

# Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

## MCBW Welcomes New Executive Director

*Danielle Kluz, Communications Coordinator*

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is pleased to announce that it has hired a new Executive Director, Cyndi Cook. "I cannot think of a person more qualified to lead the Coalition than Cyndi Cook. It's an exciting time for MCBW and under her leadership we can only continue to build upon our success," said Sharonna Lee, chair of the MCBW Board of Directors.

Cyndi has been involved in the battered women's movement in

Minnesota since 1984 and has an extensive background in legislative and public policy work. From 1999 to 2001, she served as MCBW's Legislative and Public Policy Coordinator, where she was a key player in the passage of the Domestic Violence Omnibus Bill, which instituted a number of important criminal and civil policy reforms and also provided per diem funding for battered women's shelters in Minnesota. Cyndi also worked in state government as the Minnesota

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Memories ~ Milestones ~ Momentum

*Cyndi Cook, Executive Director*

In a few short weeks, the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women—board, staff, members, allies and friends—will come together to celebrate 25 years of collective organizing and action to seek safety, justice, and a brighter future for battered women and their children. Our theme for this historic event is *Memories ~ Milestones ~ Momentum*.

- The theme of our anniversary celebration is about honoring and remembering all of those women, men, youth and children who have worked so hard to bring us closer to that brighter future.
- It is about the women who came together around their kitchen tables—with no money and no community support, only a dream of something bet-

ter—and changed the lives of thousands of battered women and their children.

- It is about coming together to change ineffective laws and systems responses that fail to protect women and children.
- It is about acknowledging the key events along the way that brought us to where we are today.
- And, it is about our dedication to continuing that work so that a day will come when battering ends and we can all live free from fear.

The theme of this celebration is also about building coalition and coalition building is all about people.

- It is about people struggling

*(Continued on page 3)*

Summer/Fall 2003

### Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women Staff:

**Cyndi Cook**  
Executive Director

**Danielle Kluz**  
Communications  
Coordinator

**Delrita Rudnitski**  
Associate Director

**Delia Ruiz**  
Finance and Admini-  
stration Coordinator

**Lonna Stevens**  
Public Policy and  
Legislative Coordinator

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## Memories ~ Milestones ~ Momentum

### The MCBW Silver Jubilee

A celebration of our 25th Anniversary and the achievements of the battered women's movement.

**When:** Friday, October 3, 2003, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

**Where:** The University Club Downtown Clubhouse, St. Paul

**What's happening:** Dinner, silent auction, a musical performance by Ann Reed and more...

Please mark this night on your calendars, as it will be a night for **EVERYONE** to celebrate our anniversary and the achievements of the battered women's movement in Minnesota. Member programs, non-member battered women's programs, women's programs, supporters, former employees of battered women's programs, donors, legislators, survivors, family and friends— everyone is invited to share this wonderful night with us!

To make the event even more convenient for our member programs, we will be hosting the Annual Membership Meeting the same day (see page 10 for more info).

If you have not received an invitation, you may download one at the MCBW web site: [www.mcbw.org](http://www.mcbw.org).

## MCBW Welcomes New Executive Director

*Continued from page 1*

Center for Crime Victims Services' Battered Women's Program Director, where she provided leadership to the funding process for Minnesota's battered women's programs. For the last few years she has been a consultant for Praxis International, coordinating safety and accountability audits.

"Battered women's programs in Minnesota are facing serious challenges because of state budget cuts. Cyndi's knowledge of the inner workings of the Legislature and the relationships she's built in state government will be vital to the future survival of the programs we represent," said Delrita Rudnitski, who has served as MCBW's Interim Executive Director since June of 2002.

"At this time of increasing needs and shrinking resources for vital services, I look forward to joining the MCBW effort to make safety for battered women and their children a top priority in Minnesota," said Cook. She began full-time at the Coalition on July 16, 2003.

If you need to contact Cyndi via e-mail, her address is [ccook@mcbw.org](mailto:ccook@mcbw.org).

