

# The Friendship Center



SUMMER 2017

## A Parting Message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I would like to start by thanking all of you for the generous support you have shown for The Friendship Center and the survivors we work with over the years. I joined The Friendship Center as Executive



Director in April of 2013, and it has been a privilege and an honor to be a part of this amazing organization. I have been so impressed by the support this community shows for those who have experienced domestic and sexual violence and for social services in general.

In the past four years, I have been lucky enough to work with incredible people – the survivors who show such bravery in the face of their crisis, the staff who offer kindness, compassion and passionate advocacy to people in need 365 days a year, the countless heroes in the community who serve as first responders including law enforcement and hospital staff, and the many, many friends we have at

our partner agencies who work tirelessly to serve their community with dignity and respect. It really does take a village to address issues like domestic and sexual violence, and here in Helena we are extremely fortunate to have a community that

comes together to help, time and time again.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of our current shelter location. From our humble beginnings in a safe house that lacked basic facilities to our fantastic shelter now, The Friendship Center has served as a place of safety and hope to so many. As we celebrate ten years in this beautiful building at 1430 Sanders Street, it is a great time to reflect on the achievements that have been possible due to your support:

- Served over 5,000 victims of domestic and sexual violence;

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*The Friendship Center Board of Directors has formed a Search Committee to begin the hiring process for a new executive director. In the meantime, Abbie Chermack has graciously agreed to serve as Interim Director. We are grateful for Melinda's contributions to our organization and are looking forward to the new chapter ahead.*

*From April 1 - June 30, 2017  
The Friendship Center helped:*

**162**  
VICTIMS SERVED

**60**  
EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION  
SERVICES PROVIDED

**489**  
EMERGENCY SHELTER NIGHTS  
PROVIDED

**158**  
SAFETY PLANS CREATED

**281**  
IN-PERSON CRISIS COUNSELING  
SESSIONS PROVIDED

**505**  
ADULT GROUP SERVICES  
OFFERED

**54**  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES

*Thank you*  
for your continued support  
of victims of  
Domestic Violence  
& Sexual Assault  
in our community!

## CONTACT THE FRIENDSHIP CENTER

On Facebook • On Twitter @TFC\_Helena • On YouTube • [www.thefriendshipcenter.org](http://www.thefriendshipcenter.org)  
Phone: (406) 442-6800 • Fax: (406) 442-6809 • E-mail: [officem@thefriendshipcenter.org](mailto:officem@thefriendshipcenter.org)  
1430 Sanders Street • Helena, Montana 59601

## We're Celebrating 10 Years!

Ten years ago, the Helena community came together to help us open new doors to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Since then, The Friendship Center continues to be a place of dignity and hope for people in our community.

As we celebrated ten years of service to our community, we held an Open House, inviting community members in to meet with staff and take a tour of the shelter. If you were unable to attend the Open House, we would still love to meet you and give you a tour of the facility that you help make possible. Please call us at (406) 442-6800 to schedule a tour for you, your family or your co-workers.



## Carroll College

The Friendship Center and Carroll College are pleased to announce their partnership in providing advocacy services to students that have experienced sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. We are honored to be

welcomed on their campus and invited into their outreach efforts.



## "Building on Hope" Benefit Luncheon

This October we will be hosting our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Benefit Luncheon. This year's theme is 'Building on Hope', a tribute to our 10 year building anniversary as well as honoring the strength of our clients as they rebuild their lives. You have been a great friend to TFC and we would like to invite you to be a Table Captain at this year's luncheon. Call us at (406) 442-6800 to speak with Abbie and learn more about this great event.



## Become a Volunteer Crisis Line Advocate

One of our most vital services we offer is a 24/7 crisis line and that service needs you! The dates have been set for our Fall Volunteer Advocate Training. If you have always thought about doing more to end domestic and sexual violence in our community, join our training to become an advocate and provide crisis intervention and support to survivors.



- The September training will take place over four days for a total of 28 hours, plus two hours of shadowing a staff advocate.
- Training will be held September 9, 10, 16 & 17 from 8:30-4:30 with lunch from 12-1.
- Visit us at [thefriendshipcenter.org](http://thefriendshipcenter.org) or call (406) 442-6800 to learn more.

## Pets Are Victims Too

Domestic Violence affects everyone—parents, kids, families, businesses, friends. But there is another group that is sometimes overlooked but also faces the serious effects of domestic violence – the family pets. Pets are frequently used in the power and control dynamics of domestic violence. Abusers will threaten to harm or kill their partner's or child's pet. Victims know the harm their abusers inflict upon them will be turned to their pets if they leave the situation.



