



# Susan B. Anthony Project

Safety • Healing • Growth

Newsletter • Spring 2002

## Ending Sexual Violence is a Community Responsibility

In 2000-2001, Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services provided over 89,926 units of service to 5,056 victims of sexual abuse and their families. The ability of law enforcement agencies, the judicial system, community organizations and sexual assault crisis centers to effectively respond and punish perpetrators is compromised by the reality that our society does not emphatically discourage violence in relationships, the media, or in our communities. We can continue to help the victim, but we do so knowing that the larger solutions require more than immediate, crisis response services we can give. As the old adage goes, we continue to pull people out of the water at the mouth of the river,

but we will never solve the problem until we stop whomever is pushing the people in upstream.

This year's theme for Sexual Assault Awareness Month is "Ending Sexual Violence is a Community Responsibility." Preventing sexual assault requires that everyone in the community in places of worship, in the educational system, in the public sector, and in government raise their voices against sexual violence. Together, we must reject the idea that violence in relationships is acceptable and victims of sexual assault are somehow to blame for the crime committed against them. Instead, we can advocate positive ideas of acceptable behavior in relationships and

develop a plan for inoculating our community against sexual assault and violence.

It is understandable that many in our community shy away from the uncomfortable discussions about rape and sexual assault. But, in refusing to talk about it, we unwittingly help silence the voices of victims and their advocates who need their "NO" to be echoed by a chorus of voices in the community.

Susan B. Anthony Project is committed to eliminating sexual assault in northwestern Connecticut. We invite you to join us in the fight by attending the activities planned by the agency for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

### Wishes

**Remember the time you made the wish**  
to swim in the lake at night  
feel the silky water,  
sand beneath you,  
stars above.  
**I make a lot of wishes,**  
for other people.  
I wish her cancer would go away  
I wish he'd stop drinking  
I wish, I wish, I wish  
**The time I lied to you**  
was hard for me  
It gnawed deep,  
made me choke  
Can I take it back?  
**I always wondered**  
if something happened  
when I was young,  
very young  
things that happen in my dreams  
over and over again  
**What you wished for**  
was your mom to come back  
You cried out for her  
You didn't know I was there  
**What do you think I wished?**  
Did you ever think of what I wished?  
Or did I keep my wishes out of reach?  
Pushed them under the bed,  
Stuck them in a drawer  
Put them in a box  
**I don't know**  
Maybe I wished  
**That I'd come back to find**  
the hidden wishes  
Tear apart the drawer,  
Scramble under the bed,  
Open the box  
**That we'd somehow be together in the end**  
In a natural way,  
With all our wishes laid out  
Scattered  
**I wished for what I always wish for**  
Closeness

Debbie Kovalchik

## Healing and the Creative Process

By Nancy Mason

Brought back by popular demand, the third annual writing and poetry workshop will again be facilitated by Sandra Bishop Ebner on six consecutive Monday evenings beginning on March 18<sup>th</sup> and concluding on April 22nd. It will meet from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Susan B. Anthony Project offices at 434 Prospect Street in Torrington. Interested women may call Molly or Nancy at 489-3798 for more information or to register. It is not necessary to attend all the sessions (though participants usually want to after attending once) but it is necessary to sign up in advance for any or all sessions to be attended.

In the past, the workshop has been attended by women who have never attempted any form of creative

exciting discoveries has been the discovery that creativity is stimulated and flows equally at every level of writing experience from beginner to accomplished writer. The other discovery has been that creative energy and healing energy seem to be so closely connected that one seems capable of stimulating the other.

Sandra Bishop Ebner is an inspired facilitator who knows how to entice even the most timid soul out of any artistic inhibitions and into the thrill of creating with words. She usually starts each session with a task or word exercise that leads participants forward by degrees until wonder of wonders-something of beauty and deep meaning has been created. The poem in the column to the right, titled "Wishes," is a sample. The task was to take ten lines, those in bold print, and play around with them; to use them as hooks, so to speak, on which to hang our imaginations, our thoughts, our feelings. "Wishes" emerged from one group member.