## Memories ~ Milestones ~ Momentum

(continued from page 1)

- with one another to find a common understanding.
- It is about celebrating the achievements of people who are faced with the barriers of oppression—women of color, Native American women, elder women, the LGBT community, and women with disabilities.
- It is about people coming to the realization that we are far stronger together than any individual or group is alone.
- And, our theme is about organizing in a way that unleashes our power to create positive social change.

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women links battered women, children, youth, advocates, administrators, organizers, system practitioners, funders, and community members to ensure that this celebration is not only about our proud history of building a movement—it is about a movement that is alive and continues to grow. The Coalition is each and every one of you combining to create a collective voice. Coming together to mark MCBW's 25 year legacy of collective action gives us the opportunity to remind one another that what we do MATTERS—and that we are all a part of something bigger than ourselves.

We are looking forward to seeing you all and to raising our voices with yours in celebration at the MCBW 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Silver Jubilee.

Please join us on **Friday, October 3, 2003** at the University Club Downtown Clubhouse in St. Paul. For information on tickets for this event, please call MCBW at (651) 646-6177 or look on our web site at [www.mcbw.org](http://www.mcbw.org).



*Memories ~ Milestones ~ Momentum  
MCBW Silver Jubilee image by Mali Kouanchao*

## Autumn Brings Position Changes at MCBW

In August, Lisa Radzak left the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women to attend law school at William Mitchell College of Law. Lisa served as MCBW's Legislative and Public Policy since January 2003. We were very sad to see her leave, although she will continue to be involved with MCBW while in school. Lisa proved to be a true champion of Minnesota's battered women's movement during an extremely tough legislative session. Our staff used to joke that she should have just moved into the Capitol for the duration of the session, she was there so often. Lisa built many strategic alliances and raised a great deal of awareness with legislators about the needs of battered women and their children and she will be missed very much. Please see her farewell message on page 10.

We knew it was going to be difficult to fill Lisa's shoes and even wondered if such a thing were possible. But we found the perfect person already on our staff. MCBW is delighted to announce that Lonna Stevens, who has served as our Program Coordinator since September 2001, will now be our Public Policy

and Legislative Coordinator.

Lonna has a wealth of experience with policy and legislative work. She coordinates MCBW's Women of Color and Native American Women's Network (see page 4 for an update), which creates legislative and public policy initiatives on issues that affect women of color: domestic violence, sexual assault, homelessness/affordable housing, welfare rights, disparities in out-of-home placement for children of color, etc. She also has worked with national groups such as the National Network to End Domestic Violence on federal public policy initiatives such as the TANF reauthorization and the HMIS system (see her article on page 8).

It's difficult to know what will happen in the 2004 legislative session but with Lonna as MCBW's Public Policy and Legislative Coordinator, the needs of Minnesota's battered women and their children, as well as those of our member programs, will not continue to be championed.

## Women of Color and Native American Women's Network Update

*Lonna Stevens, Public Policy and Legislative Coordinator*

Beryl Rock of Mending the Sacred Hoop in Duluth, Bri Chomilo of Home Free in Plymouth, Sharonna Lee of the Battered Women's Justice Project, Kimberly L. Washington of the Central MN Task Force on Battered Women and Cyndi Cook, Executive Director of MCBW attended the **6<sup>th</sup> Regional Forum for the Women of Color Network and the National Network to End Domestic Violence** in St. Louis, Missouri on July 28-29<sup>th</sup>, 2003. The focus of the meeting for Minnesota participants was to develop an agenda for the upcoming months, which includes:

1. Setting a statewide agenda and encompassing and highlighting the accomplishments of women of color in Minnesota's domestic violence and sexual assault movements and the momentum WOC have added to the movements;
2. Building the communities of color's capacities to address domestic violence and sexual assault that is culturally specific and engage community members to strengthen community responsibility that include partnerships with community programs that are not domestic violence and sexual assault specific;
3. Creating the capacity for WOC that is specific for the African American community, the Latina community, the Native American community,

and the Asian community to build leadership, the capacity to engage WOC in the legislative and public policy arena, and to build on leadership skills that would ensure the success of women of color in domestic violence and sexual assault programs; and

4. Developing a survey that would reach all women of color in domestic violence and sexual assault programs to identify needs and to design a training calendar and agenda in various regions throughout the state that would be accessible for all women of color.

