



# The Survivor



October 2021

www.thewomensctr.org

## The Women's Center

**Cathy McClanahan**

*Executive Director*

**Martha Shum**

*Assistant Director*

**Andrea Stephens**

*DV Program Coordinator*

**John Pfeifer**

*Development Specialist*

### 24 Hour Hotline

618-529-2324 or

800-334-2094

### TTY Numbers

866-979-6636 or 618-351-1706

### Main Location

Domestic Violence Shelter

Rape Crisis Services

Administrative Offices

610 S. Thompson Street

Carbondale, IL 62901

618-549-4807

FAX: 618-529-1802

### Marion Office

1111 Anker Drive

Marion, IL 62959

FAX: 618-993-3178

Rape Crisis Services

618-933-0803

Domestic Violence Program

618-997-0949

### Franklin County Office

Franklin County Courthouse

Benton, IL 62812

618-438-4118

FAX: 618-529-1802

### Saline County Office

Bonan Business Center

540 N. Commercial Dr. Suite 320

Harrisburg, IL 62946

618-294-8641

www.thewomensctr.org

www.facebook.com/thewomensctr

## "We just want to see them succeed"

Andrea Stephens has led the Domestic Violence arm of The Women's Center for five and one-half years and is continually amazed by the community support shown to the survivors of domestic violence throughout southern Illinois.

"People often tell me 'That must be difficult but so rewarding' and they're right," Stephens says. She is inspired by clients and shelter residents daily, saying "some of the people who have been hurt the most are the most positive."

She chuckles when she recalls some of the conversations that she's had with clients and says "to work in this field you really have to have this 'never in my life did I expect that' approach to each day."

There is a certain predictability to the patterns of domestic violence and the generational affect it has on the families of both abusers and their victims that could be discouraging to many, but not Stephens.

"When you remove your expectations from the relationship you have with a client it's harder to judge and easier to find joy in their accomplishments," Stephens said. "My main goal in leading this program is to always be positive and supportive."

And yet the patterns remain.

"Domestic violence doesn't change that much; it's not some evolving health crises," she said, but is encouraged by changes in who the organization cares for.

"There is now a deeper understanding of the trauma involved with domestic violence," she said, "and the inclusivity of who we serve reflects the understanding that domestic violence affects everyone." A year after Stephens started as Domestic Violence Program Coordinator, grant requirements changed, necessitating equal services to domestic violence clients who were men or did not identify as female.

Born and raised in Carlyle, Illinois, Stephens moved to the area to attend SIU where she received her degree in Social Work with a certificate in Drug & Alcohol Counseling. She worked for 16 years in drug and alcohol counseling; the last nine at a residential treatment facility for teenagers.



**Andrea Stephens**

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OCTOBER IS

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
AWARENESS MONTH**

## “We just want to see them succeed” ... from Page 1

When the treatment facility lost its state funding in 2015, she found herself without work for the first time since college. “I was one of those brought in to create the treatment program,” Stephens said, “it was my baby and I don’t think I could have left it.”

But as 2015 dragged on, Stephens had time to regain perspective on her career and says “I didn’t realize until I was away from it that I needed a change; I needed to be away from it.” She still remembers her Women’s Center hired date: January 9, 2016. “It was the last day of my unemployment benefit.”

She sees herself as more of a leader than manager or supervisor, saying “I am so lucky and blessed to have the staff that I do. There are so many who have devoted their life’s work here at The Women’s Center,” she says, “and that re-inspires me.”

“I defer to my staff in determining what is best for the clients they’re working with because I realize they often know far more about domestic violence and their clients than I do.” Stephens uses the word “celebrate” frequently during our 40-minute interview, and stresses how happy her DV staff members are when a client has success.

“The most joy I have in my job is seeing the excitement in a staff member as they watch a survivor they’re working with reach some accomplishment,” she said.

In speaking of the past 18 months of Covid-related adjustments, Stephens says “we’ve had to be continually creative

in how we deliver services,” noting a change to virtual meetings, telephone counseling and closed courthouses when those affected by domestic violence were seeking Orders of Protection.

But she again pointed to the motivation she receives from her staff members.

“I so appreciate my people who never batted an eye or complained,” she said, “they just masked up, slapped on their hand sanitizer and continued with the in-person counseling with those who preferred it.”