Many victims that contact The Friendship Center have pets that they don't want to see harmed. A tough choice has to be made – flee an unsafe situation, leaving the family animals, and wait for the abuser to follow through with threats of injuring or killing the animals or stay to keep the animals safe. We do not want our clients to have to make this tough choice. As many of us at TFC are animal owners we know pets offer an invaluable aspect of unconditional love and emotional support that victims and their children become very attached to. Unfortunately, we do not allow pets in our shelter for various reasons.

That's why we need you. We are looking for safe local foster homes for pets whose owners have fled a domestic violence situation and are living in our shelter. We will provide food for the pets and ensure they are up-to-date on shots. If you can provide a safe and loving home to a pet in need during a time of crisis in their owner's life, we would love to work with you! Please contact us to learn more.

# SPECIAL THANKS

***Our community's generosity has blown us away these last few months. You are truly giving extraordinaires!***

- Thank you to all who have participated in the 10 Year Commemorative Brick Program.
- We were excited to receive such great support during Greater Helena Gives in May.



- Phoenix and Hannaford Houses – Our clients loved the care packages you created!



- Thank you for bringing new found independence to so many of our clients through your vehicle donations. Having access to reliable transportation is an important step in rebuilding a life free from violence. We are also thankful to the Helena Area Community Foundation that awarded us a \$500 grant to assist with our transportation services.

- Fresh Life Church, Carroll College, Helena Middle School, LDS Church, Helena Alliance Youth Group, TX's Kingsland Baptist Church and community volunteers have played an instrumental role in keeping operations running smoothly. They have spent hours sorting donations or helping with grounds beautification so our clients are greeted by a lovely exterior and can have their needs met in our 'store'.
- Thank you to our current group of extraordinary volunteers who have worked exceptionally hard to ensure coverage of our crisis line throughout the entire summer!

## Officer of the Year

The Helena Domestic and Sexual Violence Working Group, along with The Friendship Center, is excited to begin accepting nominations for the **2017 Officer of the Year** award. The purpose of the award is to recognize the critical role law enforcement plays in serving victims of domestic and sexual violence in our community, and to highlight the role of uniformed officers in particular. If you know a uniformed officer that has done an outstanding job assisting a victim of domestic or sexual violence, please take a moment and nominate that officer for this award. Contact TFC with any questions and visit [thefriendshipcenter.org](http://thefriendshipcenter.org) for a nomination form.



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- Partnered with law enforcement to implement a High Risk Offender Task Force;
- Provided thousands of survivors with material and financial assistance to help rebuild their lives;
- Offered hundreds of counseling sessions to help victims begin

- the healing process;
- Accompanied hundreds of survivors to court hearings;
- Provided safe shelter to hundreds of women and their families in times of need.

My family has decided to relocate overseas again, so this will be my

last newsletter. The Friendship Center will always be a special place for me, and I am excited to see what the future holds. I feel like I walked into an amazing place four years ago, and I know that it will continue to be that place for many more people.

***Best, Melinda***

**Donate TODAY to support ending Domestic and Sexual Violence in our community:**

- Use the **ENVELOPE** enclosed in this newsletter.
- Visit [thefriendshipcenter.org](http://thefriendshipcenter.org) and click on **DONATE NOW** in the upper right corner.
- Make a **RECURRING GIFT** from your credit or bank account.
- Make a **PLANNED GIFT** to take advantage of the Montana Endowment Tax Credit.
- Give through **SECGC** to #3707 if you're a state employee.



The Friendship Center  
1430 Sanders  
Helena, MT 59601

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The Friendship Center

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**September 9, 10, 16, & 17**

*Crisis Line Volunteer Advocate Training*

**September 12**

*Windbag Cares at the Windbag Saloon: 20% of sales will be donated to TFC*

**September 26**

*SECGC Non-Profit Fair: Capitol Rotunda Kickoff Event*

**October 3**

*Building on Hope Benefit Luncheon*

**October 18**

*Lewis and Clark Library Big Read Panel  
"In Our Communities: Sexual Violence Resource Panel"*

**January 16**

*Lewis and Clark Brewery Ales for Charity Nights:  
TFC will receive \$1 for every beer sold between 5:00-8:00pm*

**January 24**

*Wine with Friends: An event at Island Liquor Store to benefit TFC*

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