



Spotlight On Staff



Fran Elkins has been involved with Domestic Violence since 1980 when she volunteered at a shelter in Grand Rapids while attending college. During the last 30 years she has worked in shelters in the Detroit area.

Fran and her co-worker were the first paid staff at Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence which was first housed in the Detroit area.

So it was natural that upon her retirement and move to Ludington that Fran would again find her calling – this time at COVE. Starting out 3 years ago as a volunteer in the Shelter, she then came on staff maintaining COVE's client data base, working at the Shelter occasionally, collecting statistics and reporting to all COVE's many funding sources.

It is wonderful to see her eyes light up when she talks about working at the Shelter and seeing the women in the Shelter supporting one another and becoming stronger.

Over the years she has seen lots of changes. Some things are better, such as more police cooperation and more community understanding and involvement. Some things never change – never enough money to meet the needs.

But one thing doesn't change with Fran, it is her bright smile and the sparkle in her eyes. COVE is very fortunate that Fran retired to Ludington and her heart continues to connect with caring for those who are experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault and/or homelessness.

Volunteers Honored

COVE is blest with many wonderful volunteers. It is always hard to single out one or two. But we do want to honor a group of volunteers who have made a tremendous difference. It is the Pentwater Fundraising Committee. This group of dedicated women have put on 5 of the major fundraising events this past year raising almost \$10,000. So we honor and thank Mary Stiphany, Judy Seeley, Joyce Anderson, Rhonda Buzan, Lynne Cavazos, Shari Cookenmaster, Kathy Fahlsing, Pat Fitch, Connie Gillette, Betty Ligon, Susan MacGregor, Carol Nauta, Janet Nelson, Judy Rumsey, Jean Russell, Mary Schumaker, Sue Squire, Linda Haan, Marilyn Ward, Sylvia Shrauger and Barbara Burke.



The Season of Giving

This year think about Shifting Your Gift -

As we near the Christmas season thoughts turn to gift giving..... Stores are full of wonderful things... TV ads flash those have-to-have gifts... There are so many choices. So often our wants and our needs are very different things. The solution: Shift Your Gift!

Shift Your Gift - For that friend or family member who is hard to buy for, give a donation to COVE in their honor. A special Christmas card will be sent to them with your name and gift acknowledgement. This is a "Gift that keeps on giving" from you, to that special person and to over 500 women, children and men throughout Lake, Mason, and Oceana Counties. If you wish to shift your holiday gift, please use the enclosed envelope and fill in the donation option.

Develop a New Tradition: whether a business, your family, friends or church, ask them to consider:

- Making a donation in your family or group's name to COVE, touching many lives throughout the year.
- Giving unwrapped gifts to the COVE so the 80 families can pick out presents for their loved ones. (See article page 4.)
- Baking special holiday treats to share at the Shelter. (PS: this doesn't have to be just at Christmas, but could be throughout the year.)
- Adopting the Shelter for a day, a week or month by bringing a meal. (Contact Volunteer Coordinator, Kerry 843-2541 ext. 26 or cove_vc@verizon.net).
- Reading stories to the children. Helping with homework. Being a listening ear.
- Providing transportation.



No gift is too small as one reaches out to touch people's lives when they are in the most need and vulnerable.

Counting Our Blessings

- ★ Our Dedicated, Caring, Skilled Staff
- ★ Our Faithful and Talented Volunteers
- ★ Our Generous Supporters
- ★ Our Community and Supporting Services
- ★ Our Amazing, Courageous Clients

Making a Difference

Family Financial Credit Union in Hart has adopted C.O.V.E. for this year, under the leadership of Tina Terryn, Branch Manager, along with Jennifer Gonzalez, Loan Officer; Marsha Mahynski, Teller and Norene Lound, Teller. They first filled a grocery basket of school supplies, followed by pantry items! This decision to support COVE was totally their idea. Thank you to Family Financial Credit Union of Hart, MI.



Shelter News:

Almost 400 bulbs were planted by volunteers from the **Pentwater Garden Club.**

Ludington Garden Club, Mary Schumaker, and Sarah Champagne donated the bulbs which will make the Shelter look beautiful next spring. It will be exciting to see the springtime surprises as they bloom.

Successful Fall Fund Raisers

The Beach Walk/Run The weather was spectacular; the scenery was gorgeous; all participants and

volunteers had fun showing their support for COVE.

