

Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

The 2003 Violence Against Women Action Day

Danielle Kluz, Communications Coordinator

We gathered from all over the state in the Capitol Rotunda: advocates, survivors, legislators, and supporters. There were hundreds of us from the battered women's and sexual assault movements at the Minnesota Capitol—to urge the Legislature to preserve our state's sexual assault and domestic violence programs.

Co-sponsored by the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women, the Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition and the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, the 2003 Violence Against Women Action Day Rally was a great success. This was evident from the enthusiastic support of the large crowd at the rally.

The day before the rally, more than 100 representatives of MCBW, MCASA, and MIWSAC

member programs met for a legislative training at the Kelly Inn. The focus was the legislative agendas of the three coalitions, strategies for lobbying, and forming grassroots organizing networks. After the training, many members went to the Capitol to meet with their legislators.

Because the Violence Against Women Action Day Rally was held on Valentine's Day, the theme was *Don't Break Our Hearts: End Violence Against Women*. Each legislator in the state was given a special theme button with a heart on it and a bag of Valentine's hearts with special messages on each heart such as: "Expect Respect," "End Violence," and "Don't Cut Funds."

(Continued on page 2)

From the Director's Office

Delrita Rudnitski, Interim Executive Director

Despite the fact that we are facing one of the most serious budget deficits in Minnesota history and are at war with Iraq, I would like to share with all of you the many good things that are happening in the domestic violence movement.

In the Nation:

A great victory for battered mothers has been won in New York. "... A suit brought by battered mothers against New York City's Administration for Children's Services, claiming the agency routinely violated the constitutional rights of

battered women and their children by removing battered mothers' children simply because the mothers were battered by their partners. According to New York Federal District Court Judge Jack B. Weinstein, the government may not penalize a battered mother (who is otherwise fit) by separating her from her children. So reads the judge's draft injunction in *Nicholson v. Scopetta*." —Andrew Klein. To see the full report go to the *National Bulletin on Domestic*

(Continued on page 7)

Winter/Spring 2003

Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women Staff:

Sandy Davidson
Rural Grant Supervisor

Danielle Kluz
Communications
Coordinator

Lisa Radzak
Legislative and Public
Policy Coordinator

Delrita Rudnitski
Interim Executive
Director

Delia Ruiz
Financial and Administrative
Coordinator

Lonna Stevens
Program Coordinator

Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

1821 University Ave. W.,
Suite S-112
St. Paul, MN 55104

Voice/TDD: 651-644-6177
Toll-free: 800-289-6177

Fax: 651-646-1527

Crisis: 651-646-0994

Email: mcbw@mcbw.org

Web: www.mcbw.org

2003 Violence Against Women Action Day

(continued from page 1)

The Violence Against Women Action Day Rally at the Capitol began with a message of support from House Minority Leader Matt Entenza (D—St. Paul). He stated, “I will be with you to make sure you have the funding that you need.” Rep. Entenza also spoke of his personal history with domestic violence for the first time. “I came from a family like that. I had an alcoholic father. We had a very violent home for a period of time.” He added, “These problems are not the fault of children. They are not the fault of the people who are abused and we need to speak out about that.”

Other featured speakers at the rally were Senator Jane Ranum (D—Minneapolis), who urged those present to lobby their legislators on domestic violence and sexual assault concerns; Rep. Mary Liz Holberg (R—Lakeville), who has been a strong advocate of sexual assault issues; Connie Moore of the Domestic Violence Legislative Alliance; and Belinda Martinez of the Survivors Network of Minnesota, an organization advocating for survivors of sexual abuse, particularly those abused by clergy. Nicole Matthews of the Minnesota Indian Women’s Sexual Assault Coalition spoke about the immense worth of sexual assault and domestic violence programs: “We save lives and we save money [at our programs] and our women and children are important.” Sandy Davidson of Praxis International closed the rally with an impassioned plea for those present to advocate and lobby for all women, children, and oppressed peoples in our society. Jude Foster of the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault did an excellent job hosting the rally. In addition to these speakers, many Representatives and Senators attended the rally to demonstrate their support for Minnesota’s battered women’s and sexual assault programs.

Delrita Rudnitski, Interim Executive Director of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women, presented Connie Lewis, the former director of Senator Paul Wellstone’s Minnesota office and a close friend of the Wellstones, with a plaque from all three coalitions honoring Sheila and Paul Wellstone for their exemplary contributions to the domestic violence and sexual assault movements. Lewis spoke of the Wellstones’ legislative and personal work to end violence against women and encouraged the crowd to carry on the legacy left by the Sheila and Paul Wellstone. This was the first Violence Against Women Action Day in many years where Sheila Wellstone was not a speaker. Her energy and enthusiasm were deeply missed.