As John Fox says in The Healing Art of Poetry Making, "it is the act of giving our voice a space to be heard that can bring deep healing and a sense of liberation to one's life." Interested women who are in the process of healing from past trauma, assault or abuse are invited to bring their voices to this safe space. Let creativity flow!

writing as well as by women who have enjoyed writing for years. One of the two most

### IN THIS ISSUE

Ending Sexual Violence is a Community Responsibility	
Healing & the Creative Process	1
Agency Programs and Services	2
Book Recommendations	2
Agency News & Notes	3
4th Annual Festival of Performing Arts	3

## BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS:

**Trauma and Recovery**, by Judith Herman, M.D., professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, has become the seminal resource for people seeking to understand trauma and the process of healing from professionals and lay people alike. Informative and based on documented research, it is also respectful, interesting and readable. Herman links the experience of Vets, POWs, battered women and incest survivors. As Laura Davis, co-author of **The Courage to Heal** comments, "Herman presents a compelling analysis of trauma and the process of healing. Without shying away from political and clinical realities, she presents a convincing case for the empowerment and care of all trauma victims."

**The Seven Sins of Memory: How the Mind Forgets and Remembers** will be of interest to anyone who is curious about how and why they remember and forget, how and why some memories get distorted and why some lost memories are later "retrieved." It is written by Daniel Schacter who is chairman of the Psychology department at Harvard University. Jerome Groopman, M.D. says the author "bestows on us a rare gift - a fascinating journey through paths of memory, its open avenues and blind alleys. With lively narratives, he challenges us to re-conceive apparent defects of memory as crucial assets in successfully sustaining a sharp and productive mind." Of particular value to those of us with a special interest in trauma and healing from its effects, is the chapter addressing the phenomenon of memory persistence which "concerns intrusive recollections we can't forget even when we wish we could." This book helps us to understand how our brains function in ways to protect us but ways that can also seem inexplicable and confusing without this helpful information.

In **Why They Kill** author Richard Rhodes examines the findings of criminologist Dr. Lonnie Athens, himself the child of a violent family, about a pattern of social development common to all excessively violent people. This four-stage process is called "violentization." The four stages of violentization that he explores in detail include brutalization, belligerency, violent performances and virulency. Since all four stages must be fully experienced in sequence to produce a criminally violent person, we can see how intervening to interrupt the process, at any stage, can potentially prevent tragic outcomes. Every community would be well advised to utilize the information in this book as a cornerstone of community prevention programs. As stated in the jacket blurb, **Why They Kill** "offers compelling insights into the terrible, on-going dilemma of criminal violence that plagues families, neighborhoods, cities and schools."

## Agency Programs & Services

**Self-Esteem Workshop:** A six-week peer support group for women who want to develop more positive views of themselves.

**Teen Girls Empowerment Workshops:** Eight weeks of independent sessions include self-defense, prevention, dreamwork, creative processes, career building and self-esteem targeted to girls ages 16-19.

**Healing Strategies:** A ten-week group providing information and peer support to women survivors of sexual abuse or assault.

**H.E.A.R.T. Group:** (Help End Abusive Relationship Tendencies) An on-going, peer support group for women who have experienced any form of family violence meets Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

**Group Dreamwork Classes:** An on-going peer support group that works with groups to explore their meanings, insights and potential for healing and personal growth.

**Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI):** Offered through the agency at the Department of Labor in Torrington monthly through June, these free workshops are open to the general public. MBTI will be administered and individual results and their implications will be explained. The MBTI is a widely used questionnaire designed to facilitate understanding of personality type differences. It is widely used by career and educational counselors and by business and religious organizations for team-building purposes.

**For more information about exact dates, times and to pre-register, call 489-3798 and reference the title of the program of interest.**

## Sexual Assault Awareness Month Programs

As in previous years, the agency will be sponsoring a number of activities to promote awareness during the month of April. During this month, we will be visiting schools and local libraries with informational hand-outs for all those interested in receiving information about the agency, its programs and services.

Once again, we will sponsor the Clothesline Project as a tribute to the

survivors and victims of violence against women and to help with the healing process for survivors and their loved ones. Look for the clothesline project at the agency and at a town green near you during April.

The agency is making plans for the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual flower planting at Coe Park to celebrate Earth Day and Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

If you are interested in participating in any of these activities or events, or if you would like a representative from Susan B. Anthony Project to speak to your local community group or organization, call 489-3798 and ask for a Community Educator.

## Polly's Dream Thrift Shop

*A Benefit of the Susan B. Anthony Project, Inc.*

Hours: Tuesday - Saturday from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Thursday evenings until 6 p.m.

Donations accepted during business hours only.

Furniture Donations: Please call for an appointment.

