

Domestic Violence Awareness

By Steve "Stef" Stefanides

During the October 2nd meeting of the Marco Island City Council a proclamation naming the month of October as Domestic Violence Recognition Month was passed and presented by members of the council to representatives at the meeting. That proclamation, which was read by Council Chair Larry Honig was presented to Linda Oberhaus, the Executive Director of the Naples Shelter for Abused Women and Children. Accompanying Oberhaus was local residents Carole Roberts and Marco Police Chief Al Schettino, who both serve on the Shelter's Board of Directors.

Domestic violence may involve not only physical abuse, but also that of mental or verbal abuse, and can be found not only within heterosexual couples but in same sex relationships as well. "We often see an escalation of the verbal and mental abuse between couples to that of actual physical abuse; but abuse is just that, and it should be dealt with before authorities have to intervene due to a physical altercation," said Chief Schettino.

"This is a crime, and it isn't focused on race, age or income levels. Men may also be victims of domestic abuse. We see it across all spectrums of our society today. It is especially heart wrenching when we are called due to the abuse of a child," said Schettino.

Domestic abuse can destroy a person's self-worth and may in many cases lead to anxiety and depression, which may lead to



Photo by Steve Stefanides

From left: Carole Roberts, Linda Oberhaus, Executive Director of the Shelter for Abused Women and Children and Chief Al Schettino receive the official proclamation. Pictured on dais: council members Reed, Honig, Grifoni, Roman and Rios.

other issues affecting one's health. The use of verbal and mental abuse against a child will have long lasting effects and possibly lead to consequences which may manifest themselves later as they reach adulthood.

The Naples Shelter for Abused Women and Children has been in operation almost 30 years, and today works with a staff of 67 fulltime and part time members serving residents of Marco Island, Bonita Springs, Naples and all of Collier County. Their programs continue to grow as they have expanded their proactive approach to help potential victims to recognize the early signs of domestic abuse.

Due to the pressing need for more services in the eastern Collier County area, the Shelter announced plans to build a new shelter for victims of human trafficking and domestic violence in Immokalee. That new facility is being built through the generosity of one of the Shelter's longtime supporters.

For more information regarding the Naples Shelter for Abused Women and Children and their programs, or to donate to their mission please go to their website at www.naplesshelter.org.

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Meals of Hope Happy Hour, Packaging Event on Schedule

Submitted

Marco Island Meals of Hope confirmed today its annual packaging event will be held on November 4, 2017 at 8:30 AM at the Marco Island Charter Middle School.

The packaging event draws together over 500 volunteers as part of Team Hope, packaging over 200,000 meals for those in need. To volunteer as part of the packaging event please visit www.mohmi.org and register. "Team Hope needs as many volunteers as we can get," explained Bill "Captain Hope" Morris, who leads Marco's Meals of Hope. Morris went on, "We plan on packaging over 200,000 meals and will need every spot filled with volunteers to reach our goal."

This year's event will feature the music of Kevin Fitzgerald, "His music keeps everything alive and exciting. We are really lucky to have Kevin as part of our team," said Morris.

The Meals of Hope Packaging Event brings Marco Island together. Seniors, families, school age children, sports teams and clubs all join in to help feed the needy. "I cannot wait to see everyone," said Morris, "this will be a lot of fun."

Marco Island Meals of Hope

also confirmed its last "Happy Hour for Hope" of 2017 will be held on Monday, October 23, 2017 at The SpeakEasy, 1106 N. Collier Blvd., Marco Island, from 5 to 7 PM.

The SpeakEasy is graciously hosting this event with drinks at reduced prices and hors d'oeuvres. Bill "Captain Happy Hope" Morris, stated "The SpeakEasy owners, Tim McCoy, Dan Collardey and Jimmy Boylan are terrific. Every time we are there we feel at home and have a great time." Admission to Happy Hour for Hope is only \$10 and everyone is invited.



For more information concerning Marco Island Meals of Hope, please contact Bill "Captain Hope" Morris at 239-642-6020 or visit www.mohmi.org.



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