



THE ADVOCATE

News from WIRC-CAA Victim Services

24-Hour Crisis Hotline: (309) 837-5555

2022

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EVERYONE KNOWS SOMEONE

By Jamie Roth, Public Relations Manager



The Silent Witness display, which is a tribute to those who have died due to abuse, was shown by WIRC-Victim Services at the annual Take Back the Night March & Rally. [Photo by Victim Services].

Chances are high that everyone knows at least one person who has witnessed or directly experienced domestic violence or sexual assault, according to WIRC-Victim Services officials. During the month of October, which is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the counselors and advocates of the local non-profit agency were working hard to raise awareness and show survivors that there are people who will believe and support them.

Domestic violence is not only physical; it can include elder abuse,

emotional abuse, financial abuse, sexual coercion, or any other abusive behavior that is used to gain power and control over a person. Stalking is also a form of domestic violence, which can include an abuser using technology to track the whereabouts of a person without their consent. Domestic violence can happen to anyone, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or income level.

Mayor Jim Nightingale of Carthage and Mayor Rod Davies **EVERYONE** (continued on page 2)



24/7 Confidential Crisis Line
Línea de crisis las horas

(309) 837-5555

*Abuse can happen to anyone at
any point in their life.*

You are not alone.
No estás solo.

EVERYONE (continued from page 1)

of Monmouth both signed proclamations with Victim Services declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. In addition, several communities collaborated with the agency to display purple ribbons in public areas to show survivors they are not alone. Purple is the symbolic color of domestic violence awareness.

Forgottonia Brewing of Macomb created a special ale specifically to help Victim Services raise awareness as part of their 'Beer for Good' program. The Apricot Blonde ale debuted on October 14 during a special release event. One dollar from every pour of this limited-time flavor will be donated to the non-profit agency.

On October 27, the Western Illinois University Women's Center collaborated with Victim Services to host the annual Take Back the Night March and Rally. The event started at Sherman Hall at WIU in Macomb, with a short presentation and resource fair. Clothing designed by survivors of abuse, as part of The Clothesline Project, were on display, as well as the Silent Witness tribute to those who have been lost due to abuse. A large group of participants then marched from WIU to Chandler Park in Macomb for the Survivor Speak-Out, when anyone was welcome to stand up and speak about their experience in a safe environment. Counselors were available to anyone who wanted a private, confidential conversation.

Victim Services says that if someone tells you they have witnessed or experienced abuse, it is important to follow these steps: (1) be a good listener; (2) offer your support; (3) ask how you can help; and (4) give them Victim Services'

hotline number so they can speak to a counselor when they are ready.

"It is important to not pressure a survivor to do what you think is best. Every survivor is different; a healing plan that works for one person might not be the best option for another," says Jamie Roth, Public Relations Manager of Victim Services. "Our counselors and advocates empower survivors to make the best choices for themselves in their specific situation."

WIRC-Victim Services is a nonprofit that provides free and confidential crisis counseling, medical advocacy and legal advocacy to adult and child survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and/or stalking in multiple western Illinois counties. If you have experienced or witnessed abuse at any point in your life, you are welcome to call their free and confidential crisis hotline at 309-837-5555.

RARITAN STATE BANK FUNDRAISER HELPS VICTIM SERVICES

By Jamie Roth, PR Manager



Raritan State Bank employee Chloe Gaumer (right) presented a donation to VS Preventionist Educator Mariah Huston (left) on August 24, 2022.

People of all ages who have witnessed or experienced abuse will

get the mental health support they need thanks to a recent fundraiser hosted by Raritan State Bank. On August 19, the Raritan, Illinois, bank hosted a cookout fundraiser with all proceeds going to WIRC-Victim Services. Thanks to their efforts and support from the public, the bank raised \$544 for the nonprofit agency.

The donation will be used to provide free counseling, medical advocacy and legal advocacy services to survivors of abuse who are served by WIRC-Victim Services. Raritan State Bank employee Chloe Gaumer nominated Victim Services as the recipient of the fundraiser.