MCBW will work to ensure the leadership and visibility of women of color in the domestic violence/sexual assault movements in Minnesota. We recognize the contributions and leadership of WOC to these movements that are part of our herstory; and WOC continue to influence decision-making in our movements today. In the effort of providing for the most marginalized communities, we as organizations need to ensure that WOC are at the table in key decision making capacities to continue to influence policies that affect all battered women. We understand that it is the WOC who continue to dedicate their lives to ending violence within communities of color with the assistance of allies in our movements.

## MCBW Receives Altria Doors of Hope Community Awareness Grant

*Danielle Kluz, Communications Coordinator*

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is pleased to announce that it has received the Altria Doors of Hope Community Awareness Grant. This \$100,000 grant was offered exclusively to the 54 state domestic violence coalitions. 38 coalitions applied, with only 10 awarded the grant.

MCBW will be funded by Altria to create a public awareness campaign that will be geared towards teenagers of color and immigrant/refugee teenagers in the Twin Cities metro area, and will raise awareness of teen dating violence and available resources to help teenagers. The campaign will include a Teen Clothesline Project, radio public service announcements, a web site, and merchandise giveaways targeted to teen audiences.

There are a number of battered women's programs and services that work with communities of color and immigrant/refugee communities but there is a general lack of awareness in youth ages 12-18 and their parents about what these programs are, how to

reach them, and what services they offer. Teenagers of color and immigrant/refugee teenagers frequently feel isolated in a mainly white (and frequently racist and/or unwelcoming to immigrants and refugees) community like the Twin Cities and are not aware that there are culturally competent resources available to help them with domestic violence issues. There is a real need for a dating violence awareness campaign and a need for a targeted campaign where such teens can see themselves reflected in the campaign and receive messages that include their cultures and languages.

MCBW is excited to partner on this grant with five organizations in the Twin Cities that work with teenagers of color and immigrant/refugee teenagers: Asian Media Access, Casa de Esperanza, Sojourner Project, the St. Paul Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, and Women of Nations. The expertise and insight of these programs will be invaluable in developing campaign messages that are culturally relevant to our target audiences.

## Minnesota's 2003 Legislative Session: What It Means for Battered Women and Their Children

*Lisa Radzak, Legislative and Public Policy Coordinator*

After perhaps the most devastating legislative session in Minnesota's history, battered women and their children stand to lose a lot. From intervention and advocacy services, to health care, to childcare, to financial assistance, in the final analysis this legislative session will have reduced or eliminated adequate services to vulnerable citizens in this state. The following are just some of the ways battered women will be underserved and adversely affected.

### Welfare Reform

*(Thanks to Reggie Wagner, Staff Attorney at the Legal Services Advocacy Project)*

The Minnesota Legislature approved several changes to MFIP laws that affect participants who have or are granted a Family Violence Waiver. Under the former law, participants who were victims of domestic violence and sought an exemption from work requirements were allowed to develop an Alternative Employment Plan (AEP). Failure to comply with an AEP could result in it being revoked and replaced by an employment plan developed in accordance with MFIP employment and training services requirements. Failure to then comply with the plan resulted in a sanction. In the past, the participant and a person trained in domestic violence developed the AEP, which then was approved by the county.

Under the new law, AEPs are eliminated, consistent with other changes in MFIP that incorporate the philosophy of "universal participation" in which there are no exemptions from employment and training services and every MFIP participant has an employment plan. As part of these changes, there are new provisions that govern the development of employment plans for participants who request and qualify for a Family Violence Waiver. Under these new provisions, an employment plan for a participant who qualifies for a Family Violence Waiver must be developed or revised with a job counselor or the county and a person trained in domestic violence. Much of the existing language relating to ensuring the safety of the participant and her children has been retained. Because AEPs are eliminated under the new provisions, counties will sanction participants with a Family Violence Waiver if they do not comply with their employment plans just as they do with other MFIP participants.

