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Agency combats violent crime in homes *Guest column*

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Domestic violence to me is the most convoluted, comprehensive, emotionally driven crime that exists in our society today.

In Wabash County, on Monday, March 8, residents were again reminded just how serious and deadly this crime can be.

For one couple, what I am sure started out as a loving relationship, turned into one filled with extreme control, manipulation and fear.

Intensified by the fact there were children involved and a possible child custody battle, emotions I am sure ran high.

A protective order was filed and currently in place according to local law enforcement. It was commented that the victim asked for the protective order, yet went to her abuser's home.

Again, I state, this crime is the most convoluted, comprehensive and emotionally driven crime that exists. Unlike a random robbery or theft, domestic violence victims, know their abuser – they are intimately involved in the abuser's lives. They often have children together which forever binds them to their abuser.

And, many times, because of those children, the victim will try to stay with the abuser for the sake of the children.

Unfortunately, too often, that thought only leads to further violence when the abuser and victim find that despite attempts they can't function as a couple any longer.

We will probably never know for sure why the victim decided to go to her abuser's house that day despite having a protective order against her abuser. It really doesn't matter. By the letter of the protective order law, she can not violate that order, only the abuser as the one who the order was filed against can.

But that is not what is important now. What is important is that we as a community come together and work to educate victims about the services Hands of Hope offers. It is important to educate our children about what entails a healthy relationship and how to achieve that. It is important to educate our children about warning signs so they can break the cycle of violence. It is important that we as a community stand tall and declare that we will not use violence in our homes to solve our problems.

As a United Fund Agency, Hands of Hope, a division of Family Service Society, Inc. offers comprehensive prevention and intervention services in Wabash County. To learn more about what services we offer call 260-563-4407, email me at lwilk@famservices.com, visit our agency website at www.famservices.com or look up information about us at Facebook — www.facebook.com/dvcommission.

Together we can stop the violence — I challenge each one of reading this to help!