"We are thankful that Mrs. Gaumer and Raritan State Bank choose our agency for the cookout, and are glad they share our mission to end the cycle of abuse," said Victim Services Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth.

WIRC-Victim Services counselors and advocates want survivors to feel empowered and know they are not alone. People of any age can call their free and confidential 24/7 crisis hotline at 309-837-5555 to talk about their experience.



SILVIE'S RIDE RAISES OVER \$25,000 FOR ABUSE SURVIVORS

By Jamie Roth, Public Relations Manager



Hundreds of people gathered to raise awareness of child abuse at Silvie's Ride on June 18, 2022. The large group of mostly motorcycle riders traveled throughout a four-county area in Illinois [Photo by Victim Services].

While it is difficult to think about, many children in the United States have experienced or witnessed abuse. Silvie Yocum of McDonough County, Illinois, was one of those children who died as a result of domestic violence in September 2006. Members of her family, in partnership with the Knights Motorcycle Riding Club, host an annual awareness event in her memory called Silvie's Ride Against Child Abuse. All proceeds go to Silvie's Fund at WIRC-Victim Services, which provides free counseling and advocacy services to survivors of abuse. After the June 18, 2022 event, Victim Services officials are excited to report their agency received a record-breaking \$25,137 this year.

Silvie's Ride is a unique event that invites the public to ride

as a group throughout multiple counties in western Illinois. The event starts at the Macomb Elks Lodge, and attendees are welcome to purchase breakfast and bid on items in a silent auction. Those who wish to participate in the ride pay a registration fee. Motorcycles are encouraged, but all vehicles are welcome. After riding to scheduled stops in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, and Warren counties, the riders return to the Elks Lodge for dinner and a presentation.

"Hearing and watching around 100 motorcycles and other vehicles leaving at the same time for this cause is impressive and moving," said Victim Services Public Relations Manager Jamie Roth. "We are so grateful for the donation. It will help our agency to continue providing our free services to people who are

in crisis."

Tim Weaver of Weaver Guns and Ammo, a Macomb-based business, raised \$10,000 of the event's total donation through a fundraiser of his own. He presented the gift to Silvie's Ride on Friday, June 17. Weaver is a strong supporter of the cause to end child abuse, and also notably raised \$10,000 for Silvie's Ride in 2021.

Roth continued that it is important to believe a child if they tell you they have been abused. "On average, children will tell adults they have been abused at least seven times before they are believed and action is taken," she said. "I cannot stress enough how important it is to believe someone when they disclose and offer your support. Then, you can refer them to an agency, like Victim Services, so that a trained

SILVIE (continued on page 4)



SILVIE (continued from page 3)

professional can advise them of their options.”

Donations for Silvie’s Fund are accepted year-round. To learn more, visit <https://wirpc.org/silvie/> or call Victim Services’ business line at 309-837-6622.



Victim Services is a nonprofit, social service agency that provides free and confidential crisis counseling, medical advocacy and legal advocacy to adult and child survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence and/or stalking in western Illinois. Survivors of any age, gender identity, or sexual orientation are welcome to call the 24/7 crisis hotline at 309-837-5555 to have a free and confidential conversation with a counselor.

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/

You are beautiful as you are.

PAINT & ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

Tri-County Regional Collection Facility

9:00 AM to 12:30 PM / Tuesday - Friday
8:00 AM to Noon / 1st Saturday of Month
129 W. Jackson, Macomb (back side of bldg.)



It is okay to ask for help.



Do I qualify for
energy bill help
through WIRC?



I am a renter or homeowner



I live in Hancock, Henderson, McDonough, or Warren counties in Illinois



My household's total gross income is within the program limits (see chart)

Number of People Living in Your Home	Your Household's Gross Income Cannot Exceed...
1 person	\$2,265 per month
2 people	\$3,052 per month
3 people	\$3,838 per month
4 people	\$4,625 per month
5 people	\$5,412 per month
6 people or more	Call or visit WIRC's website



Apply: 309-837-2997

Learn more: wirpc.org/liheap/

Funding is provided through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity



Income guidelines effective until May 31, 2023