



Chronicle-Tribune

Your connection to Grant County, Indiana

News

Hundreds stand together against domestic violence *Hands of Hope sponsors candlelight vigil; Moffitt speaks*

[Print Page](#)

By **Mishele Wright**
mdwright@chronicle-tribune.com

Published: Friday, October 17, 2008 1:18 AM EDT

Hundreds gathered Thursday evening to speak out against domestic violence.

The candlelight vigil, sponsored by Hands of Hope, included many people in different walks of life — many who had been victims of violence — together at St. James Lutheran Church,

Michael Moffitt, vice president of student development at Indiana Wesleyan University and former Green Bay Packers football player, spoke about his experience with domestic violence. Moffitt grew up in Los Angeles, where his father abused his mother for 21 years.



Michael Moffitt, vice president for student development at Indiana Wesleyan University, speaks about growing up with domestic violence during the annual Hands of Hope candlelight vigil for domestic violence awareness Thursday night at St. James Lutheran Church. jmorehead@chronicle-tribune.com

"That's all I knew," Moffitt told the crowd. "I thought being a Christian was what my dad represented. It terrified me to think I was going to turn into this person."

Moffitt said people shouldn't just shove domestic violence under the rug; they should get involved. He said many neighbors knew his mother was being abused and didn't do anything.

"I'm in a position right now — and I don't take it lightly — to cause change," he said.

After Moffitt shared his story, Hands of Hope Director Linda Wilk challenged the audience members to love and respect themselves and then love and respect their spouses and partners because children are watching.

The vigil was encouraging to Sweetser resident Amber Singer.

"I think it helped on how to talk to my kids and tell them," she said. "It's one thing I've been struggling with."

Singer is a victim of domestic violence, and although she is divorced, she's still in the relationship, she said. She was in the abusive relationship for eight and a half years, and the most recent incident was in May.

"It was scary, and it was difficult to get out of because of the children," she said.

Singer stayed with her husband for so long because of her four children, ages 1, 2, 4 and 6. She also cited her religion as a factor for not getting help sooner; she doesn't believe in divorce, she said. But Singer finally got a divorce with the help of family and friends.

"It got bad," she said. "It got real bad. It just got worse ... but there are people out there who will help you."

Bree White said she enjoyed the service. She said it's important for the community to raise awareness so domestic violence isn't passed on from generation to generation. She learned to be more aware because

she said domestic violence is an issue that is easy to ignore.

"You don't see what's going on unless you actually look for it," she said.

Wilk said the vigil went well, and she was excited to see many faces in attendance that she didn't recognize.

"I was really pleased with the cross section from the community," she said. "There was a good response from different segments of the community."

If you go:

•What: Flowers on the River.

•Where: YWCA, 417 S. Branson St.

•When: Noon Oct. 24.

•More: Community members are invited to meet at the YWCA and walk to the river for a ceremony. One flower will be tossed into the river for each life lost through domestic violence in Indiana during the past year. Community members may also toss flowers in honor of survivors or in memory of deceased victims of domestic violence. For more information, call the YWCA at 668-8995 or e-mail ywcamarion@sbcglobal.net.

Copyright © 2009 - Chronicle-Tribune

[x] Close Window