This year we partnered with the state park for the Second Annual

Benefit Beach Walk/Run. It was held at Charles Mears State Park in Pentwater on September 12. The event included a 5K walk, a 5K run, and a 10K run with 95 people completing the different races. The race's success was a perfect birthday present for COVE.



The Pentwater COVE volunteers hosted a **Vintage Home Tour** during Octoberfest in Pentwater, Saturday, October 10, 10:00-4:00 P.M. Five hundred and seventy five volunteer hours were needed to plan and implement this tour, as well as \$500 in donated supplies.

Each home provided a narrative telling its historical background. One home, the Safe Harbor Bed and Breakfast, had a famous guest: Charles Schultz. He based many of his characters on the children living in the home at the time. One of their rooms is decorated as "Lucy's Room."

The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children & Implications for Custody/ Parenting Time

Dr. Peter Jaffe, Academic Director for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children at the University of Western Ontario was the presenter. For over 30 years he has worked with women and children who have been victims of abuse and involved with the criminal, family and civil court systems.

What Should we have learned in the Past 30 years?

- Domestic Violence is a significant problem that impacts the whole community.
- Victims, perpetrators and children defy stereotypes.
- Coordination/Integration of services is essential.
- Key strategies have to include safety, accountability, and healing.
- Family court plays a critical role and often depends on supervised visitation centers as key components of safety and accountability planning.

Facts and Myths on Child Abuse and Domestic Violence

Myth: Children do not suffer from abuse unless it is directed at them.

Fact: Children living in a home where physical, psychological and emotional abuse are present experience the same abuse symptoms, and problems of those victims who are the direct subject of abuse. Effects may be immediate and visible or delayed and subtle.

Myth: Child abuse isn't that common.

Fact: It is estimated that between 2.3 and 10 million children are exposed to intimate partner violence each year in the United States.

- As many as half a million children may be encountered by police during domestic violence arrests each year in the U.S.
- There is an overlap of 30 to 60 percent between violence against children and violence against women in the same families.

Myth: Women lie or embellish abuse to win custody issues, gain child support and make the man look bad.

Fact: Under-reporting of abuse is the reality as many as 3/4 victims don't reach out due to fear of Child Protective Services involvement.

Myth: Women can just leave the relationship

Fact: Staying in the relationship may be a form of safety planning since the point of separation is the most dangerous time for a victim and the children. (50% of women killed were involved in multiple court systems)

- Concern for the children's welfare; disruption from school, impact of separation, fear of unsupervised visitation with violent parent, the lack of financial resources, affordable housing, and rural isolation all play a role in women staying.

Why is Domestic Violence relevant in Custody Disputes?

- Abuse does not end with separation.
- There is an overlap between child abuse and domestic violence.
- Continued child exposure to inappropriate role model.
- Perpetrator undermining non-abusive parent.
- Perpetual litigation by perpetrator as form of ongoing control and possible abduction/homicide in extreme cases.

In order to better assist victims and their children, all facets of our community need to be better educated about domestic violence and how it impacts the community as a whole. Each community agency plays an integral part in the safety planning, accountability, and promoting responsible parenting.

To find out more about how domestic violence impacts custody and parenting time, please visit the education section at

www.callcove.com.

To host a training for your agency or find out how you can become involved with COVE and help make a difference please contact COVE 231-843-2541 ext. 26.

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C.O.V.E.

STABLE & BUILDING

We are pleased to report that COVE's recently completed (September 30) our third consecutive fiscal year with an increase in the fund balance. This was achieved by careful and sound management of our financial resources by our outstanding staff. Our active program of fundraising events combined with annual giving from individuals, business, churches and community organizations has enabled us to balance the budget in these tough economic times. During the year, renovation of the shelter building was done including new doors, windows and floors made possible by contributions and volunteer labor.

Because our grants from state and federal sources are either frozen or reduced for our new fiscal year, income from contributions and fundraising events will be more important than ever before. Therefore our 2010 budget goal for contributions and fundraising has increased 18 percent from last year.

Dave Gibbs, Treasurer

WILL YOU BE A BOOK ANGEL?