Volunteers are always needed- please call if you are interested

114 Water Street  
Torrington, CT 06790  
860-489-2808



24-HOUR CRISIS LINE:

860-482-7133

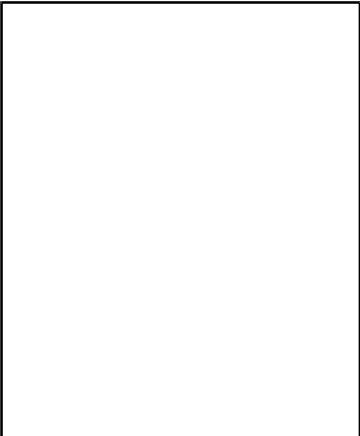
Statewide Toll Free Hotlines:

Sexual Assault: 1-888-999-5545

Domestic Violence: 1-888-774-2900

En Espanol 1-888-568-8332

# FOURTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF PERFORMING ARTS



**Festival of Performing Arts**, to be held on **Friday, April 12th at 8:00 p.m.** at Torrington's **Warner Theatre**, promises to delight audiences of all ages! Thomaston Savings Bank, presenting sponsor, is pleased to support this event, benefitting Susan B. Anthony Project. The show will feature music and dance performers of international acclaim with ties to Litchfield County.

Krystyana Chelminski, Violinist

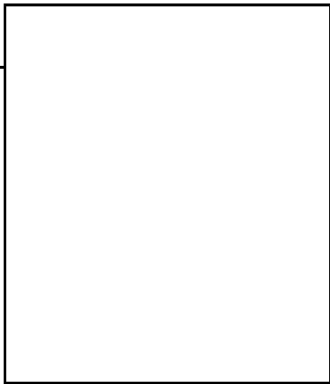
This year's performers include four time returning dancers from the dance company **MOMIX**, illusionist **Michael Moschen**, violinist **Krystyana Chelminski** and singer, **Christie Williams**. Returning to this year's show is Master of Ceremonies, **Regina Barreca**, UCONN professor of English and Feminist theory, humorist and newspaper contributor.



Michael Moschen



Regina Barreca, Master of Ceremonies



Following the show there will be a reception in the Atrium of the Warner Theatre. Guests may mingle with performers during this champagne reception.

**Tickets are on sale at the Warner. Call 489-7180 to order tickets. All seating is reserved.** General Admission: \$25.00

Patron Admission (incl. Reception): \$100.00  
Group Rate Admission: 8@ \$175.00

Plan a family outing or an evening with friends. Order your tickets early. Don't miss this phenomenal show. For more information about the show, call Lisa or Jeanne at 489-3798.



Vocalist, Christie Williams

## Agency News & Notes:

Susan B. Anthony Project was named the Outstanding Domestic Violence Program in the State of Connecticut. This award was presented to Barbara Spiegel, SBAP Executive Director, at the Connecticut Association for Non-Profits annual meeting last fall.

Jan Thayer, Manager of Polly's Dream Thrift Shop (which benefits Susan B. Anthony Project), received an award from the Department of Social Services for outstanding service in employing Senior Citizens. Congratulations to Jan and her staff.

The agency's website is up and running! Please check out our website at [www.sbaproject.org](http://www.sbaproject.org). Thanks to Nikki May, website designer, for her generous contributions to the development of this website. We will continue to update the website with upcoming activities and agency news. We welcome your feedback. You can contact us by e-mail by clicking on the link in the upper right corner of every page of the website.

In January, 2002, the Susan B. Anthony Project Board elected former Vice President, Marlene Smith, to serve at President. Thank you very much to outgoing President, Debbie Benedict, who provided outstanding leadership especially in the area of Board development and training.

Burns, Brooks & McNeil, together with Litchfield Bancorp and Northwest Community Bank hosted their first Golf Tournament held at Fairview Farms in Harwinton. The tournament was a tremendous success with proceeds divided between Susan B. Anthony Project and FISH. Thanks very much to the organizers for their tremendous effort and success.

Lincoln Financial Group has recently announced that Susan B. Anthony Project is a recipient of a \$25,000.00 grant to assist clients with basic needs such as food, gasoline, clothing, medical assistance and legal advocacy. The agency is most grateful to Lincoln Financial Group.

The Feinstein Foundation has once again issued a challenge to partially match gifts received from March through April 30, 2002. All donations received at the agency during this timeframe will be submitted for a match from the Feinstein Foundation.



SINCE 1983

# Susan B. Anthony Project

**SAFETY • HEALING • GROWTH**

works to promote the autonomy  
of women  
and the safety of  
all victims of domestic  
abuse/sexual assault  
in northwest Connecticut  
as well as to promote  
community action  
toward ending  
domestic violence  
and sexual abuse.

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