The most sobering moment of the rally was the memorial to the 21 women and 14 children who were mur-

dered in 2002 in Minnesota. Lonna Stevens, MCBW Program Coordinator and Danielle Kluz, MCBW Communications Coordinator, read the names of the victims while Sharon Day of the Neecomis Women’s Singers accompanied them on the drum. Individuals from MCBW member programs laid one rose for each victim on a table in front of the podium in remem-



brance of each life lost to domestic violence.

Judy Pearson, Executive Director of Pearl Battered Women’s Resource Center in Milaca, lays a rose in memory of a femicide victim.

The 2002 Clothesline Project, t-shirts specially decorated to remember each woman and child in the state murdered as a result of domestic violence, was unveiled in the Great Hall of the Capitol. Several relatives and friends of 2002 victims came to see the display and were moved by the memorials to their loved ones. A Capitol security guard was spotted with tears running down his face as he looked at the shirts.

The 2003 Violence Against Women Action Day was a

Images from the 2003 Violence Against Women Action Day

All photographs by Paula Keller, Copyright 2003



An audience member reflects



Rep. Matt Entenza



The 2002 Clothesline Project was unveiled



Connie Lewis (L) and Delrita Rudnitski share an emotional moment at the rally



Men working to end violence against women



Nicole Matthews of MIWSAC



A t-shirt remembering Susan Radil of Alexandria, a 2002 Femicide victim



Rep. Mary Liz Holberg

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and Marriage Promotion: Federal Update

Lonna Stevens, Program Coordinator

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is represented on National Network to End Domestic Violence's welfare advocates' policy email discussion list concerning TANF or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and the current policies regarding marriage promotion. As you may know, there has been a productive history regarding domestic violence advocates and TANF and/or welfare reform. This work has included lobbying for the Family Violence Option for battered women regarding the safety and security for battered women and their children receiving welfare.

TANF's passage in 1996 (P.L. 104-193) led to the privatization of welfare in America. Up to 1996, the federal government was at the helm of welfare. Since last federal session there has been discussion regarding the reauthorization of the current TANF law.

House Version

One of the major recommendations from the House version of the current TANF reauthorization bill is from Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, who supports increasing the 30-hour work week requirement to 40 hours per week and lowering child-care funding for families receiving TANF. According to Thompson, this plan would also include \$200 million in annual grants to support "healthy families and healthy marriages." H.R. 4, the House's welfare bill, passed in January 2003, includes several marriage provisions. Section 103 (b) (2)(B) outlines the types of programs and activities this funding would support: (these are not all of the provisions, but I highlighted a few of them)

- (i) Public advertising campaigns on the value of marriage and the skills needed to increase marital stability.
- (ii) Marriage education, marriage skills, and relationship skills programs, that may include parenting skills, financial management, conflict resolution, and job and career advancement for non-married pregnant women and non-married expectant fathers.
- (iii) Marriage enhancement and marriage skills training programs for married couples.
- (iv) Marriage mentoring programs which use married couples as role models and mentors in at-risk communities

H.R. 4 (sec. 115) also authorizes an additional \$100 million a year for new TANF project for "Healthy Marriage Promotion Activities." Again, these are not

all of the provisions but I highlighted one of the current provisions of concern to the domestic violence movement:

- (A) Encouraging and supporting healthy marriages and married fatherhood through such activities as premarital education, including the use of premarital inventories, marriage preparation programs, skills-based marriage education programs, marital therapy, couples counseling, relationship skills enhancement programs, including those designed to reduce child abuse and domestic violence, and dissemination of information about the benefits of marriage for both parents and children.

HR 4 also mandates that all states establish marriage promotion programs. The House bill includes language that in order to participate in TANF, states must, "Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent healthy families."

The Heritage Foundation is a strong proponent of government-assisted marriage promotion and just recently completed a report by Patrick Fagan entitled, *Marriage: The Safest Place for Women and Children* (www.heritage.org/Research/Family/BG1535.cfm). NNEDV has sources that state the Heritage Foundation believes that domestic violence is a "red herring" issue and are proactively trying to get it off the table during the debate on federal government support of marriage promotion activities. The Heritage Foundation also released a report in January titled, *Single Mothers are Much More Likely to Become Victims of Domestic Violence* (<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Features/Marriage/index.cfm>). These studies are being cited by pro-marriage promotion editorials and commentaries by conservative columnists.

