



Opinion > Editorials

Shining light on the fight against abuse

[Print Page](#)

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Too often domestic violence and child abuse leave a dark and cold view in society.

At 12:15 p.m., Monday, as part of Crime Victim's Rights Week, two local organizations will be shedding some permanent brightness to the issues.

A tree, rock and bench are being placed in the southwest corner of the Gardens of Matter Park by the Mayor's Commission Against Domestic Violence in partnership with Prevent Child Abuse, Grant County Council.

The community is invited and encouraged to attend this public event as we officially celebrate the work being done to end domestic violence and child abuse in Grant County.

During this brief ceremony, a prayer of dedication will be shared, representatives from the two organizations will discuss why each item was selected and Mayor Wayne Seybold will share his overall vision for Matter Park and how the tree, bench and rock fit into that plan.

Specifically, a Forest Pansy Redbud tree, rock and bench has been selected and designated as a place of rest and rejuvenation for victims and their loved ones.

The true collaboration that has taken place between the Domestic Violence Commission and Prevent Child Abuse was realized through a committee represented by Rev. Darrell Smith, Paula Pauley, Elizabeth Garrasi and Connie Rose.

The committee chose the Forest Pansy Redbud tree because in the spring it has a cheerful bright color to it and in the fall the burgundy color shows maturity and strength.

The bench which will display the two organizations names, allows for a moment of rest. And the rock will have a plaque engraved with the following message: "Our purpose is to provide Safety and Security which brings Joy for Today, Hope for Tomorrow, and Strength for the Future to the Children, Families and those who have been impacted by Domestic Violence in Grant County."

Nationally, crime victim activists across the nation will be holding events to remind communities about the importance of victim's rights during the week of April 10-16.

This year's theme for Crime Victim's Rights Week is: Reshaping the Future — Honoring the Past.

An appropriate theme as locally we memorialize all victims who have lost their lives due to domestic violence, child abuse or another form of violence by Honoring the Past.

Yet, through the ongoing work locally, we constantly our Reshaping the Future through the work done by the Mayor's Commission Against Domestic Violence and Prevent Child Abuse, Grant County.

I would welcome and encourage all to take a portion of their lunch hour on Monday, April 11 and meet us at the southwest corner of the Gardens of Matter Park, for a brief moment of remembrance and celebration. What a better way to spend a little time and show victims once again that Grant County does care and is there to help in times of need.

For additional information about the event call Linda Wilk, Chair, Mayor's Commission Against Domestic Violence or Connie Rose, Prevent Child Abuse Grant County Council at 662-9971.

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

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