### Health Care

Both Minnesota Care and General Assistance Medi-

cal Care (GAMC) will be drastically altered with \$350 million in cuts. Changes in GAMC include dropping the retroactive coverage feature and eliminating coverage for undocumented children and seniors. Single adults at or below the 75% Federal Poverty Line (FPL), or earning \$6,735 annually, will continue to be covered by GAMC. In addition, adults without children between 75% and 175% of FPL (earning between \$6,735 and \$15,715) will be covered at no cost under GAMC but only for catastrophic expenses (hospitalization only). Under MinnesotaCare, adults without children will be offered a very limited health care plan that caps benefits annually and requires large co-payments and monthly premiums.

### Child Care

*(Thanks to Minh Ta, Children's Defense Fund)*

Close to \$90 million in childcare cuts were approved by the Legislature this session. Legislative changes included substantial drops in income eligibility for childcare assistance, significant raises in parental co-payments, and cuts in payments to child care providers.

The most drastic cut reduces eligibility for childcare assistance from its current eligibility caps—75% of state medium income, or \$43,000 annual income for a family of three to \$26,000 annual income for a family of three. This cut will drop Minnesota from ranking 4<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> in the U.S in income eligibility standards for childcare, below Mississippi and West Virginia. This lowered eligibility cap potentially denies almost 40% of the future pool of families from receiving child care assistance.

### Reproductive Rights

The infamous 24-hour waiting period bill, a.k.a. the Women's Right to Know Bill, was signed into law after some questionable procedural maneuvers by some representatives in the Minnesota House. This bill requires "informed consent" of a woman seeking an abortion. At least 24 hours prior to performing the abortion, the physician is required to:

- Identify him/herself to the woman by name;
- Inform by phone or in person the medical risks of the abortion and the gestational age of the "unborn child;"
- Provide the woman with information about alternatives to abortion and inform her of her right to view materials with pictures of fetal development

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Minnesota's 2003 Legislative Session: What It Means for Battered Women and Their Children

(continued from page 5)

and more information about the risks of abortion.

The Super Gag Rule, a.k.a. the Taxpayers Protection Act, was proposed but did not pass. Supporters of reproductive rights suspect that this bill will resurface sometime during the 2004 legislative session.

The above bill would put into law enormous restrictions on the use of family planning funding. The bill prohibits a wide variety of state funds, including all family planning funds, from going to any organization that:

- Provides abortion services; is an affiliate of an organization that provides abortion services;
- Shares a similar name, facilities, or employees as an abortion provider;
- Publicly advocates for the legality or accessibility of abortion; or
- Refers patients for abortions or considers abortion to be part of a continuum of reproductive health services.

### Personal Protection

Minnesota's new Conceal and Carry Law has attracted a lot of media attention—and for good reason. As advocates for battered women know, easier access to guns does not make citizens safer. Moreover, for vulnerable citizens living in a violent home, handguns pose an even greater threat, perhaps a deadly one. The technicalities of the bill are likely to cause advocates and administrators of battered women's programs concern:

- The statute allows a sheriff to deny an application for a permit on the grounds that there is a substantial likelihood that the applicant is a danger to self or the public. If the denial is challenged, the sheriff must prove the danger to self or the public by clear and convincing evidence. Incidents that were not investigated and documented, and incidents for which the applicant was charged and acquitted are not considered.
- For the sheriff to deny the permit because of the applicant's history of mental illness, the applicant must have been confined to a treatment facility because of the illness. The statute authorizes the sheriff to obtain commitment information from the Commissioner of Human Services. Given the limitation of obtaining commitment information, the statute seems to limit denial of an application for a permit to those circumstances where the applicant's mental health his-

tory has resulted in commitment.