What's Next?

We are contacting Senators and gearing up for the Senate version of TANF reauthorization. We are asking that they support the safety and self-sufficiency of TANF clients by implementing standards and procedures to address domestic violence and sexual assault. This would outline specific state requirements regarding domestic violence and sexual assault victims.

We recognize that marriage promotion initiatives outlined in HF 4 intrude on fundamentally private

(Continued on page 5)

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and Marriage Promotion

(continued from page 4)

decisions, and will place women with abusive partners or ex-partners at increased risk. There has not been a full evaluation of the marriage promotion programs and there is not sufficient evidence to support that marriage will reduce poverty or respond adequately to issues of domestic violence, sexual assault, or child abuse.

We are urging to state Senators to: a) Enhance the Family Violence Option; b) Oppose marriage promotion proposals; c) Allow states to count services to victims of domestic violence and sexual violence as work activity; and d) Support education and training for TANF recipients.

A letter from Kiersten Stewart of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, Lynn Rosenthal of the Na-

tional Network to End Domestic Violence, and Judy Fulcher of the National Coalition to End Domestic Violence went to all Senators on March 17th, 2003 on behalf of forty-eight states and territorial domestic violence coalitions, 2,000 local domestic violence programs, service providers, health care professionals, community based organizations, and individual advocates.

I will keep you updated on the progress of the Senate version and the recommendations from the policy committees. It is imperative that we, as the state of Minnesota, be aware of federal legislation that will have an impact on us on a state level and may be detrimental to the safety and self-sufficiency of the women we serve.

MCBW Staff and Board Propose New Mission and Vision Statements

On March 13 and 14, MCBW staff members and the Board of Directors met to begin to plan strategically for the next year. One of the tasks set before us was to clarify the Coalition's mission statement and to create a vision statement.

The proposed MCBW mission statement:

The mission of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is to provide a voice for battered women and member programs; challenge systems and institutions so they respond more effectively to the needs of battered women and their children; promote social change; and support, educate, and connect member

programs.

The proposed MCBW vision statement:

The vision of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is to end violence against women and their children and to achieve social justice for all.

The 2003 Staff/Board Retreat was very productive and we are excited about how much of last year's strategic plan we accomplished and the goals we are currently working on setting for the following year. More information on the MCBW strategic plan will go out to member programs soon.

Join Us for the MCBW Silver Jubilee!

MCBW will celebrate its 25th Anniversary on **Friday, October 3, 2003**. 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!

The MCBW Silver Jubilee will feature dinner, a musical performance by Ann Reed, a silent auction, and much more! It will be located at the University Club's Downtown Clubhouse in St. Paul. To make the event even more convenient for our member programs, we will be hosting the Annual Membership Meeting the same day.

More information coming SOON!

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women Board of Directors

Officers:

Board Chair—Sharonna Lee

Battered Women's Justice Project, Minneapolis

Board Vice Chair—Cyndi Anderson

Lakes Crisis Center, Detroit Lakes

Treasurer—Nita Quinn

Home Free, Plymouth

Secretary—Susan Utech

Safe Haven Shelter for Battered Women, Duluth

Members:

Edwina Baskin-Bay, M.D.

Mayo Clinic, Rochester

Pat Dunlavy

Range Women's Advocates, Virginia

Deborah Galuk

Human RX, Eden Prairie

Denise Gamache

Battered Women's Justice Project, Minneapolis

Ruth Hubbling

Southwest Crisis Center, Worthington

Nicole Matthews

Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition,

Minneapolis

Vickie McCollum

Region IV Council on Domestic Violence, Perham

Bruce Reeves

Violence Intervention Project, Thief River Falls

Marilyn Rossman

Advocates for Family Peace, Grand Rapids

Grace Vigilante

Korean Family Crisis Advocacy Program,

Minneapolis

The Board and Staff of MCBW would like to thank Deborah Nathanson, formerly of Communications Services for the Deaf MN Domestic Abuse Program, for her many contributions to the Board of Directors. We wish Deborah the best of luck in her new position in Denver, Colorado. She will be missed!

Thank you to our WONDERFUL donors!

