for Silvie's Ride Against Child Abuse. [Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA].

Donations are accepted year-round. Supporters are welcome to donate by mailing a check to WIRC-CAA Victim Services, PO Box 157, Macomb, IL 61455, or by credit card at wirpc.org/donate/.

For more information about Silvie's Ride, find "Silvie's Ride Against Child Abuse" on Facebook or call Kathleen Yocum at 309-255-0301.

If you have experienced abuse at any point in your life, or if you think someone you know is being abused, call Victim Services' free and confidential crisis hotline at 309-837-5555.



WIU RAISES \$1,425 FOR VICTIM SERVICES



WIU representatives presented a \$1,425 donation to Victim Services to support survivors of abuse served by the agency. [Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA].

\$1,425 was raised to help survivors of abuse during the Take Back the Night March and Rally hosted by Western Illinois University on April 15, 2021.

On July 22, WIU President Guiyou Huang (left), WIU Multicultural Center Director Rocio Ayard Ochoa (middle left), Multicultural Center Associate Director Carl Ervin (middle right), and Vice President for Student Success David Braverman (right) presented a check donation to WIRC-CAA Victim Services Director Debbie Collins (center).

The donation will help to provide free crisis counseling and advocacy to survivors of abuse served by Victim Services.

Victim Services staff members want to extend their heartfelt thanks to WIU, the Take Back the Night Committee, and all those who helped with and supported the event for their continued support.

If you have experienced abuse at any point in your life, call Victim Services' 24/7 free and confidential crisis hotline at 309-837-5555.♡

JAMESON RETIRES FROM CAA BOARD AFTER 39 YEARS



On June 29, 2021, WIRC Executive Director Tracy Camden (left) and WIRC Administrative Assistant Rose Elam (right) presented retiring CAA Board Member Nancy Jameson (center) with a plaque to recognize her 39 years of distinguished service to the Agency [Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA].

After 39 years of distinguished and dedicated service, Nancy Jameson has retired from the WIRC-CAA Board of Directors. She was honored with a plaque on June 29 by Executive Director Tracy Camden and longtime Administrative Assistant Rose Elam.

Jameson has served in multiple roles on the Board since 1982. In 1982 and 1998, she served as First Vice Chair representing Hancock County. From 1990 through 1992, Jameson had the honor of serving as Chair for the Board. She attended more than 155 meetings over the years, and is the longest term serving Board member to date in the Agency's history. In 2011, when she became the Everly House Director,

she then represented McDonough County on the Board.

"Nancy was a steadfast member of the WIRC-CAA Board, as she rarely missed a meeting," said Camden. "She really cares about the Agency and I could always count on her to ask questions at Board meetings. I appreciated her asking questions because that helped make us better. I thank Nancy for her commitment and for all the guidance she provided to the Agency over the years." ☺

To apply for social service programs, call 309-837-2997.

WIRC HELPS CANTON SECURE OVER \$1 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDS

Thanks to grant writing assistance and a submission through WIRC, the City of Canton, Illinois, will be able to improve their aging water treatment plant and make water infrastructure improvements. In January 2021, the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded the city \$1,026,637 in matching grant funds for this important project.

WIRC Principal Planner Jarred Dexter, who wrote the application for Canton, says the grant will give the city the ability to supply more water upon demand. "It allows the City of Canton's water treatment plant to provide potable water not only to its water district but also to any major manufacturing or industrial companies that want to locate to the region," said Dexter.

For more information, call WIRC at 309-837-3941. ☺

REICHOW RECEIVES RECOGNITION OF SERVICE TO WIRC BOARD

Bill Reichow, representing the Warren County Board on the WIRC Board of Directors, recently retired after 15 years of dedicated service.

"We appreciate Bill's dedication and service to the agency for the past 15 years," said Executive Director Tracy Camden. "His guidance over that time period has been invaluable."

Reichow came on the WIRC Board in 2005 and officially retired in October of 2020. He also retired from the Warren County Board, where he served as Chair for many years.

"We will miss his presence at our meetings," said Administrative Assistant Rose Elam.