- The former statutes that prohibited possession of a pistol or firearm because of a conviction for a misdemeanor level domestic assault and/or a violation of an OFP remain unchanged.
- Convicted felons will not receive handgun permits but this does *not* include conviction for a misdemeanor level domestic assault that was enhanced to a felony.
- It is the prosecutor's duty to notify the sheriff if they are charging a permit holder with an offense that prohibits carrying a handgun. The permit can be suspended until the charge is resolved.
- If the sheriff denies an application, the sheriff must inform the applicant of the factual basis for the denial and the source of the factual basis. For example, if a batterer is applying for a permit and the victim or the domestic violence agency reports abuse to the sheriff so that the sheriff then concludes there is a substantial likelihood the applicant is a danger to the public and denies the permit, the sheriff is required to tell the applicant who provided the sheriff with the information that was used as the basis for the denial of the permit.
- If the sheriff suspects the applicant is a batterer for any reason and wants to obtain information from a domestic violence agency or victim about domestic violence, the sheriff is prohibited from telling the advocates or the victims why they are making the inquiry. In other words, the application is private data.

### Gun Ban Postings

All businesses and non-profit agencies (including shelters and non-shelter programs) renting space within a public or private building can post signs reading: "[shelter/program name] BANS GUNS IN THESE PREMISES". However, if a program is one office in a larger complex, all tenants would need to agree to post signs for the common areas. If there is no agreement a program can post for its portion of the complex only.

- Agencies must personally inform each person of the posted request and demand compliance.
- Agencies must post signs prohibiting handguns at every entrance.
- The posting prohibiting handguns must be 48" across and must be posted with the bottom of the sign at a height of four to six feet above the floor.

(Continued on page 7)

## Minnesota's 2003 Legislative Session: What It Means for Battered Women and Their Children

(continued from page 6)

The posting's lettering must be in black Arial typeface at least 1-1/2" in height against a bright contrasting background that is at least a 187 square inch area.

- The agency may not prohibit the lawful carry or possession of firearms in its parking facility or parking area.

Much more can be written about what this past legislative session will mean for the citizens of Minnesota—particularly vulnerable citizens who are threatened by or are escaping violence. Coming out of sessions like this it may be easiest for those who seek justice to shake their heads with exasperation and walk away, for it truly is unbelievable what is

happening in our state right now.

Don't stay exasperated and angry, though. Remember what Walter Mondale instructed us during his senatorial concession speech, shortly after two of social justice's greatest champions, Sheila and Paul Wellstone, passed from this earth. Mondale's words may be what the Wellstones would tell us today, coming out of this past session and facing so many threats as we head into the next. "You are needed now more than ever. You're the trustees of the legacy of social justice and decency. Stand up and keep fighting."

## Are You Interested in Joining the MCBW Board of Directors?

Pat Dunlavy, MCBW Board of Directors Nominating Committee

The MCBW Board needs knowledgeable, committed people from our member programs and from the community at large to provide governance and vision to the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women. We strive for a diverse Board with goals of 50% of members from rural areas and 50% women of color and Native American women. We are especially looking for Board members with financial backgrounds.

Terms on the MCBW Board of Directors are for two years with a maximum of three consecutive terms. We meet every other month with committee meetings in the alternating months. Standing committees include Executive, Finance, Nominating, and Personnel. Half of the Board meetings are in St. Paul and half are located at various rural program sites. Mileage and expenses are reimbursed for travel to meetings.

To apply for the MCBW Board, please email your contact information and your responses to the following questions to all members of the MCBW Board Nominating Committee:

1. What is your background and expertise in the battered women's movement?
2. What skills would you bring to the Board (finance, fund development, management, personnel, recruitment, strategic planning, change agency, etc.)?
3. What nonprofit board experience do you have?

4. Why do you want to be on the MCBW Board of Directors?
5. What would be your strongest contributions as an MCBW Board member?
6. Please list all of the following demographics which apply to you: Native woman, woman of color, battering survivor, person with disabilities, rural, urban, elder, and/or LGBT.
7. [Optional] How should MCBW deal with the efforts of certain special interest groups to provide funding and more services for male victims of domestic violence?
8. [Optional] What should be the single most important priority for MCBW? How should MCBW pursue this priority?

Please be aware that your contact information and answers to these questions will be shared with MCBW's voting membership at the Annual Membership Meeting if you are nominated for a Board position.

Please email this information to all the following Nominating Committee members:

Pat Dunlavy	rwa@rangenet.com
Ruth Hubbling	swcc@frontiernet.net
Vickie McCollum	vickiem@arvig.net

If you have questions about the MCBW Board application process, please call Pat Dunlavy, Chair of the Nominating Committee, at (218) 749-5054.

