

Message from our Executive Director

A Letter of Thanks

Another year has passed, and this is my opportunity to say "Thank You" to all the people who support Bay Area Women's Center and its good work in our community. We faced significant financial difficulties in 2009. But, like so many of you, we plugged along, we cut where we could and we served victims of domestic violence and sexual assault with the same fervor and commitment that we did when times were good.

To those of you who were able to send significant gifts in 2009, you are the angels who gave the most worrisome budget issues a light at the end of the tunnel. For those of you who sent several smaller gifts throughout the year, you are the oxygen that keeps us alive. We thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts.

Our volunteers are our life-blood. They are the spare pair of hands for overwhelmed mothers and the afternoon hug for the little ones coming off the bus after school. Their presence gives the gift of an hour or two for staff to complete paperwork or just take a breath. We lost two very dear friends this past year, Phyllis Ryder and Linda Moreau. We thank their families for sharing them with us for so many years, and we deeply mourn their passing.

Thank you to the members of the Board of Directors for Bay Area Women's Center. You give your time and energy; you take my calls for help; you offer your knowledge and expertise, and your service makes a positive difference in the lives of victims.

Lastly, many, many thanks to the Staff of BAWC. They care and they work hard. They see and take into themselves the hurt of the families with whom they work. They make each person who walks through our doors feel welcomed, cared for and safe. They help break the cycle of violence through their advocacy, compassion and wisdom. We are all better off because they work with the people of our community.

You have my deepest wish for peace and prosperity in 2010.



First Friday Folk Series

On January 8, 2010, Bay Area Women's Center proudly presented the official kick-off of its **First Friday Folk** series. BAWC welcomed **Greg Greenway** (www.greggreenway.com) to the **First Friday Folk** stage. Greenway was joined by special guests **Jen Cass** (Bay City's own folk phenomenon), and the **Saginaw Arts & Sciences Academy Choir**, together creating an unforgettable evening of song.

On Friday, February 5, 2010, **First Friday Folk** brings Michigan's folk/blues sweetheart, multi-instrumentalist **Jen Sygit** (www.jensygit.com) to the stage with friend and fellow folk favorite **Sam Corbin** (www.samcorbin.com). With rich harmonies and tasteful arrangements, they're a strong combo that is quickly becoming a favorite in the Michigan music scene.

On Friday, March 5, 2010, **First Friday Folk** continues with an international chart-topper: singer-songwriter sensation **Drew Nelson**. (www.drewnelson.net). Drew gives expression to our own personal memories and dreams as though he knew us. He tells our stories, giving us the words we need to celebrate or let go.

First Friday Folk concerts are held at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Bay City and begin at 7:00 pm. Each concert is preceded by an intimate reception with our featured performers at 6:15 pm.

First Friday Folk does not charge admission as all our performers have agreed to donate their time and talent to benefit this worthy cause. However, there is a **suggested donation of \$10 per person** to support Bay Area Women's Center and its effort to eliminate Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Bay & Arenac Counties.

For more information, call Debbie Keim at (989) 686-2251.

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BAWC helps to bring Christmas Cheer to 71 families

Thank you to all of the wonderful donors who gave to our Christmas Adoption Program (24 families adopted) and to the Church Giving Tree Programs (47 families). Because of YOU we were able to provide Christmas gifts and holiday food for 71 families. Many area organizations donated needed items for the shelter.

We are so fortunate to be part of a community who is so willing to give of themselves to help others in a time of need.

The Holiday season is a very difficult time for survivors of domestic violence. Not only are they enduring the violence but experiencing homelessness, depression and overwhelming stress. Thank you for providing a little happiness in this time of need.



2009 Donors

Bay Area Women's Center would like to thank the donors listed here. We would also like to thank all the anonymous donors who have chosen to not give their names but have given generously throughout the years. Your gracious contributions are greatly appreciated.

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Church of Saint Norbert
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Bequest of Shirley Ann Brady

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Mike Windy

In Honor of Sue Cook's Birthday

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Dr. Marguerite Kuhn

In Honor of the Marriage of Jeff and

Michelle Mayes

Jason Allen and Suzanne Miller Allen

In Honor of Gwen Hoff

Pamela Blondin

This list contains names of monetary donors from January - December 2009 only. If your name should be on this list but is missing, please notify us so we can correct any mistake.

Many Thanks!

January, National Stalking Awareness Month

Know the Dangers of Stalking

Most people associate stalking with celebrities—Madonna, Sheryl Crow, or Britney Spears. Yet celebrity stalking cases, though dangerous and serious, are relatively rare. More commonly, victims are ordinary people pursued by someone they know. Victims may not understand that stalking is criminal. And what they don't know about stalking may jeopardize their lives.

Stalking is a crime. All 50 states have passed laws that make it illegal to engage in stalking—usually defined as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause “a reasonable person” to feel fear. Stalking behavior can range from annoying and intrusive to terrifying and dangerous. Stalking can escalate to violence and frequently ends in murder. Three out of four women killed by their intimate partners were stalked by that partner before they were killed.