The WIRC & CAA Boards of Directors and staff wish Reichow a deserved happy retirement. ☺

Community Members Keeping Our Communities Strong



Thank you to our donors who help people in need through WIRC-CAA.



133 West Jackson Street
Macomb, Illinois 61455
(309) 837-2997
wirpc.org/donate/

LAMOINE VALLEY RAISES OVER \$3,000 FOR PROJECT SANTA



On March 19, 2021, LaMoine Valley Project Santa representative Laurie Smith (right) presented a donation of \$3,150 to Project Santa Coordinator and Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth (left) for the Project Santa Program [Photo by Loni Baker, WIRC-CAA].

For many years, members of LaMoine Valley have supported the WIRC-CAA Project Santa Program. The LaMoine Valley Project Santa group normally hosts a popular in-person fundraising event to benefit WIRC-CAA's holiday program. Due to the pandemic, the event changed to an online raffle that was held on February 13, 2021. Thanks to the support of donors and members of LaMoine Valley Project Santa, \$3,150 was raised for WIRC-CAA's Project Santa Program.

WIRC-CAA team members are extremely grateful for the donation because they are anticipating continued increased need during the 2021 holiday season. "In 2020, Project Santa assisted nearly 500 children in western Illinois, which is notably higher than our program enrollment in 2019," said Project Santa Coordinator and Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth. "The

economic ripples from COVID-19 will be felt for quite some time, and we are preparing for another busy program season later this year. We are very thankful for LaMoine Valley's continued support of our program."

Since 1983, WIRC-CAA's Project Santa Program has provided a happy holiday full of gifts, food, and clothing to children of low-income families living in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough and Warren counties. On average, \$75 is spent on each child officially enrolled. Project Santa is funded primarily from donations, and relies on the generosity of volunteers and sponsors who support the program.

For more information about Project Santa, call WIRC-CAA at (309) 837-2997. ☺



*You deserve to feel safe,
be respected, and be loved.*

WEEKLY ONLINE VIDEO SERIES GIVES UPDATES ABOUT SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS

Now more than ever, people are using social media services like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to stay in touch with their loved ones and share information about local news, programs, and events. In an effort to keep donors informed and raise awareness about critical social service programs, WIRC-CAA has started a weekly video series called "WIRC Wednesdays."

As the name implies, the short videos are posted on Wednesdays on the agency's social media pages, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. Every week, viewers learn about a program that the agency offers and how to apply.

Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth hosts the short videos in a friendly, conversational style. "Our donors and advocates are the lifeblood of the agency; without them, our programs would not exist," said Roth. "This video series is another way for us to keep that line of communication open with our supporters and people in need who are not aware of programs that may be available to them."

The agency's main office is located in Macomb, but their services and programs reach throughout Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, Knox, and Warren counties. The Community Action Agency department focuses on social service programs that give

people a helping hand when times are tough. Some of those programs include free food from the pantry, job training stipends, free clothing for all ages, scholarships, homeless prevention programs, and more.

Roth continued that sharing the videos on social media can have a big impact on the life of someone who may be struggling in silence. “Chances are high that everyone knows at least one friend or family member who is secretly struggling to make ends meet. Liking and sharing our videos only takes a few seconds, and is a great, no-cost way to support the agency’s programs by raising awareness.” ☺

SRC RECEIVES \$1.5 MILLION GRANT

WIRC is pleased to announce that Spoon River College in Canton was awarded a \$1.5 million grant by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) through the U.S. Department of Commerce. WIRC’s Community Development team provided grant writing assistance for the application.

The Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act Recovery Assistance grant will be used to improve the Vocational & Technical Education Center at the Canton campus, which houses the Diesel Tractor Technology & Welding program and an agriculture lab. According to a press release issued by EDA, officials hope that the grant will lead to the creation of nearly 300 jobs and the production of half a million dollars in private investment. The grant is also expected to fund 125 current job positions at the community college.

