



Alive & ALERT *alive*

Alternatives to Living In Violent Environments

SPRING 2010

Helping Clients Stay Safe and Self-Sufficient

Special points of interest:

- *More than 40 families were adopted through the Adopt-A-Family efforts this past holiday season.*
- *Spring fundraisers will be happening in St. Louis and Washington.*
- *Legal Advocacy program assists clients using the court system.*



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To those of us who work with domestic violence victims every day, it is not surprising that domestic violence and economic distress often go hand-in-hand. Victims with little or no income lack the types of resources that help them meet their basic needs and maintain self-sufficiency. This lack generates a risk that can further compromise the victims' safety, so it is critical that agencies like ALIVE recognize this risk and determine victims' needs in order to best assist them. ALIVE's annual Adopt-A-Family program is designed to address these needs and alleviate some of the stress families feel specifi-

cally around the holidays.

Participants of the program are adopted by ALIVE donors and provided with family needs and wants designated by clients on their "Wish Lists." During the 2009 holiday season, ALIVE's generous donors adopted more than 40 families, providing mothers and their children with an abundance of gifts. As a result, the Adopt-A-Family program demonstrated exceptional results for several participating families.

Much of the feedback ALIVE has received from its adopted families is incredibly positive and heartwarming. Within a

thank you letter addressed to ALIVE's donors, one client stated, "The gift cards to Schnucks were so helpful to buy groceries ... when cash was so tight. It warms my heart that the community is so generous."

ALIVE has received several more letters and verbal "thank you" from clients, illustrating the great impact this program had on their lives. ALIVE's staff would also like to thank its Adopt-A-Family donors and volunteers for their time, generous resources and desire to assist families in need. Here's to hoping 2010 is even better!

Celebrate Spring At ALIVE's Wine Tasting

As winter skies begin to fade and spring touches the air, excitement builds around ALIVE as the time for our Annual Wine Tasting and Silent Auction arrives. Last year we set a record with our most successful Tasting to date. More than 160 guests were in attendance and we raised \$16,000 for ALIVE's programs.

With more than 45 wines available for tasting and a buffet of delicious appetizers from Provisions, along with a variety of auction items, this event is a wonderful way to meet many of ALIVE's staff and Board members and other supporters. If you are looking for a way to introduce friends to ALIVE's mission, invite them to the Wine Tasting and make your reservations today.

Wine Tasting and Silent Auction

March 19, 2010

7 to 9 p.m.

The Wine and Cheese Place
7435 Forsyth in Clayton

\$50 per person

Call (314) 993-7080 or visit
www.alivestl.org to RSVP.

Hotcakes Make Warm a Cold Morning

Despite the cold and some snow, ALIVE's 3rd Annual Breakfast at Applebee's in Washington, Missouri, was a success. Nearly 100 people joined us for a breakfast of pancakes, sausage, eggs, juice and coffee.

Many thanks to our celebrity waiters who kept everyone's plates filled: Attorney at Law Samantha Wacker; Franklin County Prosecutor Bob Parks; Washington Police Captain Ed Menefee; Franklin County Sheriff Gary Toelke; Franklin County Circuit Clerk Bill Miller; Mayor of Washington Richard Stratmann; State Rep-

resentative for the 98th District Brian Nieves; Franklin County Commissioner for the 2nd District Ann Schroeder; and Chief of Police in St. Clair Bill Hammack.

We also extend our gratitude to the team of volunteers from the Washington, Mo., Kohl's Department Store, who helped bus tables and greet guests. Along with the Applebee's staff, everyone involved graciously gave up a Saturday morning and helped ALIVE raise more than \$1,500 to benefit ALIVE's programs in Franklin County.

Project XOXO

ALIVE wishes to extend its gratitude to the members of the St. Louis Bar Association who participated in the Project XOXO event, especially the Simon Law Firm and the Campbell Law Firm. The event, held the evening before Valentine's Day in the rotunda of the Old Courthouse in Downtown St. Louis, raised funds to benefit ten local nonprofits, including ALIVE, that assist clients in crisis situations. The charities selected include several that clients of the attorneys have used in the past, highlighting the partnerships necessary to truly help victims during their times of need.

