

Locally, domestic violence reports sporadic

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

One partner in half the marriages in the United States will suffer from either physical or emotional abuse.

In the Sandy-Mt. Hood area authorities are reluctant to say just how many persons fall victim to domestic violence, but officials claim it is considerable.

Lt. Lonnie Ryan, public information officer with the Clackamas County sheriff's department, said that this information is in the files, "but is not retrievable."

"A few months down the road we will be computerized," said Ryan, "and we will have this information available at our fingertips. But our data base is not just to gather statistics. We are working towards establishing a multi-victim shelter facility in Clackamas County."

Ryan said that in the Sandy-Mt. Hood area, the problem isn't any greater or lesser than elsewhere in the county, or in the country for that matter. He estimates that one out of every two marriages or domestic living arrangements is marred by some type of abuse or violence.

Sergeant Dan Wolf of the Oregon State Police said that because the area is rural, the isolation can make assistance sporadic, and in most instances they never learn of the abuse.

Wolf said that in the past when an officer responded to the scene of domestic violence, it was often not clear who was the victim and who was the assailant.

Either party may have suffered from some sort of physical abuse and the law did not give the responding officer the right to remove the aggressor from the scene. As a result, the officer may have been called back to the scene, where the problem had magnified.

Victims rights advocates

may be critical of law enforcement officials for not doing their jobs. Law enforcement officials have countered that the law did not give them enough authority to respond properly.

They argue that it was often the victims themselves who would not sign a complaint against the abusing spouse.

And, if they wanted to proceed with any criminal action, they were too intimidated, and afraid of possible reprisals.

This past legislative session Senate Bill 355 was passed with the hope of correcting some of the problems of domestic violence.

Some law enforcement officials, although praising the new law, say it places a lot of responsibility on the responding officer, who may be working with a backup in a potentially dangerous situation.

Under the new bill the responding officer has to make an attempt to separate the assailant and the victim, even if it's only for a few hours, according to Wolf.

Each of the parties has to

be advised of their rights, and are given a card explaining them.

Unlike the old law, which only covered situations dealing with spouses, former spouses and live-ins, the new law has been expanded to include blood relatives or married relatives, and any adult family members.

Also, "sexist language" was changed.

Wolf said that the new law will attempt to protect everyone involved in the incident, including family members and the officer responding. Often, domestic violence causes law enforcement personnel to become victims themselves.

"The situation can change at any time," said Wolf. "Often the drama will change and the violence will be directed against the officer. We keep that very high in our memory."

Domestic violence cases can involve assaults by fist, feet, knife, gun or even motor vehicle, according to Wolf.

Some of these incidents end up in court as crimes of rape or sodomy,

manslaughter or attempted manslaughter or murder.

"This is why the removal of the aggressive party is essential," Wolf said.

"When you respond to a crime like domestic violence and can establish the offending party, you should remove that person from the scene, whether it's the husband, wife, boyfriend, or girlfriend," said Wolf.

"You may not put the person in jail, but you may write up a citation and make them go to a motel or to another person's home for the night."

Ryan said that SB 355 now mandates that the officer make an arrest if any assault of any degree has occurred. The officer would not have to be present during the act, nor could the victim prevent the arrest by refusing to testify or sign a complaint.

Wolf said that with the officer legally being able to remove the abuser immediately from the scene, the potential for further abuse after the officer leaves is prevented.

Under the old law, if the

victim refused to cooperate, for whatever reason, no arrest could be made.

The new law also allows, according to Ryan, the removal of the aggressor if the victim is in real fear of their life.

Under HB 355, domestic violence victims have a right to file a complaint against their attacker. In addition, they can file a petition in Circuit Court and request any of the following orders:

An order restraining the attacker from abusing one further, either physically or emotionally;

An order directing the attacker to leave one's residence within a specified period of time;

An order preventing an attacker from entering one's place of residence, place of employment or business, or school;

An order pertaining to custody of minor children and visitation rights, as well as payments for child care.

The law also allows the victim of domestic violence

to sue for any losses suffered as a result of the abuse. Typically, these losses range from medical and moving expenses, loss of wages, property

damages, or any other out-of-the-pocket expenses.

If the total claim is less than \$700, the victim may file in small claims court without the assistance of an

attorney. Ryan said that the new law not only covers those that are physically abused, but also those "battered emotionally."



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Slide show describes activities at Wy'east

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

A slide show featuring the new day lodge at Timberline is scheduled for Dec. 30, according to Tom Iraci, a visitor information specialist with the U.S. Forest Service.

Iraci said that the slide-tape program, titled, "Activities Around the Wy'east Lodge," will be held in the old ski deli at Timberline Lodge and will begin at 7:30 p.m. The slides will be accompanied by a sound track and narrative.

The presentation will show the audience what

types of recreational activities are available at the new lodge and the services it offers.

The new \$7 million dollar facility has 44,000 square feet and was not constructed to be a replacement to Timberline Lodge, but to complement it.

"The new lodge was built to relieve the congestion and overuse that Timberline was getting from the skiers," said Iraci. "Because it was receiving so much traffic from ski boots, it became a problem in maintaining and providing upkeep."

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