



NO NEWS

Op-ed from the Board Chair When victims of sexual assault see justice

Investigating sexual assault cases is often frustrating. The majority of sexual assaults are not reported to law enforcement and when they are, it is difficult to develop enough evidence for a prosecutor to prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt. Victims are reluctant (understandably) to relate details of a unwanted intimate experience to strangers, the cases often amount to one person’s word against another’s and in many cases, unless the suspect has denied the contact altogether, the forensic evidence juries crave isn’t dispositive (it confirms there was contact, but doesn’t address the issue of whether it was consensual).

April is Sexual Assault Awareness month and rather than focus on the frustrations involved with investigating sexual assault cases, I’d prefer to relate the facts of one of those cases which come around periodically and demonstrate the difference it can make in a person’s life to report a sexual assault to law enforcement. It is cases like these that motivate dedicated law enforcement officers to do their best on every case because when the pieces come together, they can positively impact a life. I have changed the name of the individual involved in the incident for privacy reasons.

I met Tara on the Tuesday following Memorial Day weekend a few years ago. Tara was 21 years old and was accompanied by her mother when she came in to report her sexual assault. Tara had been sexually assaulted multiple times between the ages of 7 and 14 by her stepfather. She had kept the assault – and her pain and turmoil - to herself. For whatever reason, that Memorial Day weekend, she decided it was time to tell her mother about the assaults and

write a letter to her stepfather explaining how much he had hurt her.

As Tara related the incident she described hating trips to the country store with her stepfather to get an ice cream. She hated them because the trip frequently involved a sexual assault by the stepfather in the privacy of his car. It was unclear whether the obligatory ice cream connected with the trip was intended as compensation or a gift to ease his conscience, but whatever it was she dreaded the trip. I thought of my own children and how a trip to get an ice cream is always an exciting and positive experience and this drove home to me the impact of the assaults on Tara.

The impact on Tara lasted far beyond an ability to enjoy an ice cream trip. Keeping the abuse to herself caused distance between Tara and her family. She had difficulty keeping a job. She had gotten married and had a son, but that relationship had also suffered due to Tara’s inability to be open about what was hurting her. The marriage failed and Tara had little contact with her son at the time I met her. She was living in the shed of a small landscape company for which she worked.

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Mission Statement

Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine is an agency of professionals and trained volunteers dedicated to providing advocacy and support for survivors, families and concerned others affected by sexual assault, sexual abuse and sexual harassment. SASSMM offers services to improve awareness and response by providing prevention, education and risk reduction programs throughout Eastern Cumberland, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Knox, and Waldo Counties.

Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine
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 TTY 1-888-458-5599
 Website: www.sassmm.org

Tara related the facts of the assaults. Much of it happened in a neighboring jurisdiction, so I enlisted the help of another detective who worked for that jurisdiction and he partnered with us to put the case together. Tara's mother and Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine helped her begin to put her personal life back together. Tara's case was taken on by a bulldog of a prosecutor who was determined to give Tara her day in court.

Tara had her day in court. She had to relate and relive the incidents in front of the jury. The defense attorney attempted to destroy her credibility by asking questions or calling witnesses to portray her as a freeloader who had made up the allegations of assault because her stepfather refused to help her when she was homeless. Her stepfather's girlfriend (new relationship) actually referred to Tara in front of the jury as "white trash". The defense attorney accused me of manufacturing evidence.

The trial ended and after a day's deliberation, the jury found Tara's stepfather guilty. He received a sentence which included seven years in prison. While this may not seem like nearly enough, in Maine, it is a significant sentence.

A couple months after the trial, I saw Tara and her mother at the Topsham Fair. Tara was all smiles and reported that she now had her own apartment and was the assistant manager of a restaurant in Freeport. More importantly, Tara's son was with her and Tara and her ex-husband were sharing custody. The little boy was looking forward to a fun trip to the fair with his mother and grandmother. My time at the fair that night was spent directing cars where to park as part of a volunteer effort. The volunteer work provides a lot of reflection time and I spent most of the night thinking about how much Tara's decision to disclose the assault to her mother and report it to law enforcement had changed her life for the better.

Written By: Capt. Mark M. Waltz,
 SASSMM Board Chair
 Special to the BDN - March 31, 2013



**Save the
Date**

**Mark your calendar for the
Eleventh Annual Celebrity
Gala and Silent Auction:**

Saturday March 15, 2014

SASSMM Celebrates 30 Years!

