

Womenews

W o m e n ' s C e n t e r o f M o n t g o m e r y C o u n t y



Save the Dates!

An Update from the Special Events Committee of the Board of Directors of the Women's Center of Montgomery County

As the rest of us are busy planning our holiday and year end celebrations, the Special Events Committee is hard at work planning a series of springtime events to bring together new and old friends of the Women's Center of Montgomery County! Recognizing that these are difficult economic times for many of us, the Committee has opted to put together a calendar of events that are affordable and, hopefully, appealing to our large and diverse membership, in lieu of the one large fundraiser we traditionally host in the spring. Each of these events is designed to be 'friend-raisers' – events where we can come together in celebration of our work, our community and our common mission to end family violence. Over the coming months, we will be bringing you more information about each event, but for now here are the highlights of several uniquely themed activities from the Special Events Committee!

In March 2009, the Center will be sponsoring an Irish music concert to coincide with the St. Patrick's Day holiday. The concert will feature music performed by Cathie Ryan, accompanied by her band and the award-winning local Irish dance troupe, Tara Gael. It will be held the evening of Thursday, March 12th 2009 at [Montgomery County Community College](#), Blue Bell campus, with proceeds generated from ticket and promotional CD sales benefitting the families in crisis we serve. Ticket prices will be \$30 per person, with the option to attend our cocktail reception prior to the concert for an additional fee.

Irish American Cathie Ryan, with her crystalline vocals and insightful songwriting, is an original and distinctive voice in Celtic music. Since her acclaimed seven year tenure as lead singer of Cherish the Ladies, the Detroit born Ryan has established herself as one of Celtic Music's most popular and enduring singer-songwriters. *The Boston Globe* recently wrote, "Cathie Ryan is a thrilling traditional vocalist whose honey-pure soprano is equally at home on probing original ballads about a woman's place in the modern world."

Cathie has released 4 critically acclaimed CDs on [Shanachie Records](#): *Cathie Ryan*, *The Music of What Happens*, *Somewhere Along the Road*, and her latest, *The Farthest Wave*. She is featured on more than forty compilations of Celtic Music.

Cathie is a captivating and deeply affecting performer. "There is nothing like a live show, being with an audience, sharing the music. That is the best part of being a singer and writing songs," she says. She has built a loyal following throughout Europe and North America by touring steadily and singing "songs of the heart." At a live performance *The Irish Echo* observed, "Cathie Ryan certainly knows how to communicate with her audience. And what she communicates through song are the enduring values of home, family, memory, and spirit..."

In 2003 Cathie was included in the famous Irish music collection, *A Woman's Heart - A Decade On* placing her amongst Irish music's finest female vocalists and songwriters. It was the first time Americans were featured in the series and she shared

Norristown Volunteer Update

IN-SERVICES:

Our holiday party is scheduled for Tuesday, December 16, 2008 from 12:00-3:00 pm in the Norristown office. We will sample volunteer's favorite recipes and have our annual Pollyanna game. It is always a great time stealing gifts from one another!

LEGAL REMEDIES:

There will be no Legal remedies Workshop for the month of December.

The Legal Remedies Workshop will resume on Tuesday, January 20th, 2009 from 5:00 -7:00 pm in the Norristown office. The guest attorney is to be announced. The discussion will be open to civil and family law. The information sessions are held at our Norristown office at 18 West Airy Street, 4th floor. Please call 610-279-7474 to register to attend. Also, please refer a family member or friend to this valuable program!

A NEW KIND OF SUPPORT GROUP:

Time for Healing Spiritual Based Support Group

Healing from domestic violence hurts and other life issues that have left one broken and scarred.

Fridays from 6:00 -7:30pm at 132 West Main Street (Lafayette Street entrance)

Contact Denise at 215-681-6595 or Women's Center at 610-279-7474

Happy Thanksgiving!

Jenn B.

Norristown Volunteer Coordinator

Local Artist Offers Support to Victims of Domestic Violence

Those of you who attended our Art & Craft show in August will undoubtedly remember Diedra Stone-McGrory's gorgeous drawings, paintings, and sculptures celebrating empowered women, motherhood, and nature.

After exhibiting at the Art & Craft show, Diedra was inspired to continue to combine her passion for artwork with her drive to empower survivors and all women. She recently developed a Myspace page cataloging a number of her drawings and paintings, and has generously offered to donate 25% of her proceeds to the Women's Center of Montgomery County.

