



# Chronicle-Tribune

Your connection to Grant County, Indiana

## News

### Rally a reminder against domestic violence

BY MISHELE WRIGHT

[mdwright@chronicle-tribune.com](mailto:mdwright@chronicle-tribune.com)

Published: Wednesday, October 8, 2008 1:18 AM EDT

Dozens of people gathered on the lawn at city hall Tuesday to kick off Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The rally was sponsored by the mayor's Commission Against Domestic Violence.

Also on the lawn, 63 items of clothing were hung, each with a nametag attached. The shirts represent the 63 men, women and children in Indiana who died as a result of domestic violence between July 1, 2007, and June 30, 2008. None of those victims were from Grant County.

Linda Wilk, chairwoman of the commission and director of Hands of Hope, said the group of fatalities includes a baby who was born prematurely because its mother was abused. Twelve of the 63 were children, including a 14-year-old girl who was beaten with a jack hammer by her boyfriend.

Wilk introduced the Expect Respect campaign at the rally Tuesday. Residents will soon see billboards and other ads featuring role models in the community. Wilk said the purpose of the campaign is to help teenagers realize the importance of respect.

"This seemed like an appropriate time to unveil this and make people realize the seriousness of the issue," she said.

Wilk and others recognized people in the community who have helped intervene in domestic violence situations.

"This is such a serious issue, I want to make sure people who go out of their way to stop violence get recognized," Wilk said.

Shawn Winkle and his fiancée, Pansy Hubbard, were recognized for intervening in a home where domestic violence was taking place and rescuing two young children.

The couple now has custody of Hubbard's cousin's children, ages 2 and 3, after they intervened in the cousin's home. Hubbard said seeing domestic violence close to home was unreal. She didn't realize how bad of a problem domestic violence was until after she experienced it firsthand.

"It makes me wonder what would have happened if I hadn't stepped in," she said. "It goes through my mind every day. What would've happened to them? Where would they be?"

Marion attorney Marty Harker also was recognized for his work in helping a female client whose husband chased her into the law firm. Harker intervened and acted as an advocate for the woman. He also convinced her to divorce her abusive husband.

Harker said it's troubling when he gets cases like that, but he did what he thought was right and was glad to have helped the client.

"I was happy to receive (the award), but I'm only a small part in the system that deals with it on the legal

Print Page



Debra Corn Agency director Cynthia Habegger and secretary Cathy Persinger read the names of domestic violence victims attached to 63 shirts displayed. [jmorehead@chronicle-tribune.com](mailto:jmorehead@chronicle-tribune.com)

end," he said.

Harker said it's important to have rallies like the one Tuesday for domestic violence.

"It's crucial for not only the awareness, but to show support for the victims, to show them there are people in the community who care," he said.

Sgt. Matthew Swain and Deputy Jeff Sands from the Grant County Sheriff's Department, along with Marion Police officer Shawn Sizemore, were recognized for their efforts in a July domestic dispute where a man fatally shot himself, with his wife and three children in the other room.

During the rally, Mayor Wayne Seybold thanked all of the departments for their hard work in trying to prevent domestic violence. He said he hoped there would come a day when the city didn't have to gather for domestic violence awareness.

"To me, this is a coward's crime," he said. "I just have zero tolerance for it."

#### **CANDLELIGHT VIGIL**

- ◆What: Hands of Hope's candlelight vigil.
- ◆When: 7 p.m. Oct. 16.
- ◆Where: St. James Lutheran Church, 1206 N. Miller Ave.
- ◆Speaker: Michael Moffitt.

Copyright © 2009 - Chronicle-Tribune

---

[x] Close Window