“Every time someone walks in the door of the shelter is a positive” Stephens says, “because it’s a decision they’ve made to live a day without violence.” In a job in which all satisfaction is experienced vicariously through staff and clients, Stephens says, “we just want to see them succeed.”

Stephens lives in Christopher with her husband Schuyler – an 18-year law enforcement veteran – and their two children. “Our son just started middle school and plays baseball and – for the first time – football. Our daughter is in third grade and enjoys cheer and gymnastics.

She relishes time spent with family and talks longingly about their backyard swimming pool. “I’d loved to have spent more time in the pool this summer,” she says, “but I’ve only seemed to find time to keep it clean.”

“Maybe next year.”

## 50 Years, 50 members

On November 3, 2022 The Women’s Center will commemorate their 50th Anniversary of helping survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Our goal is to have 50 members of our **Survivor’s Circle of Hope** annual giving group to celebrate with us next November.



Launched three years ago, the **Survivor’s Circle of Hope** is the recognition society that provides members with more frequent updates and invitations to special events and Open Houses at our four southern Illinois locations.

The **Survivor’s Circle** offers four annual giving levels, beginning with \$1,000 - \$2,499 and extending to donors who are able to donate \$10,000 or more.

**Survivor’s Circle of Hope** members understand and tangibly support the Women’s Center’s mission: For more information, please contact Development Specialist John Pfeifer at (618) 549-4807 x.228 or [wcds@thewomensctr.org](mailto:wcds@thewomensctr.org).

## Capital Campaign Continues

Since we launched "Saving Lives ... Building Hope" Phase II of our \$350,000 capital repair and renovation campaign in early 2018, much has been accomplished. With your generous support, we have replaced an antiquated security camera system, purchased two vehicles to transport clients, installed 16 new high-efficiency HVAC units and replaced an aging roof.

Later this month, an outdoor covered patio will be built on the north side of our shelter, offering residents a comfortable fresh air alternative and our staff a great 3-season space for group counseling and children's activities.

But there is still much to be done.



We still need new gutters and downspouts. Carpeted areas of our Rape Crises and administrative offices are worn and rapidly becoming a safety hazard. Just prior to carpet replacement, the entire interior of our Carbondale facility needs a fresh coat of paint. And most importantly, 1600 square feet of space designated for "future development" 16 years ago needs to be built out to provide shelter space, common area and counseling offices to serve male survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and abuse.

The Women's Center will turn 50 on November 3, 2022, and we'd love to have all of our repairs and renovations completed before that. And not just so everything looks great for the Anniversary Open House. No, we'd like the capital campaign completed by then so that we can begin our next 50 years of community service without any strain on our operational budget.

You can help.

Everything that has already been done - the roof, transportation vehicle purchases, security camera system upgrade and HVAC unit replacement - has been accomplished because donors contributed amounts in excess of their normal gift amounts. So that in spite of COVID, our regular donation stream continued and an additional \$200,000 has been contributed toward our Capital Campaign goal.

As part of the response card found on the back page of this newsletter, you can designate an additional amount that you would like to contribute toward the completion of our repairs and renovations. If you would prefer to speak with someone about making a donation specific to one of the items listed above, contact Development Specialist John Pfeifer at (618) 549-4807 ext. 228.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and for generously providing the little bit extra needed for us to reach our \$350,000 campaign goal.

## ***The Women's Center's Mission***

***"To end domestic violence and sexual assault in Southern Illinois and to assist survivors of these crimes and their non-offending significant others."***



The Women's Center, Inc.

610 South Thompson Street Carbondale, Illinois 62901

618-549-4807

Crisis Hotline: 800-334-2094

Return Service Requested

Serving Franklin, Gallatin, Jackson,  
Johnson, Perry, Saline, Union, and  
Williamson Counties



### 4th Annual Marion Pumpkin Glow & Stroll

Saturday & Sunday, October 29 & 30, 6:00-9:00pm

Stroll the lined path around the pond and view 500 carved and illuminated pumpkins, and plenty of spooky inflatables.

*A safe, socially-distanced Halloween tradition.*

Hosted & sponsored by



Thank you for your continued involvement and the support you provide.

Return this form to: The Women's Center 610 S. Thompson Street Carbondale, IL 62901

Please accept my tax deductible donation to The Women's Center.

I wish to contribute \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$350 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$125 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ (other amount) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Additional donation to Capital Campaign \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to The Women's Center, Inc.