



The Advocate



North County Rape Crisis &
Child Protection Center

Spring
2007

IMAGINE *The Possibilities . . . A Fresh Beginning*



Interior Decorator Pat working on her skills.

Since 1974, the Center has been renting space in the city of Lompoc from various landlords. For much of that time we have dreamed of creating a safe space for survivors of sexual violence and buying a building to call our own. In October 2006 escrow was closed and our hope and dream of someday owning our own facility became a reality. Located at 511 East Ocean, just blocks away from our old location on Walnut Avenue, the new facility affords individual offices for staff (with a little bit of sharing), more efficient work stations, a comfortable counseling environment, and the ability to conduct on-site activities such as advocate training, self-defense/personal safety seminars, the AMAC support group with ample space for healing activities, and monthly volunteer meetings. The community came together in a very kind-hearted way by assisting

staff with the renovation of the facility. Board members started off the renovation by removing carpet and linoleum flooring, paving the way for a brand new place. Once the interior was cleared of all the remnants of the former tenant, interior decorator Pat Durant chose a paint and carpet scheme that creates an ambience that is both soothing and comforting to staff, volunteers, and survivors.

Who could have imagined when a small group of women got together in 1974 to form the Rape Crisis Center that in 2007 we would still be going strong, and that a dream would come true with the purchase of our own building. With our new center we are able to create a safe haven for the survivors of rape, child abuse and sexual assault, our staff and volunteers. Of course it couldn't have been done without the hard work of everyone involved, and we thank you. Together we made a difference.

Joyce Howerton
Board of Directors

Pat was assisted by her wonderful spouse Jack, who contributed an enormous amount of labor in his spare time: hanging blinds, installing doors, and fixing whatever needed repair. The entire interior was given a fresh coat of paint by Dave Acker, who came in prior to going to work in the morning, and then after his job at night. We wouldn't have been up and running efficiently without the generosity of master electrician George Weber, who took care of all of our electrical needs. Lynne Whitmore worked on our interior phone lines and ensured that we would be ready



With old carpeting removed, painting had begun.

and available to meet the needs of callers. The phone system itself was moved and installed by Patrick Guthrie of Lompoc Phone & Computer. Patrick stepped in during a moment of panic on our part, working very late into the night so that our needs were met and our system was operational. Finishing touches were provided by Ace Hardware (paint), Home Depot (new blinds), and Moore Mill & Lumber (new door).

This project has been a labor of love from the beginning, and while it took a lot of work, we would not have it any other way. We encourage you to stop by and see what the support of our community enabled us to create for all survivors who walk through the door. All of the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and the survivors we serve thank each and every one of our donors who supported this project. We could not have done it without you. An open house is planned for this summer—but feel free to stop by any time to see the new place and admire the handiwork of our dedicated local businesses.



The finished product . . . just IMAGINE the possibilities . . .

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Volunteer Voices . . .

Having recently graduated from training I sat and paced with enthusiastic anticipation for that first call to come through. Zero! That is how many calls I received that day. In retrospect, it was a good thing that there was not anyone in crisis that day, which led me to ponder why I chose to volunteer and more specifically why Rape Crisis. I heard a quote years ago, "I don't have to have been raped to have compassion for someone who has". Compassion. That is the key for me. To take a few hours out of my week and become the compassion that someone needs is why I volunteer. I look back and think about when someone offered me the reassuring smile, the I'm here for you hug or the always appreciated, "It's not your fault." Gratefully, I am at a place that was so freely given to me. I do not have unrealistic expectations of changing the world, only that piece which has been entrusted to me. So for now . . . I wait. I wait for the call to come in knowing that quite possibly crisis could be on the other end, but confident that I am fully and mightily equipped with compassion as my tool.



Crisis Intervention Coordinator Noemi Cortez with recent graduate and author of this article Johnna

KIDS DAY IN THE PARK IS HERE AGAIN



Mark your calendars because Kids Day in the Park is just around the corner. Traditionally held in April, we decided to try something a little different this year in the hopes that we can outrun the rain gods by scheduling the event for May 20th. This year promises to be jam packed with excitement for families and children of all ages. Come on out and try your hand at arcade games, a rock wall, bounce houses, and a maze. If that's not enough to entertain you, perhaps you'll need to give in to the grumbling of your stomach and head on over to the food court for a taste of barbeque chicken, corn dogs, strawberry shortcake, shaved ice, kettle corn, and ice cream. Bring your friends and family out for some wholesome fun in the sun at Waller Park from 10:00am—4:00pm, Sunday, May 20, 2007. See you there!!!

The Voice of a SURVIVOR...it is *WHAT* I am

I am a survivor, and I am proud. Proud not for what I went through, but where I have come from. First of all, let me introduce myself. I am your daughter, your sister, your aunt, your friend, your neighbor, and your co-worker. My story is not extraordinary but it is about me.