☺☺☺

QUILT GIVES VOICE TO ABUSE SURVIVORS AND VICTIMS



Rose Elam spent nearly 50 hours constructing a quilt made from t-shirts of Victim Services’ Clothesline Project display. Each t-shirt was designed in memory of a victim or by a survivor of abuse. [Jamie Roth, WIRC-CAA]

“Everyone deserves to feel safe,” “Love doesn’t hurt,” and “Hands are not for hurting,” are just a few of the heart-wrenching messages written on t-shirts designed by local survivors of abuse. The t-shirts are part of a national exhibit called The Clothesline Project. WIRC-CAA Victim Services curates the exhibit in western Illinois. The t-shirts are hung from a clothesline wire that are put on display at various locations throughout the year. When the wear and tear on the t-shirts becomes too much, Victim Services gives the shirts new life by sewing them into a quilt. This year, longtime WIRC Administrative Assistant Rose Elam constructed the five-foot by seven-foot quilt.

Elam says the colorful quilt took nearly 50 hours to make. She started the project in November 2020, and

added the finishing touches in early April 2021. “I am proud of how it turned out and think it is meaningful to all that see it,” said Elam.

All of the t-shirts in Victim Services’ collection were designed by child and adult survivors of domestic and/or sexual abuse who lived in the agency’s service area. In certain cases, shirts are designed by a friend or family member in memory of someone who has died as a direct result of abuse.

Each t-shirt color represents a different form of abuse: white is for people who died because of violence; yellow represents survivors of physical assault or childhood sexual abuse; red, pink, or orange stand for survivors of rape or childhood sexual abuse; blue or green represents survivors of incest or child abuse; purple is for people who were attacked because of their sexual orientation; brown or gray is for survivors of emotional, spiritual, or verbal abuse; and black is for people who were disabled after a physical assault.

If you have experienced abuse at any point in your life, call Victim Services’ free and confidential 24-hour crisis hotline at 309-837-5555. Victim Services counselors want to help you feel empowered and regain your life. ☺



WIRC-CAA AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS TO INCOME-ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

WIRC-CAA is pleased to announce that 10 income-eligible students across multiple western Illinois counties have been awarded \$2,000 scholarships. Six awards went to students in McDonough County; two awards were given to Warren County students; and two awards were presented to Knox County students. Scholarship funds are applied directly towards tuition, fees, books, supplies, and/or room and board.

Applicants had to meet three core requirements in order to be considered for the scholarship: they are enrolled at an Illinois community college, vocational school, college, or university on at least a half-time basis; their primary residence is in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, Knox, or Warren County in Illinois; and their household's total income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines. In addition, applicants were evaluated on a short essay about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their academic progress, and letters of recommendation. Due to the income component of the scholarship, the names of the award recipients are not being publicized to protect their privacy.

Thanks to developments in the scholarship program, award recipients who maintain a 2.5 GPA or better for the Fall 2021 semester may be awarded an additional \$2,000 for the Spring 2022 semester, making their overall scholarship award worth \$4,000. The award recipients must provide documentation of their GPA to WIRC-CAA to qualify for the additional award.

Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth says that financial barriers to attending college are very difficult to overcome for students of lower-income families. "People are often told that they need to go to trade school or get a college degree if they want to have a secure financial future," said Roth. "For students of lower-income households, that can be a challenge because they are living paycheck-to-paycheck, sometimes despite working multiple jobs. It is difficult to justify paying for college to improve your circumstances when you are worried about having enough money to pay rent or get groceries for the week. That is why the agency started a scholarship program."

The WIRC-CAA Scholarship Program is funded by the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), which is administered statewide by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO).

For more information about the agency and its social service programs, visit wirpc.org, find Western Illinois Regional Council & Community Action Agency on social media, or call (309) 837-2997.



Emergency Hygiene Assistance

Free personal care items, diapers, and non-food items for people in need.

Call WIRC-CAA at (309) 837-2997

COLLINS SELECTED TO LEAD VICTIM SERVICES



Deborah Collins has been chosen to lead WIRC-CAA Victim Services. [Photo by Jamie Roth, WIRC & CAA].