Established in 1983, Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine, is celebrating it's 30th anniversary this year.

On Saturday, May 4th, 85 SASSMM supporters gathered to walk together on Popham Beach in Phippsburg, ME and then joined at Fort Popham for a 30th anniversary barbeque lunch celebration. It was a great afternoon and \$1,400 was raised in donations to go towards SASSMM services.

SASSMM 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Free to be Me

POPHAM BEACH STATE PARK
MAY 4, 2013

Thank you to Diane and Bill Racine who created and organized this great day!

Upcoming Ladies' Open Golf Tournament

Thursday, June 6th, 2013

8am at Brunswick Golf Club

Rain Date is Thursday, June 13th, 2013



Format

Scramble format with two flights based on handicap. Prizes awarded for first, second, and third places - gross and net- in each flight. Players can register as foursomes, threesomes, twosomes or singles. Tournament committee will form teams for those not playing in a foursome. Registration deadline is June 2nd, 2013.

Schedule of Events:

Registration/Continental Breakfast
7:00-7:45 AM
Shotgun Start
8:00 AM SHARP!
Lunch/Prizes
1:30 PM

Registration

Entry Fee: \$65 per individual includes; 18 holes of golf, continental breakfast, on course refreshments, gift for participating, luncheon, and prizes galore!

Cart Fee: \$15 per rider not included in entry, must be prepaid with entry fee.

Registration and payment can be done online at www.sassmm.org.

Listen up: Sexual violence does not discriminate

By: Susan Hall Dreher, Special to the BDN - April 18, 2013

Sexual assault in later life is incomprehensible to most of us and yet is a reality we must react to as a caring community. What does later life mean? Routinely for many, later life means “older than me.”

Abuse in later life refers to violence that occurs at age 50 or older. The mere thought of sexual violence in later life causes us to pause and ask, “How can that be possible?” The answer is that sexual violence does not discriminate by age, gender, orientation, height, weight, religion, race, culture or disability.

We are unique in our individuality. Some of us may have a chronic illness and or disability; others are active and healthy. Aging is a process, not a disease, and being older is part of the fabric of who we are in this world.

The possibility of sexual assault in later life challenges the myths and stereotypes of growing old in today’s environment. Our reactions may become even stronger if we think about the possibility of our grandparents, parents, friends, and neighbors as victims.

We know that sexual victimization of vulnerable individuals occurs on a daily basis. Yet, we seem to believe that sexual violence is age specific and can’t happen to older adults.

But it does.

Beginning in 2006 through 2015, a baby boomer turns age 60 every 7.5 seconds resulting in 78 million new seniors, according to the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging.

The committee also estimates that between 2 and 5 million older adults are abused each year. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Maine is ranked as the oldest state in the nation by median age. Older adults in Maine are not immune to abuse in later life, and we must acknowledge and respond to that reality.

Evidence shows that sexual assault rarely is the sole abuse in an older adult’s experience, yet, there seems to be more recognition of other forms of exploitation and violence in later life. We know that 2 to 4 percent of those abused in later life will have sexual assault as a component within their abuse. Sexual violence is the taboo subject – the last “secret.”

We must break the stereotypes surrounding sexual violence and aging — as they hinder older victims from seeking services. All survivors deserve to be heard and acknowledged regardless of whether the violence occurred today or 60 years ago.

It is imperative that services exist that honor a lifetime of experiences while providing opportunities to facilitate a “safe” disclosure of current or past sexual abuse. We know that, when asked, older adults want to answer the question, and they actively engage in a supportive process that acknowledges their worth and right to support and safety.

Let me be clear: Age does not increase the risk of being abused; the perpetrator is responsible for the abuse. No excuses accepted. Yet, isolation and vulnerability will increase the potential for abuse, particularly if we don’t pay attention to the well-being of all people, especially our older community members.

Many of our greatest teachers are older adults who all have a rich history and, sometimes, a painful past. They live their lives with resiliency and strength in spite of the impact of

sexual violence – or any form of violence. If we don't ask the difficult questions, we give the message to victims, and our communities at large, that we are more comfortable with silence rather than responding and reacting to the reality of abuse in later life.

By listening, we acknowledge their contributions and ongoing value in our world.

By listening, we recognize aging is a process and does not prevent the possibility of sexual violence in later life.

And most importantly, by listening, we show that we believe and honor older adults.