Inaugural Franklin County Fashion Show Set For April 23rd

New York Fashion Week may be long gone by April 23rd, but you can still get into the spirit by joining ALIVE for its first ever Fashion Show to be held at the Presbyterian Church of Washington, Missouri.

When the Franklin County Advisory Committee was looking for a new event this spring, everyone became excited at the thought of a fashion show. Under the leadership of Event Chair Dr. Jennifer Stearnes and Advisory Committee Chair Jacque Ward,

the committee has worked hard to create an event for the whole family.

KPLW personality Diane Jones will serve as the Master of Ceremonies and several friends of ALIVE will model women's, men's, and children's spring and summer fashions from Kohl's Department Stores. The evening will also feature a silent auction, a variety of passed hors d'oeuvres, and wine, beer, and soft drinks. Reservations are required and the cost is \$40 if made before April 1, 2010.

First Ever Fashion Show

**Friday, April 23, 2010
7 to 9 p.m.**

**Presbyterian Church of Washington
4834 South Point Road
Washington, MO**

**\$40 per person before April 1
\$45 per person after April 1**

**Call (636) 583-9863 or visit
www.alivestl.org to RSVP**

More Spring Events Help Raise Awareness, Funds for ALIVE

Successful networking is the goal of many business people these days, and ALIVE is going to help them accomplish their goals. On Thursday, April 8, 2010, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m., at the conference rooms of Harrah's Hotel and Casino, ALIVE will host a **Speed Networking** event called Networking With a Heart. Similar to the speed dating phenomenon that was popular a few years ago, Speed Networking

will allow a roomful of people to meet one another individually for a few minutes to make new connections that might be helpful in the near future.

The evening's \$40 admission will include hors d'oeuvres, open bar and a list of all attendees' and their contact information. It should be a great way to introduce new people to ALIVE while meeting your business goals!

Thanks to volunteer Mike DeGeorge, who is organizing a **rummage sale and a silent auction** to benefit ALIVE from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 17, 2010. If you can help by donating items to the sale, please e-mail alivestl@sbcglobal.net. And if you'd rather shop, visit the upcoming events page at www.alivestl.org to view a flyer with all the sale's details!

Court Advocates Help Clients Navigate the Legal System

“I need to file an Order of Protection, but I have no idea how to do that.”

“I want to hold him accountable, but I am terrified of having to see him in court.”

“I don’t really understand what to expect when I go to court, but I can’t afford to call my attorney every time I have a question.”

These are just some of the thoughts that often run through the minds of victims of domestic abuse when they attempt to utilize the court system to hold their abusers accountable.

The court system can be intimidating for many people, and this is especially true for victims dealing with the trauma of domestic abuse. Between trying to make sense of the procedures and legal language and having to face an abuser in court, many victims are overwhelmed by the idea of trying to pursue a legal case against their abuser.

Getting an Order of Protection, often a first step victims take, can be a complicated ordeal. When a victim writes her statement to file for the Order, she brings to mind the violence, and she must describe it in as precise of detail as possible to make sure the evidence is strong enough to persuade a judge to approve the Order.

ALIVE’s court advocates can help clients make sense of the legal process by accompanying them to court to file Orders of Protection or assist them during hearings, divorce proceedings, or custody issues.

Court advocates are not attorneys, but they play a critical role in helping clients hold their abusers accountable. ALIVE provides the emotional support victims need when they have to face a serious issue like this one. One former client, “J”, says that having her court advocate with her in the courtroom is what gave her the strength to file assault charges against her abusive former husband.

Most importantly, because ALIVE’s services are provided at no cost to clients, court advocates can answer many questions about what to expect when she goes to court without the client needing to contact an attorney and increasing her legal bills unnecessarily. Considering the length of time some court cases can take, having resources like ALIVE are extremely important in helping clients endure lengthy court battles. For example, at one point, “J” discovered that her daughters were being physically abused during their weekend visits with their father. She picked them up

and found that one girl had bruises and marks on her face and torso. Since the evidence was so clear, “J” had little difficulty getting a court to agree that she no longer had to take the girls for weekend visits. However, that moment was just the start of what turned out to be a four-and-a-half year court battle to get her ex-husband’s parental rights relinquished. She was ultimately successful, but it was a long struggle made easier thanks to ALIVE.

