

Womenspace: A place to find shelter from, confront violence

By Alice Wheeler
Emerald Managing Editor

Domestic violence is a regularly occurring crime in Lane County, so regular in fact that over 500 women and children sought shelter at Womenspace, a local shelter for victims of domestic violence.

"We provide shelter for battered women and their children, and try to empower those women to make decisions on their own," said Pearl Wolfe, volunteer community education coordinator and graduate student in sociology.

Womenspace runs a confidential, temporary shelter house in Eugene, 24-hour crisis hotline counseling, a transition house, which has inexpensive apartments for women who are trying to remove themselves from abusive situations and community support groups held in both Eugene and Springfield.

Volunteers make up 75 percent of the staff at Womenspace, which means the shelter needs an average of 75 to 100 volunteers to function properly. Wolfe's job is to recruit and screen potential volunteers before and during training sessions.

People volunteer to work at the shelter for a number of rea-

sons, Wolfe said. Some have been in abusive relationships and working at the shelter is a way of working through and sharing their past experiences to the benefit of themselves and others, she said.

Not just anyone can become a volunteer at Womenspace. It takes a certain kind of devotion, which includes participating in two Saturday training sessions. Training includes an overview of domestic violence, a description of Womenspace services, an explanation of the cycle of violence, men who batter and women who are battered, skill training and role playing.

The training sessions weed out people who are not prepared to deal with the variety of situations volunteers at Womenspace often have to face, Wolfe said.

"Victims cross all social classes. They are women who have been through a lot emotionally and physically. They are usually stronger than people think they are," Wolfe said. "The children really vary. With some you can really see it, they are really needy. Others take on the parents role."

Being a volunteer at Womenspace has its advantages, Wolfe said. "You are able to work with women to stop the cycle of male violence.

It is really a social movement, the domestic violence movement and it feels good to be a part of that.

Womenspace needs volunteers to work in many of its services, such as its 24 hour crisis intervention hotline, residential program, social service advocacy, and children's workers, Wolfe said.

The first training session will be held on Saturday Oct. 7 and the second on Oct. 14. Additional training is provided once volunteers choose a specific area in which to work. People who would like volunteer information, contact Pearl Wolfe at 485-8232.

Womenspace began as a hotline in 1977, when three women who had been victims of domestic violence, started running a crisis line for abused women out of their home, Wolfe said.

Womenspace now handles over 6,000 calls a year on its 24-hour crisis line and houses over 500 women and children in the shelter. It is now a non-profit organization with funding from local, state and federal sources.

"I like to think that people who work for organizations like ours, want to make a contribution to their society," Wolfe said.

Sex hearings canceled

By Stephanie Holland
Emerald Reporter

Arraignment hearings were canceled this week for three people cited in Eugene on prostitution-related charges stemming from an alleged sexual research project.

Eugene Police Department officials cited the three two weeks ago when the Woods claimed to be conducting a nationwide sexual research project to evaluate "the sexual potential of the mature female," according to police reports.

Nancy Steffen Wood, 44, and Rodney Thorp Wood, 60 were scheduled to be in court Monday to face charges of prostitution and promoting prostitution, respectively. A University student was scheduled Thursday to face prostitution charges.

Both hearings were canceled; however the case is still under investigation.

Mr. Wood, an anesthesiologist at Southampton Hospital on Long Island, N.Y., was suspended from his job Monday, said Alex Sneddon, director of development and marketing for the hospital.

The University student, who was paid for having sex with Mrs. Wood as part of the reported research project, said his lawyer told him the charges probably will be dropped.

Eugenians to demonstrate in Washington for homeless

By Janis Joseph
Emerald Reporter

Fifteen people from the Eugene-Springfield area are in Washington D.C. to rally for affordable housing with 250,000 to 500,000 other demonstrators.

Housing Now!, a National Coalition for the Homeless project that promotes housing for average Americans, is sponsoring the demonstration on Saturday in the nation's capitol.

Local support for Housing Now! began last summer when Mitch Snyder, an advocate for the homeless, visited Eugene to encourage participation in Saturday's demonstration.

According to a recent Housing Now! report, millions of households pay between 35 and 60 percent of their income for rent. Since 1981, federal housing assistance to these households has been cut, while upper-income families have benefited from subsidies in the form of mortgage tax exemptions, the report said.

Demonstrators are encouraged to meet with their congressional representatives and urge them to support affordable housing legislation, the report said.

"Housing is one of the hottest issues coming around," said Norman Riddle, a homeless outreach worker for White Bird Clinic's Health Care for

the Homeless Project.

Riddle added that the rally will show homelessness is a nationwide problem across the nation and not just in certain places.

"This event, led by homeless men and women, will give hope to millions who sleep in our nation's parks and on steam grates," said Donna Brazile, Housing Now! national coordinator.

Housing Now! serves to bridge the gap for Americans who are finding it difficult, if not impossible to find decent and affordable housing.

Barry Zigas, national president of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, said the rally is a non-violent demonstration encouraging reform of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the restoration of budget funds for housing.

Housing Now! seeks support from people in every state. Lack of money kept more Oregonians from attending the rally, Riddle said.

"We're a long way from Washington D.C. A lot of people wanted to go that couldn't because we're so far away," Riddle said.

The 15 people that did go hope to show members of Congress it is in their interest to create more affordable housing in Eugene and nationwide, he said.


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HILLEL SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
YOM KIPPUR: Sun. October 8 (Tishri 9)
Eve: Meditation and Music 6:30 p.m.
Kol Nidre service 7:00 p.m.
Location: 1236 Kincaid, behind U of O Bookstore
Day: Monday, October 9 (Tishri 10)
Meditation and Music 9:30 a.m.
*Movement process with Joan 1:30 p.m.
*Nurturing compassion with Gary 2:30 p.m.
*Social Justice & Spirituality
Panel discussion 3:30 p.m.
Yizkor & Martyrology 5:00 p.m.
Neilah (closing) 6:00 p.m.
Break-the-fast at end
Location: Koimonia Interfaith Center at 14th and Kincaid (corner building)
SUNKKOT SERVICES IN SUKKAH
on Wed., October 13 (Tishri)
at 7 p.m. - at Hanan's
For further information, check at the Koimonia Center or at the Jewish Student Union office, EMU Suite 5, call 686-4366, or call Rabbi Sills at 686-0038.
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