They tell us what we may not want to hear. Yet, how can we not listen? They are the experts; they are inviting us into their lives to share their hidden "secret." For all victims, especially those who may be the most vulnerable, they deserve for us to show up and speak out.

Susan Hall Dreher
SASSMM Executive Director

Support Line Advocate Training

Would you like to make a positive difference in the lives of sexual assault and abuse survivors? Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine (SASSMM) has openings for Per Diem Volunteer Advocates to provide coverage for our 24-hour crisis and support line. Volunteer Advocates receive an hourly stipend for being on call and carrying a pager. The hourly stipend amount increases during a support line call, hospital or police accompaniment call. Please email clientservices@sassmm.org to learn more.

SASSMM Receives JOY Grant

Oceanside High School - East, in Rockland has awarded a \$500 grant to SASSMM to compile our survivor VOICES columns from the SASSMM newsletter NO-NEWS.

Oceanside High School's Jobs for Maine's Graduates program (JMG) participated in an exciting philanthropic initiative called J.O.Y (Jumpstart Our Youth) sponsored by the Unity Foundation, UniTel, Inc., and the Maine Community Foundation. JMG students are trained in the grant making process and researched local nonprofits that serve youth in their community

The JMG students at Oceanside reviewed proposals and chose SASSMM to be one recipient of their grant awards.

Thank you to those students for their hard work and thoughtfulness! Our future leaders are well on their way to making a difference in our communities.

Your Voices

An
inspirational
compilation of articles,
poems, and letters from
survivors of sexual violence.

**Kindness nurturing alive
courage journey power strength
free recovery affirming safe
voice**

Stay tuned for the announcement of this updated, completed compilation that is being made possible by this JOY grant!

SASSMM Celebrates Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Rape jokes, victim-blaming, sexual assault, child sexual abuse. It's all been in the media this year, and with little talk of prevention.

Every April, Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine (SASSMM) recognizes Sexual Assault Awareness Month. This year a new campaign focused on different types of sexual violence and prevention.

"Our goal with this campaign is to educate the community about the prevention of sexual violence", says Susan Hall Dreher, Executive Director at SASSMM. "Our campaign wanted to take the focus on sexual violence in the media within the last year and put a spin of prevention on it."

It's time. Prevent sexual violence at every age. is a new statewide campaign and it focuses on all types of sexual violence - from child sexual abuse, to sexual harassment, to rape jokes, to elder abuse. In partnership with other sexual assault support centers across the state, SASSMM will engage in year-long messaging with regard to healthy sexuality, talking to people about consent, and gender norms.

For the month of April, SASSMM created a window display at Senter's Place on Maine Street in Brunswick. A central feature in that display is a Capstone Project sculpture created by Liz Kneebone, Mt. Ararat High School. The title of her sculpture is "Blameless" and highlights raising awareness about sexual assault victim blaming.

Sexual violence in Maine - and nationally - is prevalent and underreported. A study in 2011 found that approximately 13,000 Mainers will experience sexual assault or rape

each year. Only 391 rapes and attempted rapes were reported to law enforcement in 2012. Rape is the most costly violent crime to crime victims, costing 127 billion dollars annually, excluding the cost of childhood sexual abuse.

"It's not only about bringing awareness to the issue of sexual violence - we know it happens," says Hall Dreher. "We are working with communities across Eastern Cumberland, Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox and Waldo counties in innovative ways to prevent sexual violence and support victims and survivors."

Along with Sexual Assault Awareness Month, SASSMM is acknowledging 30 years of providing services in our communities. Please go to the SASSMM website www.sassmm.org for how to get involved in preventing, and speaking out, against sexual violence.



Thank you to our sponsors!

Corporate



Gold Sponsors:



Bronze Sponsors:



Special thanks to our emcee, Ethan Minton, our DJ, Jon Shannon and graphic artist, Tony Roy!

Thank you to our wonderful celebrities!

Holly Stover, Director for the Prevention of DV and SA, DHHS

Geoff Rushlau, District Attorney: Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Knox and Waldo Counties

Roger Sirois, President/CEO Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union

Polly Campbell, Director SAFE Program

Sheriff Todd Brackett, Lincoln County

Sheriff Joel Merry, Sagadahoc County

Sheriff Kevin Joyce, Cumberland County

Chief Richard Rizzo, Brunswick P.D.

Chief Bruce Boucher, Rockland P.D.