If you are interested in viewing or purchasing Deidra's work, visit her directly either at her Myspace page at www.myspace.com/diedrasart or at her online shop www.diedrasart.etsy.com. Deidra will donate 25% of each sale to the Women's Center when you mention us.

All of Deidra's 16x20 inch prints are \$50.00, matted and signed. Shipping is included in the price.

Pottstown's Potpourri

Last month, Chuck Gallun, Project Manager of the SAFE program out of Creative Health in Pottstown, hosted the November meeting for providers of Batterers Intervention Services from across the state. Aside from the lone victim's advocate from the Women's Center, who was an invited guest, the attendees of the meeting were all representatives of programs focused on the perpetrator's behavior.

The approaches being utilized by the batterer's intervention providers present at the meeting varied a great deal, while their overall goal to effect change in the perpetrator's behavior is the same. The perpetrators participating in the represented programs are also varied in their approaches to abuse. Some perpetrators are more "commonplace" in their emotional and physical abuse, while others will "brutally and systematically terrorize their partners." In an effort to be more inclusive of all domestic violence perpetrators, the group is considering a change of its title from *Batterers Intervention Services* to *Intervention Services for Domestic Abuse and Battering*.

Historically, some advocates for the victims of domestic violence have questioned the legitimacy of the intervention programs for the perpetrators. In some instances, victim's advocates have refrained from communicating or interacting with their community's batterer's programs. This position is counter productive given the fact that both groups are working toward the same goal: to end domestic violence. Awareness of, and healthy dialogue about each other's programs and each other's roles in ending the violence will go a long way in helping both groups to confront the challenges ahead.

Kristine Wickward
Legal Advocate - Pottstown

Notes From the Elkins Park Office

Important date! **Wednesday, December 17th, 3-8pm**, at the Elkins Park office is our Holiday Get-Together for volunteers. No in-service this year, just socializing. Potluck, please bring either an appetizer or dessert. WC will supply beverages. Looking forward to seeing everyone.

I will be starting new domestic violence counselor training sessions in January, probably both a day and an evening session at the Elkins Park office starting the week of January 19th. The training meets once a week for eight weeks. The day of the week has not been determined yet, it will depend on what works out best for the majority of the applicants. If anyone is interested, please contact me at the Elkins Park office by phone, 215-635-7340 or email at dlinn@womenscentermc.org. Volunteer [applications](#) are also on the Women's Center website.

The January in-services will be the program on how to integrate HIV risk reduction into the services offered by domestic violence counselors. Please read the information written by Susan Spencer in the newsletter about this program.

Submitted by Deanna Linn
Director of Volunteers

Thrift Shop Volunteers Needed

The Women's Center of Montgomery County Thrift Shop, located at 703 West Avenue in Jenkintown, is open six days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. We have a need for volunteers to staff the shop, particularly on Saturdays. Whatever your talent we have a position to suit. We need sorters, merchandisers, decorators, and cash register clerks.

For more information, contact Maria at the Elkins Park office at 215-635-7340.

In-Service Alert!

Domestic Violence and HIV What's the Connection?

The Women's Center will be providing HIV risk reduction safety planning in-services on **Tuesday, January 13th, 7:00 pm** and **Wednesday, January 14th, 1:00 pm**, at the Elkins Park office. The following is information on the program written by Susan Spencer who is coordinating this program. Please RSVP to the Elkins Park office for the in-services so sufficient training materials are available.

For the past three years, Susan B. Spencer Inc has received funding from the Office on Women's Health to integrate HIV risk reduction into the services offered by domestic violence providers. The program, Many Hands Working Together to Prevent HIV, has worked primarily with providers in Philadelphia for the past two years. This year the team is interested in expanding, to work with the DV providers in Bucks and Montgomery Counties.

The first question someone may ask is "Why are we concerned about this, women who are involved in violent relationships have a lot to deal with already." All true, but there is a growing body of information which indicates there is a higher risk for HIV for those who are in abusive relationships. Some of those points are noted below:

- ❖ In addition to increased physiological susceptibility to HIV infection, violence against women increases vulnerability to HIV (Human Rights Watch, 2005)
- ❖ Abused women were 5 times more likely to have contracted an STI in previous year (Wu et al., 2003)
- ❖ Physical, verbal and sexual violence in intimate relationships are associated with HIV risk (Lichtenstein, 2004)
- ❖ Female victims of domestic violence have limited options for negotiation within their sexual relationships and have little access to HIV testing & counseling services (Human Rights Watch, 2005)
- ❖ Behaviors that put individuals at highest risk for HIV are unprotected sex, drug use, and sex with multiple partners—all behaviors that are co-morbidities of domestic violence.