## Homeless Management Information Strategies

*Lonna Stevens, Public Policy and Legislative Coordinator*

States and local communities are in the process of developing or already have developed central databases to track homeless people's personal information, service usage, and often case notes.

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is currently monitoring and following the Homeless Management Information Strategies (HMIS) with local agencies and the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV). The local organizing consists of homeless shelters, domestic violence organizations, and programs serving homeless youth, adults, and children to make recommendations to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) by September 22, 2003. MCBW along with other state coalitions and the NNEDV are concerned primarily about the safety and security for battered women and their children and privacy issues.

**Background:** *(adapted from the NNEDV HMIS information sheet)*

In 2001, Congress directed HUD to collect data on the extent of homelessness at the local level. The directive was intended to make an unduplicated count of homeless persons, to analyze their use of assistance, to determine how they enter and exit the homeless assistance system, and to determine the effectiveness of such systems. Computer databases were suggested as one way to collect such data.

These proposed standards direct local and statewide Continuums of Care (CoCs) to establish and maintain databases containing client-identifying information, client assessments, and service outcomes. The proposed standards encourage, but do not require, *the sharing of case notes*, monitoring clients' use of services, and the current location of an individual with the service system. Sharing of data is at the discretion of each CoC.

HUD proposed a data standard for all local HMIS that requires all clients to be asked for personal identifying information, including name, date of birth, and Social Security number when seeking housing or services. If a CoC decides to share information, this identifying information, which will generate a unique client identifier, should be the least amount of data required in order to determine whether an individual has previously been served with the CoC.

In response to advocacy on behalf of battered women, HUD has made certain confidentiality exceptions for victims of domestic violence seeking shelter or housing assistance, and does not expect domestic violence shelters to participate in local HMIS when the data protocols raise significant risk to clients of the shelter. *Given the lethal risk to victims, domestic violence organizations should not be submitting any client-identified data to HMIS servers.*

### Where Do We Go From Here?

There is still concern for the safety, security, and confidentiality of a victim of domestic violence utilizing homeless shelters or community services such as food pantries, drop-in centers, or any other assistance that a battered woman may need to help herself and her children.

It is a matter of human rights—research needs should not be the sole reason for requiring persons to disclose personal information and should not be tied to service delivery. A person should not be required to release personal, confidential information about her/himself in order to receive assistance. Especially if that information can prove lethal by revealing the location of a woman and her children to her batterer.

On August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003 there will be another local organizing meeting to discuss recommendations to submit to HUD from Minnesota by September 22. These recommendations will be made along with other state coalitions and national organizations concerned about the safety, security, and confidentiality of battered women and their children. NNEDV believes these recommendations will be finalized in about six months and states will be moving toward the direction of data collection of our most vulnerable citizens.

For more information about the proposed standards from HUD please visit:

[www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/hmis](http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/hmis). Please remember that these standards are *proposed*, not finalized.

## The Inaugural Sheila Wellstone Institute Conference on November 13

The Sheila Wellstone Institute focuses on issues of violence against women and children in Minnesota and around the country by sponsoring conferences, building coalitions, and advocating for sound public policy. Created by representatives of academic, program, and governmental interests connected to Sheila Wellstone's work on violence against women, its goal is to honor her by continuing her legacy in this area. An inaugural conference will be held on November 13, 2003, at the University of Minnesota's Coffman Memorial Union.

Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, a leader in efforts to end domestic violence in America, will keynote the one-day conference, which will focus on the experiences of battered mothers in family courts and on issues relating to custody disputes and safe visitation. Governor Napolitano is involved in developing new information and public awareness regarding the experiences of battered mothers in Arizona's family courts.

In addition to Governor Napolitano's address, there will be a number of related workshops and the creation of an action plan outlining how to move forward on new policies and interventions. This conference is designed to enhance the statewide discussion in Minnesota about the following urgent issues in cases of domestic violence:

- Child protection issues

- Custody and visitation issues in cases of domestic violence
- Parental kidnapping
- Custody evaluation of parents
- Immigrant and refugee women's experience

The conference will also include a look at the Massachusetts and Arizona Battered Mother's Testimony projects.