Donors to the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women from September 2002 to March 2003:

Accord Corporation

Kari Anderson

Winnie Anderson

Nancy and Kevin Asmussen

Sharyn and Paul Bramscher

Otto Bremer Foundation

Centennial United Methodist Church

Olivia I. Dodge

BL Dunford-Jackson

Eleanor Fenton

Community Solutions Fund

Arianna Gardiner

Greater Twin Cities United Way

Grotto Foundation

Lydia Frazier

Shawn Giese

Mandy Grunwald and Matt Cooper

Family Violence Department of Reno, NV

Margaret H. and James E. Kelley Foundation

Elizabeth Harrington

Judith Harrington

Sharon Hogenson

Susan Hora

Cynthia and Ronald Huber

International Service Agencies

Helen and Paul Klapprich

Kelly Knutson

Kathleen and Tom Malaske

Harriette Manis

McKnight Foundation

Georgette Micheletti

Minnesota School Employees Association

Minnesota State Bar Foundation

Minnesota Women Lawyers

Jennifer Moeller and the Employees of

HealthPartners

Julie S. Morton

Stephanie Murphy

Kristen Olsen

Parents of Murdered Children

Ernesto Perezalonoso

John H. Peter

Rose Quirk

Jane Revere

Christine Robinson

H. David Rosner

Sherri Shutheis

Silicon Graphics

St. Paul Foundation

Kathleen Stuart

Walker Art Center

(Continued on page 7)

From the Director's Office

(continued from page 1)

Violence Prevention at
www.dvponline.com.

Orders for Protection:

Please be aware that one important change has been made in responding more effectively to domestic violence in the military families of our nation. Congressman Robin Hayes of Fayetteville (Fort Bragg) North Carolina passed the Armed Forces Domestic Security Act (HB 5590) which closed a loophole previously prohibiting enforcement of civilian orders on military land. This legislation passed in record time—it got through the House on October 15, the Senate on November 14, and with the President's signature on December 2nd of 2002, it took immediate effect. Please spread the word to local judges.

In Minnesota:

The Sheila Wellstone Institute was formed through a group of individuals that began meeting in November of 2002. This group of individuals was contemplating ways to keep Sheila's work and memory alive. We were thrilled to learn that the Sheila Wellstone Institute would be included as a link on the Wellstone Action website. On March 17, 2003, Wellstone Action launched their official website with a major presence for the Sheila Wellstone Institute. Please take a look and get involved at: www.wellstone.org.

At MCBW:

There have been a whirlwind of ongoing organizing activities here in response to the impending budget crisis. MCBW, along with the Interagency Task Force on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention,

recommended to the Legislature that there be no further budget reductions in the area of crime victim services. With the assistance of our most recent employee, Lisa Radzak, Legislative and Public Policy Coordinator, MCBW has kept member programs informed of the state's budget forecasts in respect to domestic violence funds, organized legislative meetings with recently elected members of the House and Senate, and arranged for MCBW member programs and survivors of domestic violence to testify at legislative hearings on the budget. Danielle Kluz, Communications Coordinator, and Lonna Stevens, Program Coordinator, have been working hard at organizing and communicating with our member programs and other domestic violence programs to make sure that the Legislature will not forget the needs of battered women and their children this session.

Member programs:

I appreciate all the work that you do to respond to the needs of victims/survivors of domestic violence. Thank you for meeting with elected officials from county boards and city council members to legislators about the impact of funding cuts for battered women. Thank you for writing letters, emails, making phone calls, and for your collective voices on behalf of battered women and their children. Please keep up the work as the 2003 legislative session continues. We here at MCBW will continue our work to improve upon the support and assistance we provide to all of you. May peace prevail in our homes and in the world.

Thank you to our WONDERFUL donors!

(continued from page 6)

Deborah Warhol
Jeanne and Melvin Weber
Maryann and Paul Wiborg
Lorilee Williams Kippley
Lynelle Wood
Women's Foundation of Minnesota
Priscilla Zeller

Many of these donations to the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women were made in the name of Sheila and Paul Wellstone and also in memory of loved ones of the donors. Please forgive us if we have missed any names on this list.

We thank each and every individual donor, donor group, and foundation for their generosity. Donors allow us at MCBW to work to end battering against women and their children, and to advocate for our more than 90 member programs statewide.

If you are interested in donating to the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women, please call Danielle at (651) 646-6177 or go to our web page at www.mcbw.org for more information and an online giving option that makes giving MCBW a tax-deductible donation as easy as sending an email.

Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

1821 University Avenue West
Suite S-112
St. Paul, MN 55104

Voice/TDD: (651) 646-6177 or
(800) 289-6177
Crisis Line: (651) 646-0994
Fax: (651) 646-1527
Email: mcbw@mcbw.org
Web: www.mcbw.org



Community
Solutions fund™



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.

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.