Given this, Many Hands Working Together has designed a program to teach DV counselors sexual safety planning. Staff are provided with an HIV Update to assure their knowledge is current. They are then trained in sexual safety planning with the clients they see. Finally, there will be monthly check-ins with staff to support their efforts in implementing this service. In addition to learning sexual safety planning, a group level intervention designed for use in support groups will also be taught.

We are excited to have the opportunity to work with the staff and volunteers of the Women's Center over the coming year with this project and look forward to meeting you!

The Women's Center of Montgomery County
Please make us your highest priority
United Way Donor Option
Number 00433

The following article is from the Family Violence Prevention Fund “Speaking Up” Newsletter :

CA COURT: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS MUST SERVE MEN, BUT NOT WITH IDENTICAL SERVICES

In mid-October, California’s 3rd District Court of Appeals ruled in *Woods vs. Shewry* that state-funded domestic violence programs must provide services to male as well as female victims. While “men’s rights” groups hailed the ruling, a closer look shows that it supports the practices that most shelters and domestic violence agencies use today, because the Court explicitly recognized that most victims of domestic violence are women, and that women tend to suffer more serious injuries. Thus, it allowed programs to provide different services to male and female victims.

The three-justice panel said the state’s domestic violence grant making should be gender-neutral and support domestic violence services for victims without regard to gender. But the Court ruled that programs are not required to provide “identical” services to male victims.

The decision says, in part: “In reforming the statutes that provide funding for domestic violence programs to be gender-neutral, we do not require that such programs offer identical services to men and women. Given the noted disparity in the number of women needing services and the greater severity of their injuries, it may be appropriate to provide more and different services to battered women and their children.”

The Justices noted that they have no evidence that any state programs do not currently offer services to men, and could only presume that 15 percent do not, based on a statement put in evidence that 85 percent of programs in the state offer services to men.

California awards \$22 million to more than 100 domestic violence programs each year. The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence (CPEDV) notes that the ruling supports its mission, as well as that of its member agencies, to serve all victims of domestic violence, and that most programs have long-standing policies to provide male victims with emergency hotline assistance, service referrals, hotel vouchers, transportation and other needed services.

It says in a statement: “Since the majority of domestic violence victims seeking services are women who have been abused by men, the presence of men in shelter facilities could pose yet another barrier to victims obtaining the help they need. CPEDV is pleased that the Court chose to uphold shelters’ rights to protect the privacy and safety of their residents.”

“In many ways, this ruling is an affirmation of what violence prevention and victim services programs in California and across the country already do,” said Family Violence Prevention Fund President Esta Soler. “We work to stop domestic and sexual violence in all its forms, and serve all the victims who need help. But there is no question that women are the majority of victims who need services.”

Four men and the daughter of one of them filed the lawsuit, challenging state funding for domestic violence programs that allegedly discriminate on the basis of gender. A Superior Court judge in Sacramento dismissed the case because, he found, the plaintiffs had failed to establish that there was an unmet need for services for men in the same way the legislature had established an unmet need for services for women when it adopted the statutes. An appeals court judge agreed but, on further appeal, the 3rd District Court of Appeals issued its October ruling.

The 3rd District Court of Appeals ruling is available on CPEDV’s website, at www.cpedv.org/docs/101608CPEDV-Woods_v_Shewry_Decision.pdf.

**Women's Center of Montgomery County
Domestic Violence Service Statistics
July 1, 2008 through October 31, 2008**

Contacts:

Telephone counseling	1905
Peer Counseling	201
Support Groups	37
Inperson counseling	319
Court Accompaniment	303
Total	2765

Time:

Telephone counseling	513.75
Peer Counseling	199
Support Groups	74
In-person counseling	327.5
Court Accompaniment	276.5
Total	1390.75

Unduplicated Victims:

Telephone counseling	1428
Peer Counseling	90
Support Groups	11
Inperson counseling	245
Court Accompaniment	254
Total	1984

Community Education Programs	24
Number reached	1279

School-Based Programs	16
Number Reached	469

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the honor with Allison Krauss, Dolly Parton and Emmylou Harris. In recent years, her original songs have been recorded by such distinguished Irish vocalists as Frances Black and Mary Black among others. Cathie has performed on national and public television in the United States and Europe, appeared on NPR's Mountain Stage and Thistle and Shamrock, PRI's The World, BBC2 in England, Radio Scotland, and RTE, RnG, and TG4 in Ireland. She was voted one of the Top 100 Irish Americans by *Irish America Magazine*, Chicago's *Irish American News* honored her as Irish Female Vocalist of the Decade, and the LA Times recently named her, "One of the leading voices in Celtic music."