This conference is designed for practitioners in the field of domestic violence: advocates; the legal community including county attorneys, judges and lawyers; county human service professionals; social workers; psychologists; and public officials.

There will be a breakfast reception immediately before the conference. This reception will highlight the contribution the Sheila Wellstone Institute will make to the work being done to end violence against women in Minnesota and around the country.

*For more information or if your organization is interested in being a co-sponsor of the conference please contact Connie Lewis, Director of the Sheila Wellstone Institute at 651-645-3939 or [connie@wellstone.org](mailto:connie@wellstone.org) (no financial commitment required).*

### MCBW/MCASA Joint Coalition Meeting

**WHO:** Member programs of MCBW and MCASA

**WHEN:** Wednesday, September 24 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Penn Lake Library (Hennepin County), 8800 Penn Ave. South, Bloomington.

**Please join us for an afternoon of planning and strategizing for the upcoming judicial district funding meetings. We recommend that ALL members attend this important meeting! Lunch will be offered.**

**Please RSVP for this meeting no later than September 22nd. For an RSVP form or a map, go to the MCBW web site at [www.mcbw.org](http://www.mcbw.org).**

## Saying Goodbye

*Lisa Radzak, Legislative and Public Policy Coordinator*

The Minnesota battered women's movement is in a place that it has never before been—advocates and allies of battered women and their children are being forced to prove why working to end domestic violence is valuable to all of Minnesota. I cannot over-emphasize how astounding that is to me, as I am sure it is to all of you. I can't comprehend why, as advocates for battered women, or as formerly battered women ourselves, we are being asked to prove the value of our work in the fight to end domestic violence.

So, over the last few years I have asked and asked and I have learned that answers don't come to questions like that. I asked the question every day while I watched some of Minnesota's elected officials fight for ethanol subsidies, increased nuclear storage

space, and as some—unfortunately the majority—fought at all costs to maintain the current spending level at the behest of the Taxpayers' League of Minnesota. I will not stop asking why. I hope that none of you stops asking why, either.

I bring all of this candid frustration to this newsletter now because I will be leaving the position of Legislative/ Public Policy Coordinator here at MCBW to begin law school. I have loved and appreciated my time here. I wish I could express to all of you how I love knowing you—how your work and your passion, piece by piece, drives an entire movement of Minnesotans who believe in peace, justice, and taking care of one's neighbor. Thank you for what you have given me and to battered women and their children. Keep fighting, please keep fighting....

## The MCBW Annual Membership Meeting

*Sharonna Lee, MCBW Board of Directors Chair*

Greetings, All! This year's Annual Meeting will be extra-special because it will be followed by MCBW's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Silver Jubilee. This year, the annual meeting will be held on Friday, **October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** at the Radisson River Front Hotel, located in downtown St. Paul at 11 Kellogg Blvd.

The Annual Meeting promises to be a productive, informative and important meeting for all of the MCBW membership as we work together to address the challenges we face, especially those brought on by the state budget deficit. The agenda includes a Board and staff update, discussion of what members need from MCBW, credentialing of MCBW voting members, a facilitated strategic planning session, discussion and voting on the 2004 legislative agenda, and voting of new Board members.

To encourage voting members traveling outside the metro area to attend, MCBW will be offering scholarships of \$100.00 per program to be used towards travel and hotel expenses. To receive a scholarship, please complete and check the scholarship box on the registration form, which can be found at the MCBW web site at [www.mcbw.org](http://www.mcbw.org). **All registrations must be received by Monday, September 15<sup>th</sup>.** Once your registration has been received, we will mail you an Annual Meeting informational packet containing by-laws, membership list, current Board of Directors

and the slate of new board members recommended by the Board of Directors Nomination Committee for vote by the voting membership.

**Voting Members:** Please be sure you are current on your membership dues. **All dues must be current on or before October 3 in order to vote at the annual meeting.** For more information, please call Danielle at MCBW at (651) 646-6177.