Jana Hentz-McDorr, RN, CEN, SAFE, Midcoast Hospital

Julie Wagoner, VP Commercial Lending, Bath Savings Institution

The following businesses and local artists donated items for the auction. Please support those who support SASSMM!

- Anne George
- Anthony Alves
- Bart & Greg's DVD Explosion
- Bath Area YMCA
- Bath Brunswick Veterinary Assoc.
- Bath Savings Institution
- Bay Chamber Concerts
- Bayview Gallery
- Blessings
- Bob Morrell
- Boston Beer Company
- Boston Celtics
- Boston Red Sox
- Bull Feeny's
- Bull Moose
- Café Miranda
- Cahill Tire, Inc.
- Cappy's Chowder House
- Casco Bay Frames & Gallery
- Cathance River Education Alliance
- Cecile Marro
- Center Street Cycle
- Clarion Hotel
- Clay Play
- Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens
- Deb Thibodeau
- Delilah Pottery
- Diane Freve
- Edgecomb Potters
- Eveningstar Cinema
- Frank Douglass
- Funtown Splashtown U.S.A.
- Gallery Framing
- Goodwill Industries
- Goranson Farm
- Grill 233
- Gulf of Maine Books
- Hancock Lumber
- Heather Caron Floral Design
- Henry and Marty Restaurant
- Hilton Garden Inn Portland Downtown Waterfront
- Jana Hentz-McDorr
- John H. Kilbourne
- John Nordby
- Judy Bean
- Le Garage
- Lobster Pound Restaurant
- Lou Ann Hunton
- Lynda and Greg Kelly
- Maine Art Glass Studio
- Maine Foodie Tours
- Maine Home & Design
- Maine Pines Racquet & Fitness
- Maine Rafting Expeditions
- Maine Running Company
- Maine State Music Theatre
- Matt Jones
- Moody's Diner
- Morning Glory Natural Foods
- Nest
- New Hope for Women
- Nina Sommer
- Norma and Tom Conway
- Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority
- Now You're Cooking
- Ornament
- Pierce Studios
- Polly Campbell
- Portland Detailing
- Portland Glass Company
- Portland Sea Dogs
- Portland Stage
- Roland's Auto Body
- Scott Bean
- Sea Dog Brewing Co.
- Shaklee Independent Distributor
- Sherry Cleaves
- Ship to Shore Lobster Company
- Spa Tech
- Spare Time Family Fun Center
- Starbucks Coffee Company
- Stephanie George-Roy
- Steve Knight
- Summer Island Studio
- Susan Fuller and Wayland Linscott
- Sweet Water Day Spa
- Tabitha's Jewelry Designs
- Tate House
- The Great Impasta
- The Public Theatre
- The Theater Project
- The Waterfront Restaurant
- Tire Warehouse, Topsham
- TJ Maxx
- Victoria Mansion
- Wassamki Springs Campground
- Westport Educational Consulting
- Wild Oats Bakery & Café

SASSMM Support Groups

&

Additional Advocacy Services For Survivors, Parents and Concerned Others

Support Groups: A Piece of the Healing Process.

Survivors of sexual violence are often left with deep feelings of shame, guilt and embarrassment. Many feel they have no one to turn to for support and assistance.

SASSMM provides a casual and non-judgmental environment for individuals to connect with others who have been through similar life events. Participants share personal experiences, discuss information and exchange resources.

Groups focus on healing and moving forward. A variety of survivor-centered groups are offered.

Call 1-207-725-2181, 1-207-594-8580, or 1-207-338-4622 to schedule a pre-group appointment.

SASSMM also offers the following services:

- **One-To-One Support**

- For individuals waiting for a group to begin, or simply looking for information and support, SASSMM offers meetings on a scheduled basis.

- **24-Hour Crisis and Support Line**

- 1-800-822-5999, from a cell phone call 1-207-725-1500
- TTY dial 1-888-458-5599

- **Specific advocacy and assistance around law enforcement and legal proceedings.**

- **Informed advocacy services for people with disabilities and older individuals.**

All of SASSMM's advocacy services are confidential* and free of charge. Services are available to survivors of sexual violence and the people who care about survivors, no matter when the violence occurred. We look forward to speaking with you.

*SASSMM advocates are mandated reporters and in some cases information shared may not be able to remain confidential.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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Sexual Assault Support Services of Midcoast Maine