For more information about Cathie Ryan, please visit her website at www.cathieryan.com.

Because of her commitment to our mission, Cathie has generously agreed to donate her talent in support of this effort. Even more amazing than this act, however, she has provided the Center with the opportunity to sell advance copies of two of her CDs, which can then be autographed at the concert. The Center is currently selling copies of her current release *The Farthest Wave* and her previous CD, *Somewhere Along the Road*. CD's may be purchased through the Elkins Park office at a cost of \$18.00 each.

Finally, later this Spring, on April 26, 2009, the Center will be hosting our "Celebration of Family and Friends" brunch at the [Meadowlands Country Club in Blue Bell](#). We hope that you will join us for the festivities as we honor the women who, through their volunteer efforts and support, have made our community safer, brighter and filled with promise for the future. If there is a special person in your life, we hope that you will both join us and include a special message in our Celebratory Message Book which will be distributed at the brunch! Let's take this opportunity to tell these important people what a wonderful and inspiring difference they have made!

FIREARMS, PARTNERS CAUSE MOST MURDERS OF WOMEN

In 2006, 1,836 females in the United States were murdered in cases in which a single male offender killed a single female victim. In nine out of ten of these cases (92 percent), the victim was murdered by someone she knew. Three in five victims who knew their attackers were wives, ex-wives or intimate partners of their killers, and 16 percent were shot and killed during an argument.

Those are major findings from the Violence Policy Center's latest report, *When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2006 Homicide Data*. It is based on data from the FBI's unpublished Supplementary Homicide Report. Researchers examined cases of homicides involving one female murder victim and one male offender. They found that more than 12 times as many females were murdered by a male they knew than were killed by a male stranger.

The study finds that firearms were, by far, the most common weapon used by males to murder females, and were involved in 54 percent of these homicides. "The picture that emerges from *When Men Murder Women* is that women face the greatest threat from someone they know, most often a spouse or intimate acquaintance, who is armed with a gun," the report says. "For women in America, guns are not used to save lives, but to take them."

In 2006, the national rate of women killed by men in single victim/single offender incidents was 1.29 out of 100,000. Nevada ranked highest of all states with a murder rate (3.27 per 100,000) more than two and a half times the national average. Ranked behind Nevada were South Carolina, Alabama, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Vermont, Texas, Arkansas, Arizona and Tennessee.

When Men Murder Women is available at www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2008.pdf

Women's Center Evening Book Club Schedule 2008-2009

December	Moral Disorder Discussion Leader: Vivian	Author: Margaret Atwood Hostess: Sandy
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January & February *Nothing scheduled at this time*

March	The Shawl Sarah's Key Discussion Leader: Ruth	Author: Cynthia Ozick Author: Tatiana DeRosnay Hostess: Sunny
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April	Loving Frank Discussion Leader: Judy	Author: Nancy Horan Hostess: Elaine
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May	Little Women Discussion Leader: Elaine	Author: Louisa May Alcott Hostess: Vivian
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June	The Glass Castle Discussion Leader: Suzanne	Author: Jeannette Walls Hostess: Judy
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July	Amsterdam Discussion Leader: Dottie	Author: Ian McEwan Hostess: Dottie
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Meetings are held on the third (3rd) Wednesday of every month.
Time: 7:30 p.m. social/8:00 p.m. discussion

Regrets only to hostess appreciated.

For more information, contact Sunny Letizi at 215-576-6215

Seeking Interested, Committed and Qualified Candidates to Join the Women's Center of Montgomery County Board of Directors

Once again it is that time of year when we are in search of prospective nominees for Board candidacy. If you or someone you know would consider serving our Center at this level, please feel free to discuss with one of us on the Committee or a current staff member. We are at present seeking persons with expertise/interest in the areas of finance, development and/or strategic planning.

Please remember this is YOUR board and its composition and service reflects your interests and concerns. Your input is of great value to those of us currently on Board as we, like you, are volunteers with the common goal of serving Women in Crises at any and all levels.

We appreciate and honor each of you for all that you do. We look forward to hearing from you.

WCMC BOARD NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Lillian Sulliman, Chairman

Beth Rubin

Larry Pauker

Beth Brinly

Women's Center of Montgomery County

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