**Hotel Information:** MCBW has a small block of rooms reserved at various hotels for the Annual Meeting and Silver Jubilee event. All of the rooms are set up for you to make individual reservations and payment. **Please make your reservations ASAP.** St. Paul hotels will be in high demand that weekend due to the Twin Cities Marathon and the National Diamond Karate Tournament.

The Board of Directors looks forward to having you join us both for the Annual Meeting and the Silver Jubilee. If you have any additional questions please contact me at (800) 903-0111, extension 1, or the staff at the Coalition at (651) 646-6177.

## Update from the Associate Director

*Delrita Rudnitski, Associate Director*

MCBW has had a busy spring and summer. Since the printing of the last newsletter, staff at MCBW participated in the Meeting Victims' Needs Post-Conviction Study Group, convened by staff from the Minnesota Department of Corrections and the Minnesota Center for Crime. The study group met six times from January to June of 2003. Thirty-two people participated in the Study Group meetings including crime victims, staff from county-based victim services, community-based victim advocacy groups, the Department of Corrections, a community corrections probation agent, MCCVS, and the University of Minnesota Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking.

Due to budget constraints for agencies across the state, recommendations were divided into immediate recommendations that required little or no additional funding and long-term recommendations for ideal processes to meet victims' needs. The report is available on-line at:

<http://www.clarityfacilitation.com/postconviction>.

MCBW has also been engaged in the planning of the Inaugural Conference of the Sheila Wellstone Institute. For more info, see Connie Lewis' article on page 9. This conference will be the first event sponsored by the Institute to honor Sheila Wellstone's memory and her dedicated work on domestic violence issues.

The Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization

Enforcement Grant has come to its final stage with the ending of the fiscal year. One of the resources from this grant was the creation of a manual titled: *Promising Practices for Battered Women's Programs: Responding to the Dual Issues of Battering and Child Abuse*. This manual will be available for programs to purchase in the near future.

MCBW is working on, along with a variety of other state coalitions, is a reference guide to state and federal law for the advocates and service providers who might encounter women interested in gun prohibitions. It is a guide to the law and the process and will include best practices and models from jurisdictions around the country.

Of course the best news of the summer has been Cyndi Cook's appointment as the new Executive Director at MCBW. Under her leadership and guidance, I am confident that MCBW will pursue many more endeavors to improve the safety and resources available for battered women and their children in the coming year.

Remember to mark your calendars for MCBW's 25th Anniversary Celebration on October 3, 2003 as we gather together to remember our accomplishments, celebrate our collective efforts, and renew our commitment to carry on this important work to end violence against women and their children.

## Region IV Council on Domestic Violence Changes Its Name

*Dianne Long, Executive Director of Someplace Safe*

Beginning on August 1, 2003, the staff of the Region IV Council on Domestic Violence began answering the phones using our new name—SOMEPLACE SAFE.

Region IV Council on Domestic Violence has been our name since 1978. Since that time, we have become larger than Region IV with the addition of Big Stone County and we have added additional services: sexual assault, abused children, monitored exchanges and supervised visitations.

Until 1990 we were providing all victim services out of the shelter in Fergus Falls. Today we have advocacy services in Glenwood, Morris, Wheaton, Ortonville, Breckenridge, Perham and Fergus Falls, and school-based programs in area schools plus two Par-

enting Time Centers.

We are excited about our name change and feel Someplace Safe is a great fit for all our programs. As a survivor recently said, "That's what I needed and you provided, Someplace Safe".

### **Someplace Safe**

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**Fergus Falls, MN**

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**Crisis line: (800) 974-3359**

**Fax: (218) 739-9305**

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If you have any questions or comments about the MCBW newsletter, or wish to contribute (we are always looking for reports from our member programs), please call the newsletter editor, Danielle Kluz, at (651) 646-6177 or email her at [dkluz@mcbw.org](mailto:dkluz@mcbw.org).

I want to help stop violence against women by supporting the mission of MCBW. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution:

\$25     \$50     \$100     \$250     \$500     Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return the completed form with contribution to the address above.  
We thank you for your generous support of MCBW.