

SARA TEENS

SARA Teens, a group of local teens, meets weekly with Myrtha Veldhuis, SARA's Adolescent Educator. The group's purpose is to "educate other teens in order to end sexual and dating violence in the community."

One of their projects this past year was the development of three Public Service Announcements related to sexual assault and some of the common misconceptions about sexual violence. With the help of Bree Luck at Lighthouse Studios we received a grant to bring those PSA's to life. In June, this incredible group of adolescents filmed and edited the PSA's. Our hope is to have them shown in the school systems and possibly on local TV. We hope to work with Bree to submit one of them to film festivals. All of the PSA's will be available to view on the SARA website, SARA Teens Facebook page and YouTube in the upcoming weeks. For more information contact Myrtha at 434-295-



The Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA) is a non-profit agency whose mission is to eliminate sexual violence and its impact by providing education, advocacy and support to women, men and children.

Our Vision : A community free of sexual violence

Summer 2009

Dear Friends of SARA,

30 years ago a dedicated group of women (and a few men) joined together and formed the Charlottesville Rape Crisis Group. This all volunteer agency became what we know today as the Sexual Assault Resource Agency. SARA has come along way in those 30 years. As with all agencies we've had our share of growing pains but have survived; actually grown and thrived. SARA's services reach into the outlying counties, providing educational programs and training for thousands of youth, allied professionals, and community members. Every year hundreds of women, children and men reach out to SARA for crisis intervention services in the aftermath of a sexual assault or rape.

Over the next year we will be celebrating the work of SARA in a series of interviews, articles, historical tidbits about the agency and the work provided in our community over the life of the agency. Please join us in recognizing the work of a dedicated group of individuals who have labored for over 30 years with a vision of creating a community free of sexual violence.

Walker Thornton, Director

Stephanie Snell is a native of Charlottesville, a local business owner and a long time friend and supporter of SARA. She served on the SARA Board of Directors from 1997 through June 2009. Stephanie graciously agreed to share the following information about her time with the agency.

Stephanie, tell our readers about some of the milestones from your time with the agency:

The high points of my time on the board of SARA have included watching the agency's education programming develop; in types of programs and number of children reached. Working together as a board we helped establish financial stability for the agency and of course the purchase of the house which SARA now calls home.

You were Board President when the SARA house was purchased, how did that come about?

The idea of purchasing a permanent home was proposed by a small group of longtime supporters who felt that the time had come for SARA to have a place of its own. The timing was perfect. It didn't take long for them to find the right house that, with a little TLC, could serve the agency's needs well into the future. SARA's good karma came into play ... Dr. Masloff, the owner of the property, agreed to work with us; Freeman Allen, a longtime friend of SARA, offered to serve in a volunteer capacity as our general contractor; the Perry Foundation awarded us a matching grant and local businesses generously supported the renovations with donations of supplies and labor.

What will you take away with you from your 12 years with SARA?

What stands out the most to me is the many people I have met who have been touched by SARA in one way or another; individuals who contributed financially to the formation of SARA, adults who remember volunteering for the agency during their college years, teens or their parents who participated in the VIVA program, the individuals involved in the purchase, renovation and opening of the SARA House and community members who donate to SARA year after year.

Every time SARA comes up in a conversation, someone shares their connection to the agency, relating their experience with a sense of pride, a sense of connection to the important work SARA does for this community. SARA is a community agency in the truest sense of the word – not only do we provide services for individuals in the community, we depend on the community –its individuals- for our growth

Visit our website: www.sexualassaultresources.org

Charlottesville, VA
PO Box 6880



NON-PROFIT
BULK RATE
PERMIT #472
CHARLOTTESVILLE,
VA

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PROGRAM



SARA works with child victims of sexual violence, providing a wide range of services tailored to the needs of children and their families. One of our favorite programs is the children's camp held at the Gallastar Equine Center. This program provides therapeutic horseback riding workshops to girls, ages 8-12, who have experienced sexual abuse. During a week long summer camp, the participants gain confidence and experience healing as they bond with one another and their special

horses. Reunions in the fall and in the spring further the relationships built during the summer and provide a familiar, safe place to continue the healing process.

Each and every animal, from the horses to the pot-bellied pigs, has a story of how they came to call Gallastar home. Some have been neglected and abused, while others could no longer be cared for by their owners. The attitude that each animal is important and deserves to be safe and secure resonates with the girls and provides them with the chance to be themselves, no strings attached, during the week.

This summer we had 6 girls in attendance for the weeklong group. The girls were paired together and put in charge of a horse for the week, spending time grooming, washing, riding, and feeding "their" horse, while also learning teamwork, boundaries, and patience with one another. The various other animals on the farm provided the girls with the opportunity to learn about the great responsibility they are and the care each one requires. The day ends with a cool snack, a period of journaling back at the SARA office and a discussion of the day's events. This year's camp was underwritten by the generous employees at Rimm-Kaufman. Many thanks to the Pulliam's, Gallastar owners, for their donation of time and services.

We look forward to reuniting with the girls in the fall!



Volunteer Training Spring 2009

SARA's Volunteer Hotline Advocate training is an excellent way for community members (male and female) to become involved with the agency. Training includes information on the legal system, supporting a survivor in crisis, empowerment, mental health and other local resources.

This Spring, nine women completed the 40-hour training, and are now active volunteers on the hotline. Advocates provide a full range of services for individuals who have experienced sexual violence after office hours and on weekends. Hotline advocates speak with survivors, including friends or family, offering crisis intervention, emergency room accompaniment and referrals day and night.

Visit our website at <http://www.sexualassaultresources.org/volunteer.htm> for more information about becoming involved and the dates of upcoming trainings. Or feel free to contact me, Laurie Jean Seaman, Crisis Services Coordinator at 295-7273.

SARA Wish List

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| • Children's coloring books, crayons, washable markers | Assorted pocket folders |
| • Office Desk | Copy paper: white or color |
| • Wal-Mart, K-Mart, or Target gift cards | New or gently used fax machine |
| • ER clothes (New sweat suits / t-shirts – all sizes) | Food donations for special events and meetings |

IN HONOR OF OUR 30TH ANNIVERSARY

- ADD AN ADDITIONAL 3% OR 30% TO YOUR USUAL DONATION
- WRITE US A CHECK FOR \$33, \$333, \$3000, \$30,000.
- PLEDGE TO SEND SARA \$30 A MONTH FOR THE WHOLE YEAR
- TELL THREE PEOPLE WHY YOU DONATE TO SARA
- JOIN IN AND FIND A CREATIVE WAY TO HELP SARA CELEBRATE THIS MILESTONE

~WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT ~

SARA Staff

Walker J. Thornton, M.Ed., Executive Director
Molly McElwee, Administrative Assistant
Myrtha Veldhuis, Adolescent Educator
Aaron Elizabeth Miller, Child Advocate
Nancy C. Walker, Child Educator
Laurie Jean Seaman, Client Services Coordinator
Michelle Q. Thompson, M.S., Counselor
Michele Zehr, Outreach Advocate

Board of Directors

Chair: Connie Jorgensen
Vice-Chair: Jamie Schwartz
Scribner: Nathan Veldhuis
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Past Chair: Deborah E. Healey, MD

Dave Chapman *Gia DeAngelis, MD*
Gregg Donovan *Claude Worrell*