GOLF TOURNAMENT DATE SET

Thursday, June 24, 2010

**ALIVE’s 14th Annual
Golf Tournament and
Dinner Auction**

**Norman K. Probst Golf
Course in Forest Park**

**Celebrate a belated Father’s
Day by showing support for
families and joining us at
ALIVE’s 14th Annual Golf
Tournament. Note new month
and new day of the week!**

ALIVE Grows With Three New Staff Members

Betty Crawford, M.S.W., comes to us as a part-time children’s counselor in ALIVE’s Franklin County office. Her position was created thanks to the Putting Kids First grant that ALIVE received last fall. She will work with clients referred by the Juvenile Office and Children’s Division. Betty lives on a farm near Hermann, Mo., with her daughter, two dogs, and four cats. She is also a singer, songwriter, and author.

Marissa McCormick-Gunther is ALIVE’s newest Crisis Intervention Specialist. A former intern, Marissa comes with extensive knowledge about ALIVE and our clients. She works “after hours” answering crisis calls and conducting intakes in the evenings and on weekends. Marissa holds a Bachelor’s degree in psychology and is completing her Master’s in social work at Washington University.

Liz Downey, another former ALIVE intern, has taken over the position of “Nights of Safety Coordinator.” Liz holds a Bachelor’s degree in social work and is completing her Master’s in Social Work at St. Louis University. She has previous experience doing crisis intervention with victims of natural disasters individuals with drug addictions, and working with homeless expectant mothers.



P.O. Box 11201 • St. Louis, MO 63105

In St. Louis contact:

(314) 993-7080 OFFICE • (314) 567-5629 FAX

(314) 993-2777 24-HOUR CRISIS LINE

alivestl@sbcglobal.net • www.alivestl.org

In Franklin County contact:

(636) 583-9863 OFFICE • (636) 583-6648 FAX

(636) 583-5700 or (800) 941-9144 24-HOUR CRISIS LINE

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April 15th Coming Soon!

If you made gifts totaling \$100 or more to ALIVE in 2009, your gifts might be eligible for Domestic Violence Shelter Tax Credits from the Missouri Department of Social Services. These credits are equal to 50% of the amount of your donation. The amount of the credit cannot exceed your state tax liability for the taxable year, but it can be carried over for up to four successive years.

For example, for an individual filing an itemized return, the out-of-pocket cost for a \$1,000 donation is \$170 based on the following:

- 50 percent tax credit of \$500
- Federal charitable tax deduction of \$280 (based on a 28 percent federal tax bracket)
- Missouri State charitable tax deduction of \$50 (based on a 5 percent state tax bracket)

For a \$5,000 donation, the out-of-pocket cost is \$850.

For a \$1,000, the out-of-pocket cost is \$170.

For a \$500 donation, the out-of-pocket cost is \$85.

For a \$100 donation, the out-of-pocket cost is \$17.

ALIVE Staff

Erin Ercoline, *Executive Director*

Regina Przetak, *Development Director*

Jennifer Gadsby, *Adult Counseling Coordinator*

Jeanne Oberdan, *Children's Counseling Coordinator*

Susannah Altesman, *Crisis Intervention Specialist/Court Advocate*

Claudia DeRiemer, *Adult Counselor*

Liz Downey, *Nights of Safety Coordinator*

Marissa McCormick, *Crisis Intervention/Outreach Coordinator*

Susan St. Leger, *Adult Counselor*

Cathy Covington, *Crisis Intervention Specialist/Court Advocate*

Elizabeth "Betty" Crawford, *Children's Counselor*

Roselyne Hazard, *Adult and Children's Counselor*

Rachel Visocan, *Adult Counselor/Crisis Intervention Specialist*

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