Stalking is shockingly common. More than one million women and 370,000 men are stalked every year in the United States. About one in 12 women and one in 45 men are stalked sometime in their lifetimes.

Stalking can dominate and devastate victims' lives. Victims may feel unsafe and vulnerable, in constant fear of what their stalker might do. They may have trouble working, eating, or sleeping; some victims suffer disturbing flashbacks and nightmares. Victims may also feel isolated and frustrated because people do not understand why they are so afraid. They are caught -for two years, on average -in a threatening trap set by their stalkers.

Stalkers are not easy to identify. They come from virtually every walk of life and every socioeconomic background. They have no single psychological profile, and the differences among stalkers make it hard to predict their behavior and find effective strategies to deter them.

Many stalkers have used computer and communications technology to increase

their power over their victims. They use global positioning systems (GPS), miniature video cameras, listening devices, and “spyware” (secretly installed software that records every keystroke) to track their victims and secretly invade their lives. Such devices allow stalkers to control their victims and successfully evade law enforcement.

Victims should report the stalking to law enforcement and carefully document evidence by writing down the times, dates, and places they are stalked. They should keep e-mails, phone messages, letters, notes, and anything sent by the stalker. Victims should also alert friends, family members, roommates, and co-workers about the stalking and enlist their support and help.

Communities can support stalking victims by listening, showing support, and never blaming the victim for the crime. They can pool their resources, mobilizing police, prosecutors, advocates, educators, private security, the media, and all available resources to support the victims and discourage stalkers.

Victims need to know that help is available. They can call Bay Area Women's Center at 1-800-834-2098. For more information on Stalking and other crimes visit The National Center for Victims of Crime at www.ncvc.org.

**It's NOT a Joke,
It's NOT romantic,
It's NOT OK.
STOP
STALKING**

Teen Dating Violence Awareness

The first week in February marks the nation's fifth annual awareness week for Teen Dating Violence, a national epidemic that is often not recognized until it is too late.

- At least one out of every five teenagers have been hit or slapped by their partner.
- When it comes to sex, nearly one out of every four teen age girls has been pressured to have unwanted sex with their partner. One in three actually believe that it is an expectation in the relationship.
- Warning signs are often ignored because the vast majority of teens are too embarrassed to report the abuse, especially if it is verbal or emotional.

BAWC is working in the schools to educate youth and provide information on healthy dating relationships. For more information or to schedule a presentation call Jessica Gregory at 686-4551.

BAWC Shares Recipe Secrets

Following in style with BAWC's Pot Luck tradition, Kellie Courier brings an award winning salad, good enough to be dessert. This Carmel Apple Salad is one of our favorites and Kellie does a fine job of making this dish special with a little help from above.

Carmel Apple Salad!

- 1 container (8 oz) frozen Cool Whip topping thawed
- 1 pk. dry instant butterscotch pudding
- 1 can (8 oz) crushed pineapple with juice
- 3 cups diced apples
- 1 cup dry roasted nuts
- 1 cup marshmallows

Mix Cool Whip, butterscotch pudding and crushed pineapple with juice. Add apples, roasted nuts and marshmallows. Keep in refrigerator.

Kelly makes this dish at least an hour before our Pot Luck but never the day before. Timing is everything.

Note: You won't have to make dessert. This is so good that your guests will want more after dinner.

**Give
a
Day**



Get a Disney Day

Bay Area Women's Center is a participating agency in the Disney Give a Day - Get a Disney Day promotion. Volunteer for a day at Bay Area Women's Center and enjoy a Day at a Disney Park free. To sign up go to www.disneyparks.disney.go.com or call our Volunteer Coordinator, Shelley Ramos at (989) 686-4551.

Bay Area Women's Center

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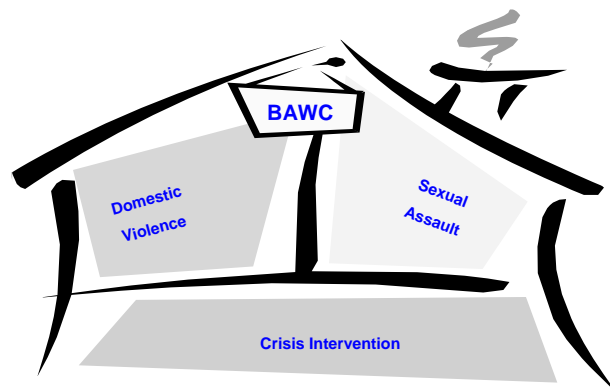
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Administration (989) 686-2251

Toll Free (800) 834-2098

Fax (989) 686-0906



Bay Area Women's Center offers free, confidential help to adults and families who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault, and preventive education to the community. Client support services include a 24-hour crisis line, shelter, housing advocacy, legal advocacy, support groups, and children and teen services. For more information, call (989) 686-4551.

BAY AREA WOMEN'S CENTER MISSION...

To eliminate domestic violence and sexual assault in our community.

"Peace"ing lives together since 1975

Check us out on the World Wide Web

www.bawc-mi.org

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newsletter via e-mail**