I have learned over the years that healing is a process, a rather painful process, but not an insurmountable process. While once in a while life will hand a person, no matter who they are or what their life experiences have been, a stumbling block to overcome, that stumbling block can be hurdled. My story while still very personal, is now worth sharing, not in the hopes of healing on my part, but for the healing and the peace for all of the people that love me.

I was six years old when the most inconceivable forms of sexual abuse started. Yes, I was six. A number that reverberates over and over in my head. For several years beginning when I was six—yes, there is that number again—I went through the often daily cat and mouse game, eventually being caught in my abuser's snare. After several years of repeated abuse it came to an abrupt halt because he was caught—not because I told—but he was caught. Free—that is what I thought I was—free and safe. But the safety I felt was short lived, because it did not take long for him to figure out more deceptive ways to trap me once again. The day I received my short respite I was told that the “matter” would never be discussed with anyone. I was afraid and lonely. I could not even talk about what had happened with the people that I knew would protect me. The power was taken out of their hands as well that day and I was left to “forget” about what had happened on my own.

Fast forward more than thirty-five years and here I sit today. My life has taken some amazing twists and turns, yet buried deep within the core of my soul, a secret that was yet to be shared. Even as an adult I found myself caught within the grip of someone no longer with us. I have found myself wanting to share so many times, yet sucked back into the fear of telling. Sucked back into the depths of fear few people understand, few people discuss. I have found myself almost uttering the words many, many times, only to clamp my mouth shut as it was done so many years ago.

Yet today as I write this I can honestly say things are different. The cloud that had enveloped me for so long has been blown away because the burden has been lifted. I am free and it feels better than I could have ever imagined. Yes, I am free—free from the bondage of a secret that I did not have to keep. Free from the fear of what would happen. Free from my own self loathing. Wrapped around me are the arms of my family, my friends, and my co-workers. Being a survivor does not define me but it is *WHAT* I am.



On Butterfly Wings

It is early spring and the butterflies have migrated once again, but the butterfly that we have come to love as one of our own still quietly flutters around, protecting us and giving us the strength to fight against sexual assault and child abuse. Last year we brought you the story of Kimberly, a young woman raped and murdered in 1995 in Philadelphia. Kimberly's cousin Greg Brewer, co-owner of Brewer-Clifton Winery, wanted to make a difference and honor the memory of Kimberly. Thus the Kimberly Vineyard was planted in the late 1990's, in the shape of butterfly wings, by Greg and the Melville family. Greg came to the Center and indicated that proceeds from the sale of this select wine would be earmarked for the Center. Fast forward one year and the most recent, very generous, and quite unexpected gift the Center received from the sale of this special wine — a check from Greg Brewer, Steve Clifton, and Brewer-Clifton Winery in the amount of \$10,000! The Center is very fortunate to have the support of the Brewer-Clifton Winery as we continue to provide hope and healing to those affected by sexual assault and child abuse. For more information on the Kimberly Vineyard and Brewer-Clifton Winery visit www.brewerclifton.com/kimberly, email the winery at info@brewerclifton.com, or call 805-735-9184.



APRIL 16th - 30th EVENTS

- ★ APRIL 16th – MY STRENGTH PROGRAM – 12-4pm – SANTA MARIA – TOWN CENTER MALL 2nd FLOOR
- ★ APRIL 18th – BAKE SALE – 10am – LOMPOC – WAL-MART
- ★ APRIL 18th – 5% WEDNESDAY – SOLVANG – NEW FRONTIERS MARKET-PLACE
- ★ APRIL 20th – MY STRENGTH PROGRAM – 12-4pm – SANTA MARIA – TOWN CENTER MALL 2nd FLOOR



- ★ APRIL 20th – OPERATION FREE FALL – 10am – LOMPOC AIRPORT – SEVERAL STAFF & VOLUNTEERS WILL SKYDIVE TO RAISE AWARENESS
- ★ APRIL 25th – DENIM DAY – WEAR DENIM ALL DAY TO RAISE AWARENESS AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT
- ★ APRIL 26th – INTERNET SAFETY FORUM – 6:30pm–8:30pm – SANTA MARIA – FORUM BUILDING AT ALLAN HANCOCK COLLEGE
- ★ APRIL 30th – CANDLELIGHT VIGIL – 6:30pm – SANTA MARIA – MEET AT CITY HALL FOR MARCH TO ROSELIND PARK



North County Rape Crisis & Child Protection Center



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24-HOUR HOTLINES



LOMPOC 736-7273

SANTA MARIA 928-3554

OUR MISSION

The purpose of the North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center is to reduce the incidence of and vulnerability to sexual assault and child abuse by providing education and prevention skills to community children and adults, and to alleviate the trauma experienced by survivors of these crimes by providing direct services.