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### Awareness month a success

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As another successful month of Domestic Violence Awareness comes to a close I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the community who played a role in increasing awareness to this devastating and far reaching crime.

First, to each of the Flannery-Keal Home staff who work quietly behind the scenes to ensure that when a victim, police officer or concerned friend or relative calls the hotline, answers and assistance can be given — you are each appreciated! Secondly, to the Hands of Hope education staff — thank you for your passion and dedication to educating our children and youth.

Then, to those community members who have joined Hands of Hope in so many ways to spread the word including Marion General Hospital who annually participates in Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day and every member of the Mayor's Commission Against Domestic Violence and their respective agencies.

To the Grant County Sheriff's Department deputies and the Grant County Jail Inmate work crew who assisted in setting up the T-shirts in the lawn at the Five Points Mall depicting the seriousness of domestic violence. I appreciated not only the set up and tear down, but the attention to ensuring when a windstorm came through the display was set back up. Thanks also to the management at Five Points Mall for allowing the display to be set up at the highly visible location.

The month's activities were most visibly shown through the annual Hands of Hope Candlelight Vigil which, thanks to Tim George and Ed Breen at WBAT and David Penticuff and his staff at the Chronicle-Tribune, along with various businesses in Grant County, was well promoted.

For those who were in attendance, the vigil was powerful and memorable again, thanks to the leadership of Steve Newcomer and the critical role each person played including Rev. Mark Carlson, Sandy Mindach, Noelle Lehman, Claire Allison, Kelly Cheney, Nathan Dalton, the Sold Out drama team members and St. James Lutheran Church.

And, in closing a special thanks to everyone who has worn a purple ribbon this month to show a victim who may just need to know so many people and professionals care.

While the month of October is nearing a close, we all know domestic violence knows no boundaries or time lines, so please remember to get educated and do your part to break the cycle of domestic violence.

For additional information about Hands of Hope, a division of Family Service Society, Inc., United Way agency, call — 664-0701 — 24 hours a day.

Linda Wilk, director, Hands of Hope, a Family Service Society agency, Marion

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