On June 16, 2021, Deborah Collins was officially promoted as the new Director of Victim Services at WIRC-CAA. Victim Services provides free and confidential crisis counseling and advocacy to survivors of domestic and sexual violence throughout several counties in western Illinois.

Collins is excited to take on the new challenges ahead of her, and is passionate about helping survivors of abuse. "It is my hope to create positive social change through acceptance and equality, and to end all forms of violence," said Collins. "Although these goals seem large, I am encouraged that we can achieve them with teamwork from our staff and the wonderful community members who support our programs in the six counties we serve."

Before taking on her new role as Director, Collins was the Preventionist for Victim Services. As Preventionist, she often hosted

educational trainings, including those mandated by the State of Illinois, for children and adults at schools and organizations. She is a familiar face to many local teachers and school administrators, and is practiced in delivering awareness information to a wide range of people. Previously, she also worked in the community health sector.

"I am optimistic that my own personal trauma, dedication, training and experience in the social services fields of public health and community health will help me accomplish reaching the community in new, innovative, and bold ways," said Collins.

Most of all, Collins is excited to work with a great team of advocates, counselors and volunteers who share the mission of helping survivors and ending the cycle of violence. "I would not have taken this job without the great staff; they

are amazing to work with," she said. "We all have a passion for helping survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, and oppressed, underserved populations."

Victim Services provides free and confidential crisis counseling and advocacy to survivors of abuse. A 24/7 free and confidential crisis hotline is available by calling 309-837-5555. For more information about their programs, call their business line at 309-837-6622 or find them on social media. ☺



LOMAX RECEIVES \$30,000 GRANT

WIRC is pleased to announce that the Village of Lomax in Henderson County, Illinois, was awarded a \$30,000 grant to finance a formal plan for a wastewater collection and treatment system.

The Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program, which was funded through Governor Pritzker's Rebuild Illinois Capital Plan, was awarded by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. WIRC's Community Development team provided grant writing assistance on the village's application.

After the Village of Lomax develops a formal plan, they will have the opportunity to apply for the Unsewered Communities Construction Grant to help fund the construction of the planned facility. ☺

STAFF NEWS

Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following staff members that recently celebrated special employment anniversary milestones:

One Year

Janet*

Domestic Violence Counselor

Staff Departures

We are sorry to see these team members go, and wish them the best in their future endeavors:

Gene Frakes

Regional Collection

Facility Assistant Manager

Retired after a notable 14 years



Executive Director Tracy Camden (left) with outgoing Regional Collection Facility Assistant Manager Gene Frakes (center) and Solid Waste Coordinator Tim Lobdell (right).

Call WIRC-CAA for a helping hand.



Pictured left to right with Executive Director Tracy Camden (far left):

Kerrie*

Domestic Violence Coordinator/
Legal Advocate

Suzan Nash

Interim Victim Services Director

Lori Sutton

Transit Director

Joey Pursell

Building & Grounds
Maintenance Coordinator

Pete Hannen

Interim Transit Director



**Full names of Victim Services advocates/counselors are kept confidential out of concern for their safety and the safety of their clients.*

CRISIS HOTLINE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Crisis Intervention Training Course *Now Enrolling for Fall 2021!*

This in-person, non-credit course covers all required training for volunteering and/or working at an Illinois sexual assault crisis center and/or domestic violence agency or shelter.

The course will be taught by WIRC-CAA Victim Services staff.

If you are not vaccinated, you must wear a facial covering and follow the CDC physical distancing guidelines.

Fall semester starts: Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Class Schedule:

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
(with occasional Saturday trainings)

Registration Deadline:

Tuesday, September 14, 2021
at 4:00 p.m.

Enrollment Fee:

FREE for students ages 18 and up
\$100 for working professionals

Class Location:

WIRC-CAA Main Office
133 West Jackson Street, Macomb, IL

**To register, call Victim Services at (309) 837-6622
or email victimservices@wirpc.org.**



WIRC-CAA Victim Services provides free and confidential services in a safe environment with knowledgeable staff members who are ready to provide emergency services, advocacy, counseling, professional training, and public education.

24-Hour Free and Confidential Crisis Hotline: (309) 837-5555