Wanting to do something special in memory of one of our volunteer's husband who was killed in an accident, "Book Angel" began. Seventeen "Scanimation" books were given to boys and girls at the Shelter. The shelter manager, Judy Geoff, reported that this was a great addition at the shelter, making it possible to provide a child with his/her own special book. Because these books were so well received we would like to keep this fund active....SO, if you would like to remember someone, give a gift to someone but are simply out of ideas, or say thanks to someone in a special way, please consider being a "BOOK ANGEL" for COVE. We purchase these books which retail for \$12.95, tax-free and at a 30% discount from our local Book Mark store in Ludington. For just \$9.50 you can be a COVE "BOOK ANGEL". Please send your check to COVE, 906 E. Ludington Avenue, Ludington, MI 49431. Please note that your gift is to go to the Shelter's Book Fund.

Violence in the Workplace

Why is domestic violence your business? Do you know how domestic violence affects your business' bottom-line? Do you have policies in place to address security concerns as a result of employing domestic violence victims and/or abusers?

- Homicides accounted for 11 percent (608) of all fatal injuries that took place at work in 2002.
- Averages of 1.7 million violent victimizations are committed annually against persons at work or on duty.
- The majority of workplace violent crimes are aggravated and simple assaults. Rape, sexual assault, robbery, and homicide account for 6 percent of all incidents.

Businesses lose \$3-5 billion dollars a year due to the effect of domestic violence. Over half of domestic violence victims miss work at least 3 days a month. Seventy-five percent (75%) of women killed at work (non-robbery) are killed by their ex-partners.

Tragically co-workers also may become victims of the violence. Many employers do not know how to proactively address these delicate situations.

The benefits of pro-actively addressing domestic violence in the workplace includes:

- 1) improved employee morale and loyalty

- 2) reduced impact costs
- 3) greater workplace security.

The American business community is greatly impacted by this issue, but due to a lack of understanding and the stigma often associated with the abuse, companies are unaware of the true cost.

The Domestic Violence Cost Calculator was created to assist companies in understanding the annual health benefit and productivity costs of intimate partner violence. Developed using scientific and professional literature, the Domestic Violence Cost Calculator estimates the number of physical and sexual assaults expected to occur in your employees and calculate the medical costs and absenteeism costs attributable to those assaults.

To determine the approximate cost of domestic violence to your organization use the Domestic Violence Calculator www2.texashealth.org/dv or www.callcove.com on the education page

COVE can train your management about how to assist employee victims /abusers and setting protocol that will help protect your business from civil/criminal matters stemming from violence. As a community leader you will be showing that you stand against violence by partnering with COVE. For more information please call (231) 843-25841. Let us work together for a safer community.



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Making Christmas Special

COVE serves 70 plus families in our 3 county area in addition to the women and children in the Shelter. For the past few years instead of having people adopt a family, COVE asks for unwrapped gift donations which they display in COVE's Christmas Shoppe. Shelter residents and clients then come to pick out the gifts they think their children will like. The children, also, get a chance to shop for their mom for that special present. After the gift selection, the gifts get wrapped for Christmas. It is a festive time, particularly being able to choose what they think their loved ones will like.

Would you like to participate in making Christmas special for others? If you are having a Holiday party consider asking your guests to bring a gift for COVE - clothes, toys, games, personal items for infants to 17 year old boys & girls and gifts for their mothers and fathers. Or make it a project for your family. Take your children or grandchildren shopping. Have them pick out some clothes that they like that would be good to give to a child their age. Drop off the gifts at the COVE office by December 14th. If you need help in getting the items to COVE call and someone will pick them up 231-843-2541 ext. 26.

C.O.V.E. 2009 - 2010 Calendar

- Dec. 4 - Bake sale at Lake-Osceola State Bank Baldwin
- Dec. 5 - Christmas Party at 108 Threads
- Dec. 13 - Afternoon Tea at Hexagon House
- Dec. 16 - COVE's Client Christmas Shoppe
- Jan. 26 - COVE night at House of Flavors
- Feb. 13 - Winterfest Beer Tasting - Pentwater.
- Feb. 20 - *Spa-a-thon* at ETC Spa & Salon in Pentwater

The Gift of Giving... COVE's Holiday Party

Reminder. Don't forget to make your reservation for our 4th annual C.O.V.E. Holiday Party on Thursday, November 19, 2009 from 6:30-9:30 p.m. You won't want to miss all the great items in the live and silent auction.

If you would like to make a reservation or have a question, please contact Kerry at 843-2541 ext. 26. (cove_vc@verizon.net) Space is limited so call now.

Afternoon Tea at the Hexagon House in Pentwater

Special way to celebrate the Christmas season. Sunday, December 13 at 2 p.m. Cost \$15. Space is very limited. Call Lynne at 231-869-5939 for a reservation.